

SOCIAL MEDIA PLANNING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Basic Steps to a Social Media Plan for Your Small Business

Every day, billions of people wake-up and get on social media. For many, it's how they receive their news and how they connect with family and friends. And, it's how they find and connect with their favorite brands. But when it comes to your business, which social media platform is best for you? How many platforms should your business be using to be effective?

Handling social media efforts is a full-time job, but even if you can't afford to bring on an employee, you can still find success by doing it yourself. The key is focusing your efforts on one or two social media channels. Here are some key elements to help you get started developing a social media plan.

Choose the Best Platform to Reach Your Target Audience

- Choose platforms where your audience is located and build a persona on each of them which would include: goals/challenges/pain points/objections/type of decision maker. Determine the following:
 - How they spend their time
 - What channels are they using
 - Why are they using specific channels
 - How do they prefer to receive info on your products and services
- Choose platforms that are specific to the type of content you will be producing. Is it long form with longer shelf life? If so, think YouTube, Podcast and Blogs. Or, will you be producing micro content that's easy to create and fast to digest? If so, you might want to post on Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest.
- Don't spread yourself too thin. Limit the number of social media platforms you choose to be on and then try to master the one or two you choose before tackling and more.

Brief overview of the top social media platforms to consider

1) Facebook

- 2 billion active users
- 3/4 visit daily
- Age range

13-17	51%	18-29	79%	30-40	79%
50-64	68%	65+	46%		

2) Instagram (owned by Facebook)

- 1 billion active users
- highly visual platform
- provides a quick glimpse into what your brand looks like
- helps build a positive impression to new visitors
- good for younger demographics
- Age range

13-17	72%	18-29	67%	30-40	47%
50-64	23%	65+	8%		
- Fewer users with high income / college degrees compared to Facebook
 - 43% with college degrees
 - 42% high income users

3) LinkedIn

- 300 million active users
- full of B2B companies
- excellent news feed
- excellent for firms servicing businesses and professionals
- high income audience
- Age range

18-29	28%	30-49	37%	50-64	24%
65+	11%				

4) Twitter

- Over 330 million active users
- Real time social media platform
- Up to 280 characters limitation
- Age range
 - 13-17 32% 18-29 38% 30-49 26%
 - 50-64 17% 65+ 7%
- 32% high income and 32% college educated
- 2 billion searches per day

5) Pinterest

- Used to find inspiration and helpful content
- Over 330 million monthly active users
- 42% female / 15% male
- 41% high income and 38% college educated

6) YouTube

- 1.9 billion users on a regular basis
- 2nd largest search engine behind Google
- Video is the most preferred type of media for consumers
- Success depends on consistently good content
- Time consuming production
- Quality production and editing can be costly
- Age range
 - 13-17 85% 18-29 91% 30-49 87%
 - 50-64 70% 65+ 38%
- 83% high income and 80% college educated

Conclusion

There's no perfect platform that applies to everyone. Once you pick platforms where your audience is located, start creating a content plan. Then, decide how often you want to post on each platform, the key topics you want to post about, and how much of that content will be original vs. re-shared from other sources.

Make sure to pick quality over quantity and utilize analytics. Most social platforms have analytics that you can access for free. Make sure you take advantage of the data available to you so you can see what content has the most engagement