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Blog (https://businesstechpro.com/blog/) Testimonials (/testimonials) About (https://businesstechpro.com/about-us/) Contact (/contactws)earch and hit enter How to Best Use Social Media Platforms for Your Business

May Not all social media platforms are created equal, so depending on what you sell, certain platforms may suit you better than others.



(https://www.businesstechpro.com/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/social-media-

mo_22145814_5c328a059112ef7a393c80e604c1023c2ba6d486.png)Social media has forever changed the marketing and advertisement landscape for not just consumer use, but for businesses as well. Whether you are an experienced business owner or are just starting out with a brand-spanking new e-commerce site, ignoring the digital audiences available (typically at a fraction of the cost of other forms of advertising) can leave you behind your competitors in your market.

Each social media platform on this list offers its own unique feel and set of features, so choosing which ones to focus on can make all the difference for utilizing your marketing budget well. In all honesty, you will likely not use each of these social media outlets simply because they are not well suited for your advertising needs nor are they used by your target audience.

While there may be dozens of social platforms out there, these nine can be used most effectively by businesses to create content as well as display visual marketing tools:

Facebook

With nearly 2 billion users, Facebook is possibly the largest and most diverse platform in the social media landscape. Users can create statements, post pictures and videos, tag people and locations, and share content on the fly. Facebook also has the largest diversity in demographics of any of the social platforms, making it very easy to find your target audience as well as secondary ones you would like to reach.

How to use Facebook:

- Users: Nearly 2 billion (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Content, images, video
- Facebook ads that can reach target audiences via "impressions," or users that are most likely to like your ad based on many variables within their profiles such as age, location, interests, gender, etc.
- Use Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp to send SMS text message ads to mobile devices
- · Non-industry or content specific so that you can post text, pictures, video, and links with great effectiveness

Twitter

Twitter gained its fame as a platform where "tweets" could go viral quickly, particularly if they were posted by celebrity users. This platform allows users to submit short messages (140 characters or less), pictures and videos with your followers, but can also be seen by others with applicable hashtags. The infamous hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a pound sign (#) to attach it to a certain subject matter. Tweets can gain traction by strategic use of hashtags, choosing ones that are currently popular or are widely searched by Twitter followers.

How to use Twitter:

- Users: 328 million (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Limited content, images, video
- · Before including hashtags, perform research on what is popular among users
- Sharing relevant content that may not be your own can inspire engagement

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- The popularity of your posts and channel is dependent upon others "retweeting" to get more coverage and followers
- The lifespan of a post is considered less than 30 seconds in a user's feed, so messaging must be very engaging and concise to be effective

LinkedIn

Made specifically for working professionals, LinkedIn is the social media platform to be on for forming connections and networking. You can purchase LinkedIn ads to advertise your business, but concentrating on forming working relationships with others in your industry should be your primary focus when using LinkedIn. Find vendors, partners, long-term clients or customers, talented new hires, and more here. You can establish a LinkedIn Group to get in touch with others in your industry or possible partners with whom to join forces.

How to use LinkedIn:

- Users: 467 million (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Connections, content, images, videos
- Fill out your profile as well as your business page thoroughly to make it more legitimate to others searching you
- o Participate in other LinkedIn Groups or make your own within your industry
- o Invest in LinkedIn ads to evangelize your business among the appropriate channels
- When searching for people or companies, use job titles or industry type to make your search more effective

Instagram

Instagram is a subsidiary of Facebook (meaning that they can integrate for cross promoting) and is completely image-centric. People follow your account based on the kinds of photos and slideshows (Instagram Stories) you post. This platform is very useful if you have a physical product to show off and want to put it out in front of people. Instagram is a fun way to build a company culture and identity for yourself to shrug off the "faceless company" vibe and engage with target audiences visually.

How to use Instagram:

- Users: 700 million (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Images
- · Post high definition images that demonstrate the following:
 - Your product in action or being used by people
 - The variety of your product(s)
 - Your team members in action or enjoying their time with the company (gives your company a warmer, more approachable persona)
 - Present information in visual form (infographics, graphs, charts, etc.)
 - Advertisements that evoke interest or an emotional response from the viewer
- Must post consistently to build a following

Pinterest

Pinterest is another image-centric but very niche social media platform that can be useful for the right audiences. Users can "pin" content they like to digital bulletin boards that are sorted by category (Food Recipes, Fashion, etc.). All Pins use high definition images just like Instagram and must be very interesting to draw attention and be pinned by other users. Pinterest is dominated by female users, so making your content friendly towards women would be highly beneficial.

How to Use Pinterest:

- Users: 150 million (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Images and video
- · You do not have to post as frequently as other social platforms, but keeping your bulletins organized and easy to navigate is very important for shareability from other users
- Use HD images or videos to show off your product pin
- · Since Pinterest users are primarily women, find verticals that are interesting to them (beauty, DIY projects, exercise, fashion, photography, and food are good examples); if your products or services do not have such verticals, Pinterest may not be an effective social outlet for your business
- Utilize "Rich Pins" that allow you to add additional information that can be pertinent to your business or products

<u>YouTube</u>

YouTube is the world leader in video content and the second-largest search engine in the world behind Google. While there are other video outlets that exist (Vimeo, Dailymotion, Twitch, etc.), YouTube is by far the most popular with little barrier to access as well as direct shareability with many popular properties such as WordPress. Also, since Google owns YouTube, videos on the platform are very easily found on the search engine. YouTube is particularly important because you will often be sharing videos you submit to YouTube on your other social media platforms.

How to Use YouTube:

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- Users: 1 billion (as of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Video
- If you create educational content (how-to guides, top 10 lists, etc.), create a short companion video that gives the same content to appeal to a wider audience
- · Choose video titles that capture attention and employ best SEO practices (example: "How to Paint Your Bedroom Hassle FREE!")
- Use quality recording software and equipment to make high-quality videos that are professional and retain a long shelf life
- Use video to demonstrate your products, services, or satisfied customers as promotions (teach customers how to use your product, what they can do with it, describe the quality, etc.)
- · Always share any new video content you create on your other social media platforms

Yelp

Reviews are important for every business, and Yelp has distinguished itself as the authority on where people check out your business rating. Additionally, Yelp has also become a search engine of sorts in which users can find a business type that they want, and receive results based on a 1 to 5-star rating scale with higher rated businesses appearing first. The importance of having reviews online for your business has never been higher with such fierce competition among industry leaders. Most people performing general searches tend to click on companies with either high ratings or a rating of some kind. If your business has no rating at all, then you may seem unproven or untrustworthy.

How to Use Yelp:

- Users: 145 million (As of Q1 2016)
- Focus: Content, Reviews
- Over 2.8 million business have claimed a page on Yelp; you must claim a Yelp page for your business to prevent fraudulent pages bearing your company name from stealing attention away from your real page
- By claiming a page, you establish your legitimacy on Yelp and gain the ability to engage with users giving your business a rating; being active by engaging with users no matter what their review rating can improve your overall outlook
- If a user posts a positive review of your business and praises you, post a response thanking them for their business to show everyone else that you care about your reputation
- If you get a negative review, address the issue head-on by apologizing and inquire as to what you can do to serve the user better next time, as this kind of response can help soften the blow against your company
- Beware of too many 1-stars or 5-star reviews: Too many negative reviews will hurt you no matter your engagement and too many 5-star reviews (especially ones with no actual commentary included) can make the reviews seem fake to inflate your company's rating artificially

Snapchat

Most popular among the Millennial demographic, Snapchat allows users to send images or short video segments to other users that have a limited lifespan before they are deleted. A new feature Stories, was rolled out recently that allows users to post content on their account page for 24 hours. Discover mode allows users to see branded content from popular publications and media outlets. Since Snapchat is a mobile-only app, content posted must be optimized for mobile viewing on the fly.

How to Use Snapchat:

- Users: 150 million (As of Q1 2017)
- Focus: Images, video
- · Businesses would benefit from using the Stories feature by posting announcements, sales, and other information that does not need to stay around for an extended period
- The bulk of users are under 35 years of age, so use marketing that is targeted at younger demographics
- · If your company has a youthful vibe, sending work-appropriate Snapchats of your team members working on projects, attending events, or having fun can interest people in your company culture and products

Google+

Google+ (or Google Plus) is the search engine giant's attempt at a social media network and has been received with mixed reviews. While it may not climb to the same heights as Facebook or LinkedIn in engagement, Google+ has found its niche for improving SEO for organic search results, particularly for local businesses. When performing searches for businesses types, Google+ business pages will appear first with ratings and helpful information. For example, if you search "bike shop in Los Angeles" in the Google search box, your top results will be bike shops that have a Google+ page that they have thoroughly filled out and gained reviews.

How to Use Google+:

- Users: 111 million (As of 2015)
- Focus: Content, search results
- o If you are on the fence about engagement with Google+, it is better to have a fully-fleshed out page for SEO purposes
- Google+ businesses pages are handled through Google My Business, a platform that utilizes Google Search, Google Maps, and Google+ together to make a business more visible in a local search
- Like LinkedIn, you can make connections with others via their Google accounts
- Include people you would to follow in your Circles

If you have any questions about using social media (https://www.businesstechpro.com/marketing/social-media-management/) to your advantage for your business, contact Business Tech Pro today!

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