

The Essential Guide to Social Media Platforms

FACEBOOK

Your "online magazine"
Both conversational and visual

Good for:

Promotions
Viral campaigning
Showcasing work

Facebook Stats:

Facebook is the leading social media channel to date. It has 2.6 billion daily active users (Facebook, 2018) and attracts just over 60% of all internet users to frequent its site (60.6% - Facebook, 2018).

Not only do people use it, but just over 80 million businesses have a page on Facebook and in Q1 of 2020 alone, these businesses spent in excess of \$17 Billion, yes BILLION dollars on advertising (Facebook, 2020). With all of that spend, you would assume that marketers like the channel, and you would be right; 86% of marketers flock to Facebook for advertising (eMarketer, 2018).

Who uses it?

Marketing professionals make a number of assumptions about Facebook audiences. Some are true and some are myth. Here is a gearing to who and what is on Facebook:

50% of all 65+ users in the US are on Facebook.

68% of 50-64 year olds in the US are on Facebook.

Roughly 7/10 adults use Facebook.

Many newer platforms claim that younger people are moving away from Facebook, but this is simply not true – 65% of under 35's also visit the site regularly (statista,2019).

What are they using it for?

They use it to keep in touch with family and friends. They use it to keep connected with past and present work and school connections.

They share "memory-making-moments", personal thoughts and are generally a lot more open, honest and free about their emotions and feelings on this platform.

Often people post to make themselves look more intelligent or funny. Posts on this platform either get engagement due to the humour, relevancy or controversy that they spark.

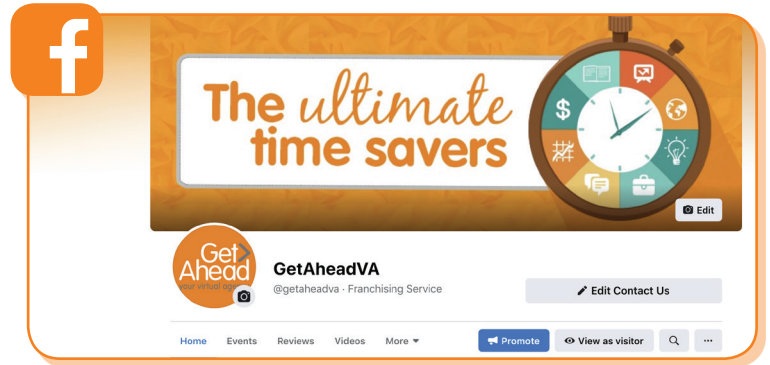
Which businesses succeed on Facebook?

Generally, B2C businesses flourish on Facebook. They can sell, inform and promote themselves well and this can be a good source of conversions.

B2B businesses can do well, but with less conversion. Businesses that deal with other businesses can showcase their wins and run competitions on Facebook, but it is not a traditional business platform so heavier content is not going to be readily digested. .

How to get the most from it:

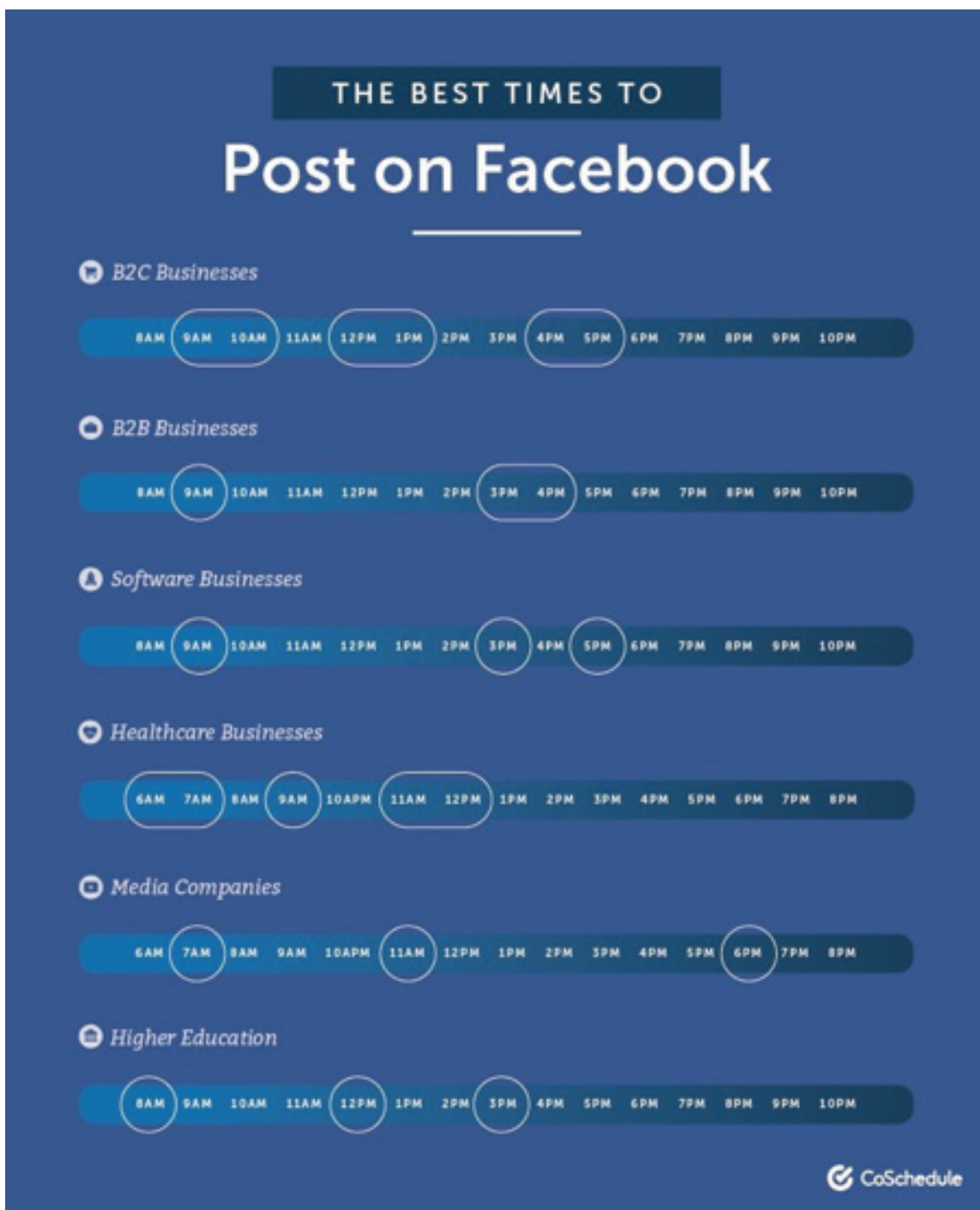
Provoke comment



- Ask a question
- Spark dialogue
- create visual intrigue
- use humour
- Run a competition or promotion

Summary:

Regardless of the size of your business, Facebook is a great place to start your social media marketing efforts. Almost all types of content can work well when it comes to sharing on Facebook, which makes it easy to get started on. Through Facebook, not only do businesses reach out to their target audience, but they can also use the social media platform to interact with their customers and enhance their relationship with them. Facebook advertising can also help a business use the information they have to refine their strategies and target their audience in a more cost- and time- efficient manner.



TWITTER

Short posts - 280 character limit
Fast-paced

Good for:

Sharing the heartbeat of your business
Interacting with clients and peers
Signposting content
Live commentary for events, webinars, conferences, talks etc.

How to get the most from it:

Vary what you post, e.g.

- Human and professional
- Original and retweeted
- Factual and funny

Use hashtags to increase visibility

Share links – it's not a medium for long content!

Check content is "on brand" before you retweet

Use lists to keep content manageable

Who uses it?

When comparing Facebook and Twitter, the audiences vary. Compared to the whopping 69% of all US adults using Facebook, only a mere 22% of US adults are engaging regularly with Twitter. This doesn't mean that its reach is small, over 330 million daily active users and over 13 million of those are in the UK, making Twitter one of the leading social channels.

What is more interesting is the age groups of Twitter users; 38% of Twitter users are between the ages of 18 and 29, 26% users are 30-49 years old. It is estimated that 80% of Twitter users are affluent millennials. In general, Twitter has a younger demographic.

Mobile is still the chosen method of access with 80% of Twitter users accessing the platform on a mobile device. 93% of video views are on mobile meaning content needs to attract quickly while people scroll through feeds.

What do they use it for?

Traditionally Twitter was used to share short statements and comments about a person, an event or a business. In principle, this is still true. Today, you will see everything from the hilarious to the ridiculous and everything in between. Celebrities have full blown melt downs on Twitter. The president of one of the most powerful countries on Earth used the word 'covfefe' instead of coverage in a tweet. Off the back of this simple spelling error @CovfefeTheGreat was born along with millions of comments and jokes.

The platform is designed around quick digestible content that keeps people up to date. It is about getting news and views and comments from influencers. It is a snapshot. A point of view.

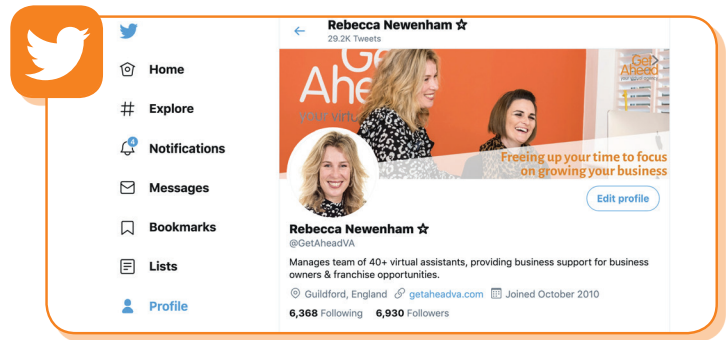
What businesses succeed on Twitter?

Any business that wishes to be present within the Twitter environment. It takes time to build a following and to keep it maintained, but done well both B2B, B2C and individuals can do well within Twitter.

Strengthen your Twitter presence

Here are some basic tips on how to attract followers, and strengthen your Twitter presence:

- Follow your clients, prospects, media and influencers within your industry; in many cases they will follow you back
- Retweet other tweets that would be relevant to your audience, this will boost the amount of content in your feed
- Provide feedback on tweets you post and answer questions that people have asked
- Mix your Tweets between information about your own business and Tweeting links to interesting



articles or news items that are relevant to your industry. Make sure to include the author or publisher's Twitter handle (address) in these tweets

- Include relevant hashtags in your tweets to attract people with an interest in a subject
- Ask questions, and reply to any answers you receive
- Subscribe to relevant Twitter lists
- Promote your Twitter account at every opportunity, e.g. include it on your email signature, blog and conference slides
- Tweet regularly, but be careful not to spam or annoy your followers

Master live Tweeting

Live Tweeting can be highly effective to engage your followers and inform them about event they want to attend but, for whatever reason, may not be able to.

Your business may be presenting or may just be attending. The act of Live Tweeting like reporting, done well, your audience may even start to view you as a source for industry news.

Why should you live tweet?

Live tweeting can help businesses raise brand awareness, increase engagement, or draw attention to an event or campaign in real time.

Live Tweeting for your brand boosts engagement and draws in new followers. And when you live tweet an event you're producing, you can promote and bring more awareness to your brand than ever before.

1. Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

A lot of things happen at even the smallest events. Preparing before an event is important. Here are my top tips:

- Research. Make sure you know the names and the Twitter handles of everyone involved with the event.
- Create image templates. If you have the skills, having a template that include the event hashtag, your logo, or other visual assets. As you take photos you can pop them into the template to create great images and content.
- Set up streams. If you use a social media management tool, you can set up streams in your dashboard. One will be for all content that uses the official hashtag of the event you're live tweeting and the second one will be for a Twitter list you've created of all the relevant people involved in the event.
- Prepared Tweets. Craft a few tweets before the event. If you know the schedule of events already, create a few tweets about things you know will happen. Will a famous speaker go on at 3pm? Create a tweet for that. Will they announce a release of a product in the morning? Create a tweet for that too.

2. Ready, Steady, React

You could have everything planned but unexpected things happen.

Live events always have moments in them that no one can predict. When that happens, you might have to forget about some previously planned tweets and images, and run with something else.

When this happens, use it to your advantage, keep your audience informed and let them know what is going on!

3. Create a hashtag

Creating a branded hashtag allows your followers to easily track and keep up-to-date with your live tweets.

If you're creating a hashtag for an event you're hosting, remember to keep it short. Make it easy to remember and be sure to check if anyone is using it already. Use it in every Tweet you send. Keep an eye out for any emerging hashtags that start gaining popularity during the event that might be relevant for your brand to start using.

4. Multi-Media Posts

Using photos, videos, commentary on a speaker's talk can always add variety to your live Tweeting feed.

Using different types of content better engages and entertains your followers. Top types of Tweets could include:

- Quotes from speakers or presenters
- Answers to questions people might have using your event hashtag
- Photos from the event using your image templates
- Videos of behind-the-scenes footage, or updates from the event
- Retweets of event speakers, presenters, or performer
- Retweets of humorous or insightful comments about the event from other Twitter users

5. Reuse and Recycle

One of the great things about live tweeting is the volume of content it can provide you with once the event is finished.

When you're finished, gather your best tweets from the event and work it into a blog post and share it with your followers to increase engagement.

LINKEDIN

Network for professionals
B2B
Industry-led

Good for:

Generating leads
Building credibility
Influencing

How to get the most from it:

Interact, don't just broadcast
Endorse your business family
Be supportive
Keep your profile professional and current

Mastering LinkedIn for Business

With 562 million users, LinkedIn is all about building networks and connections.

LinkedIn is often limited to a personal profile but a detailed Company Page can help you grow your audience and drive business results.

Completed Company Pages generally receive twice as many visitors than those with incomplete pages and businesses that post at least monthly generally gain followers six times faster than those that don't – so how do you master LinkedIn for business?

First up, you need a company page. LinkedIn members can learn about your business, your brand, and job opportunities with your company. Company Pages are also a great way to establish industry expertise. Rich content and compelling status updates can help to establish your brand as a leader in your industry.

Set Goals: Start by developing goals, after all, you'll never know whether you achieve your goals if you don't take the time to set goals in the first place. Keep in mind that even if you're new to using LinkedIn for business, you can gain a lot of useful intelligence for goal-setting and strategic planning by examining who's already connecting with you—and how—on your other social channels.

Connect: Ask your colleagues and employees to help you grow your audience. Employees are your biggest advocates, and by adding them as followers you also tap into each of their networks, expanding your reach. Encourage employees to add their position at your company to their LinkedIn profiles. Your Company Page will then be linked from their profiles, and their profiles will in turn appear on your Company Page.

Publish: The best way to grow your audience and keep your followers is to provide them with value by posting articles or company updates on a regular basis. Once you post, the information appears on your company page and in each of your followers' news feeds. Do not write much? Blog posts or a news article from external sources that benefit your followers can also be valuable. Just because the content doesn't originate from your business, it shows your audience that you are constantly looking for relevant information for them.

Rich Media: LinkedIn is business-first, but using text-only posts do not grab attention. Adding an image or video with your posts are guaranteed to get more attention. If you have a YouTube channel, try linking to your videos from LinkedIn. While other social channels require you to upload native videos for auto play, on LinkedIn, YouTube videos play automatically in the news feed.

Groups: Becoming an active member of a LinkedIn Group can help you and your business network with other professionals and businesses in your field, especially those outside of your first-degree connections.

Showcase: Showcase Pages function like subdomains. They allow you to highlight a specific area of your business, like an ongoing initiative or campaign.

Lastly, LinkedIn's research shows that posts tend to get the most engagement in the morning, followed by posts published after business hours. This is a good starting point when planning your publishing schedule, but what works for the average business may not work best for yours.



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Above all, remember that LinkedIn is a professional network that allows you to build credibility, create a meaningful network, and glean insider expertise from established experts in your industry. It's a valuable tool in your social marketing arsenal, so make sure you're using every opportunity it provides.

Who uses it?

Founded two whole years prior to Facebook back in 2002, LinkedIn is known as the "professional social networking site". It has 660 million regular users and while members tend to frequent the channel less often than Facebook, 40% of them do use it daily. That is over 100 million business professionals online everyday searching for great content. Interestingly, over 70% of LinkedIn users are outside of the US.

You will see a plethora of business people on the channel, but 61 million of these are senior level influencers and 40 million hold decision making positions within businesses. What's more, 11 million of the decision makers on LinkedIn are millennials. It's also where most Fortune 500 decision-makers and executives like to spend their spare time.

Mobile use of LinkedIn is on the up. 63 million users are picking up their device to interact with LinkedIn, but the rest still are accessing on a laptop or desktop.

What do they use it for?

More often than not, people go to LinkedIn to actively look for valuable content to read. They're not there to find BuzzFeed quizzes, wedding photos, or memes. They're looking for content that can change the way they do business.

What businesses thrive on LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a more effective channel for B2B businesses than B2C ones.

94% of B2B marketers use LinkedIn as a content distribution channel so if you have content to distribute, LinkedIn should be your first stop. It can increase traffic to your company site, almost half of all social traffic to B2B sites comes from LinkedIn.

B2C brands can represent themselves on LinkedIn, but they have to adjust their message to appeal to a business audience.

INSTAGRAM

Your "social gallery"
Picture-led

Good for:

Building your brand
Connecting visually with your audience
Sneak peeks
Getting creative!

How to get the most from it:

Use your best pictures
Invest in a smartphone with a good camera
Use hashtags and tag others to increase reach

Who uses it?

Compared to other social channels, Instagram is a network of younger users. Over half of the global users are under 35 and it is the second most popular app after Snapchat for teenagers in the US. Believe it or not, Instagram is now almost a decade old and has over a billion monthly active users.

What do they use it for?

Instagram is all about images. It is a platform for sharing images with other users either publicly or with pre-approved followers.

What businesses click with Instagram?

Any business with a visual story to tell. Generally, businesses that are direct to consumer do better, but there are some great examples of B2B brands rocking the Instagram space. It all comes down to testing and refining the message.

Getting your business on instagram instantly

Instagram has a much younger audience than other social channels, with the vast majority of users under the age of 35. With their strong online presence, it's easy to learn more about the Instagram crowd, but you will need to define a target audience and content unique to your brand. Think about:

- Who already buys from you, who are your customers?
- Look at the followers you have from other social channels – are they also on Instagram?
- Look at your competitors – what are they doing, and what are they doing well?
- What sort of content do your customers interact with? What are they posting about?

Goals

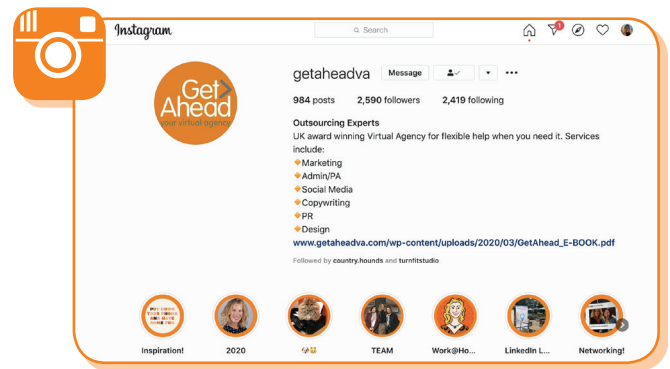
Goals are great, but you need to know what to measure and what it means. Here are some tips:

- Creating awareness: Include metrics like follower growth rate, and post reach
- Gaining engagement: Includes metrics like engagement rate (based on likes) and amplification rate (based on shares)
- Concentrating on conversion: In addition to conversion rate, you can include metrics like click-through rate and bounce rate.

Consistency

Once you start building a following on Instagram, your audience will expect to see posts from you on a regular basis. On Instagram consistency is not just about posting regularly, but posting consistently so your audience knows it is you. Tips:

- Convey your personality. Go casual, or professional, whatever works for your business.
- Bio hashtags are clickable, and are a great way to show off user-generated content.
- Emojis can help you convey a lot of information in just one character.
- Line breaks make your content easier to read online.
- For most businesses, the best profile pic is some version of your logo.



Timing

There's no one time that's best to post for all businesses. The best time to post on Instagram varies greatly on your industry. You'll need to test out some posts to determine what times seem to create the most engagement for your posts, but one of the keys is to understand when your audience is online. Instagram Insights shows you exactly when your followers are online, broken down by day.

Take amazing photos

Instagram is all about images. Your mobile phone is your best friend when it comes to Instagram images, and you can post straight from your device. Make the most of your mobile by using natural light to make shadows softer, colours richer, and photos nicer to look at. Play about with creating amazing photos for your Instagram account.

Be a storyteller

Over 400 million people use Instagram Stories every day. In fact, a third of the most viewed Instagram Stories are posted by businesses. Tell authentic brand stories that have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Get creative with Stories and be sure to end your Stories with a powerful call-to-action.

Compelling captions

Instagram may be a visual platform, but captions allow you to tell the story that makes the photo meaningful. Captions can make your followers think, laugh, and feel a connection to your brand.

Use hashtags

Captions on Instagram are not searchable, but hashtags are. Consider creating your own branded hashtag.

Respond to comments and mentions

This is social marketing, so responding to comments and mentions of your brand on Instagram is important to keep users engaging with your brand. Dedicate some time to responding authentically when someone mentions or tags your brand - do not automate!

Work with Instagram influencers

Influencer marketing is a powerful way of accessing larger audiences. Even small brands with limited budgets can use influencer marketing by working with micro-influencers: people with a smaller but dedicated following.

Promote your account on other channels

If you've got an established following on other social networks, let those people know about your Instagram business account. Make sure to tell them what kind of content you'll share on your Insta profile, so they know why it's worth their time to follow you in more than one place.