

Marketing.

Cohesive thinking

How to develop a social media plan.

A guide to social media success.



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So many companies have started working with social media yet few have a strategic plan in place. If you don't know where to start, don't worry; we're happy to share our top ten tips on how to set up a social media plan to support your overall business goals.

This is a broad outline to help you create your social media plan. Once you agree it, be sure to put it in action - don't let it gather dust.

If yours is a large organisation, distribute it to all staff and ensure they adhere to it. It will be an active plan so remember to refresh it in line with your business objectives.

How to develop a social media plan.

- 1. Set your objectives**
Do you want to drive traffic to your website or raise brand awareness? Which social media tool(s) will you use e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook etc. Each will need specific objectives and strategies.
- 2. Who are your customers?**
What will make people interested in what you have to say and engage in a conversation with you? Identify the profile of your online searchers and where they are located.
- 3. Create relevant content**
Write content that's worth talking about and adds value to your social media community. Integrate this content within your website and ensure it's optimised to attract more visitors.
- 4. Plan resource needs**
What technology will you use to monitor your presence effectively? Who will respond to feedback (positive, negative, general enquiries, and so on) - build these needs into your plan.
- 5. Check out the competition**
Monitor how other companies are using the networks and learn from what they do and how well they share information.
- 6. Agree measurement targets**
How will you measure each success criterion? Ensure you set up the measurement tools and agree the specific metrics, e.g. likes, friends, referrals, subscribers, followers, views.
- 7. Create an integrated plan**
Define how your social media presence will work with your other marketing channels (online and offline). The plan cannot be isolated from your other ongoing activities.
- 8. Identify brand champions**
Find out who endorses your brand and encourage them to become ambassadors to spread your message across their social media networks. It's all about lots of conversations.
- 9. Analyse and track**
Your audience to see if they are shifting to other social media sites and regularly evaluate performance against the objectives and goals you set. And don't forget to monitor industry trends.
- 10. Remember offline messaging**
Ensure all offline marketing material has social media icons and promote consistently across all marketing tools.