

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA

CHERYL LAWSON



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Preface

This book is aimed at managers, business owners, marketing managers, and aspiring social media marketing interns and managers. I will assume that however accomplished in your own field – baker, developer, teacher and that even as successful business owners, you approach the topic of social media marketing as a beginner. Even if you are a digital native, or an avid personal user of social networks, we will treat this book as a guided tour of social media for marketing purposes.

While this is a textbook, it is not meant to read like a traditional textbook, especially on a topic that is rooted in digital to an audience who, let's be honest, doesn't really like to read. No shade. I too would rather watch a YouTube video on how to fix a problem with my laptop than read the manual.

Like many of my [Generation X](#) peers, I began using forums and chat rooms in the early 1990's and have watched social networks come and go (AOL and Yahoo chat rooms, Friendster, Myspace) – To those not inclined to spend countless hours online over the past couple of decades, it may seem as if things change too often.

For others, particularly those born into the technology, aka digital natives, social networks as with most technology, are second nature to you, but not having work experience may leave you perplexed as to what your boss/ client / customers really want from you as a social media manager.

If you fall within either one of these audiences, this book is for you. I will do my best to help you sort out a basic understanding of the why of social media as a marketing tool for business, for personal brand building, and perhaps more importantly, where to find supporting information and research to help you design, monitor, test, and re-define a social media marketing strategy.

If you are utilizing this book as an instructor or are considering using this book as an instructor, first of all, *Thank you very much!* Here, you will find the instruction plan and a practical way of teaching students how the principles of marketing work. We will also explore the principles for each prominent social website. Also, the exercises with every chapter will give students a better chance at understanding these concepts as well.

To sum it up, the target audience for the book is a person who is interested in social media marketing for brand building.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

PART 1 – we'll discuss the origins of marketing principles. A definition of marketing and

how many of the concepts that have been around for ages are the same as what we do today in social media marketing. Part 1 answers the question, “what is marketing?” and we’ll begin to explore marketing strategies for the modern age. We’ll touch on the basics principles of marketing and a bit of the psychology of as a way to introduce concepts that hopefully won’t be so foreign to you as we dive deeper into the nature of social networks.

PART 2 – we’ll get into more of what social media marketers know and how it fits within a marketing strategy. We’ll talk about social networks in a way that no matter what networks are present and popular when you read this book, you’ll have an understanding of how you can create content, engage with your customers, and grow your brand.

Open Education at Oklahoma State University

Introduction to Social Media is an Open Educational Resource (OER). This means the book is free (It was a good joke, right?). When Dr. Joshua Daniel became Director of First Year Composition in June of 2020, one of the first things he did was survey instructors and students to learn what they thought of the program. At that time, the program had two commercial textbooks students were required to purchase, and they were in negotiations with another textbook company to add a third. Many things became clear when he talked to students and instructors, but two points are relevant here: 1) instructors hated using the textbooks; 2) students hated the textbooks and generally did not do the reading. Dr. Daniel didn't think that is because instructors or students are lazy; he thought it was because commercial textbooks generally aren't very good. The reason for this is they, as products that need to be marketed and sold for profit, need to be as applicable as possible in as many contexts as possible. In other words, the textbooks the program was using stood the best chance of being profitable if they were equally as useful at OSU as they would be at OU, or UC Davis, or NYU. See the problem? Even though many commercial textbooks are quite good, by being applicable in so many contexts, they are never as good as they could be in any specific context. This book was built by and for the instructor of this course, an entrepreneur and practicing professional in her field. Moreover, when we find problems, we get to update it as you go (none of that, "Do I have to purchase the third edition, or can I get by with the second edition?").

So that's a reason to embrace Open Education: the textbooks are better. Here is another. Education is both a right for every human being and a responsibility for every democratic nation. Speaking as a 90's child now staggered by student loan debt, Joshua Daniel comments with certainty you are already paying more than enough for your education, and textbooks for your courses, when possible, should not add to that burden. All told, if you calculate the three textbooks previously in use for the first year composition program, students were spending just under half a million dollars per academic year on commercial textbooks. This for textbooks that instructors hated and students did not read. Not the best investment, at least not for us. Dr. Daniel believes all of you have a right to pursue education as far as you wish, and a small way we can help enable that is to remove as many barriers to entry as possible. Dr. Daniel was a first-generation college student. He grew

up on a farm in Mississippi. Both of his parents had to drop out of high school for work, and none of his siblings were able to pursue higher education. When he arrived at my first undergraduate institution (he bounced around quite a few before he managed to graduate) he was lost and straight up broke. He dropped more than one course simply because he could not afford the textbooks. Many of your instructors have similar stories to this. For this reason as well as others, the instructor of this course is committed to removing the cost of commercial textbooks as a barrier to your education.

“Open Education at Oklahoma State University” licensed CC-BY is adapted from “[Introduction](#) to *Who Teaches Writing*” by Joshua Daniels, licensed CC-BY. It has been modified for voice and customized for non-textbook specific use.

Accessibility Statement

OSU Libraries and Oklahoma State University believe that education must be available to everyone; this means supporting the creation of free, open, and accessible educational resources. We are actively committed to increasing the accessibility and usability of the textbooks we produce.

Accessibility features of the web version of this resource

The web version of *Who Teaches Writing* has been designed with accessibility in mind. It is our goal to optimize the resource for people using screen-reader technology. Content should be navigable using a keyboard, and links, headings, and tables should be formatted to work with screen readers. All images considered essential include alt-tags. Information is not conveyed by color alone, and there is an option to increase font size. (See tab on top right of screen titled, “Increase Font Size.”)

- It has been optimized for people who use screen-reader technology.
 - all content can be navigated using a keyboard.
 - links, headings, and tables are formatted to work with screen readers.
- All images in this guide are screenshots that are considered non-essential as they are described fully in the text. As such, they do not include alt tags.
- Information is not conveyed by color alone.
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Other file formats available

In addition to the web version, this book is available in a number of file formats including print PDF, EPUB (for eReaders), digital PDF and various editable files. [Here is a link](#) to

where you can download this book in another file format. Look for the Download this book drop-down menu to select the file type you want.

Known accessibility issues and areas for improvement

While we strive to ensure that this resource is as accessible and usable as possible, we might not always get it right. Any issues we identify will be listed below. There are currently no known issues.

List of Known Accessibility Issues

Location of Issue	Need for Improvement	Timeline	Work Around
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Accessibility standards

The web version of this resource has been designed to meet [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#), level AA. In addition, it attempts to follow all guidelines in [Appendix A: Checklist for Accessibility](#) of the [Accessibility Toolkit - 2nd Edition](#).

Let us know if you are having problems accessing this guide

We are always looking for ways to make our resources more accessible. If you have problems accessing this resource, please contact us to let us know, so we can fix the issue.

Please include the following information:

- The location of the problem by providing a web address or page description

- A description of the problem
- The computer, software, browser, and any assistive technology you are using that can help us diagnose and solve your issue
 - e.g., Windows 10, Google Chrome (Version 65.0.3325.181), NVDA screen reader

You can contact us by completing [this web form](#) or by sending an email to kathy.essmiller@okstate.edu.

This statement was last updated on June 23, 2022, by Kathy Essmiller.

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Reviews

This resource can also be found in [MERLOT](#), and [OERCommons](#). It has been endorsed by Open Illinois and selected to be included in the [Open Illinois Collection](#). This resource was also selected [for review](#) by the MERLOT Business Editorial Board, who gave it an overall rating of 4.5 stars out of 5.

“As a business instructor, this is one of the best social media books I have seen to date.”

“Overall strong resource for marketers and/or social media folks.”

“Easy to include in the right course/topic.”

“The material is written in such a way that it does not read like a textbook. The material is relevant as it discusses marketing after COVID. The content is interesting and easy to read. [This] could be used as part of a marketing course or a social media course.” Content Quality, MERLOT Business Editorial Board

“The book can be used as the primary course resource or as a supplement to a broader topic course. The book and topics promote conceptual understanding by starting with the concepts of marketing and moving into this particular type of marketing. The book could be used as supplemental reading or as the primary source. The book includes concept information as well as additional readings and activities.” Potential Effectiveness as a Teaching Tool, MERLOT Business Editorial Board

“The material is clearly defined for use and student. Site was in working order [and] is easy to navigate. Activities were included in appropriate sections and were relevant and easy to use. Generally meets accessibility requirements.” Ease of Use for Students and Faculty, MERLOT Business Editorial Board

OpenOKState Student Privacy Guidelines

OpenOKState and the OSU Libraries Library Teaching and Learning (T&L) Team* strive to enable engaging learning experiences for students using a variety of digital resources**. When you—the student—use these resources, you're likely to produce some data, such as data about how you used the resources (e.g., what you clicked on) or the content you produced while using the resources (e.g., answering a question).

In line with our values and our beliefs about student data privacy, our T&L team has created and closely follows a set of guidelines, made up of 5 core principles, for any type of student data we might come in contact with.

We aim to be exceedingly transparent with you about your data. On this page, you can learn about our team's values and beliefs regarding student data privacy as well as explore the 5 core principles of our Student Data Privacy Guidelines.

If you have any questions about these guidelines or about your data privacy, please don't hesitate to contact the Director of Library Teaching and Learning, Holly Reiter, at holly.reiter@okstate.edu.

*The data and Guidelines referenced on this page are unique to Library Teaching & Learning, and do not indicate guidelines for the Library or the University as a whole.

**For our purposes, digital learning objects include interactive tutorials, OStateTV or YouTube videos, the mobile Library Scavenger Hunt, visits to web pages that host these items, Pressbooks, and graduate student workshop registration.

Values and Beliefs

Values

Our Library Teaching and Learning team values:

- Prioritizing student needs and welfare
- Restoring and protecting equity and assisting students in doing the same
- Incorporating student voice and experiences and using it to shape our practice
- Providing “digital sanctuaries,” or digital environments that prioritize and promote student safety

Student Data Privacy Beliefs

As a Teaching and Learning team, we have foundational, ethical, scholarship-shaped beliefs about student data that have shaped our student data practice and guidelines.

We believe in prioritizing student data privacy to...

- Protect students
- Respect student autonomy
- Return power to students and establish equity
- Protect students’ intellectual freedom
- Build trust between students and Library Teaching and Learning
- Enable student data privacy literacy

Core Principles of Student Data Privacy

Responsibility

The Teaching and Learning team believes it’s our ethical responsibility to protect your data privacy. Specifically, we uphold the responsibility to:

- Ensure any collected data is handled carefully, used effectively, and used only for the stated purpose.
- Prevent unauthorized disclosure, use, or collection of your data
- Follow specific steps in data collection, use, storage, and destruction.

- Carry a shared understanding of our role in your data privacy.

Transparency

T&L believes you shouldn't have to wonder what's happening with your data, so we strive to be as open and transparent with you as possible. For each digital learning object we use, we'll share the following:

- What we are and are not collecting
- Why we're collecting it
- How it's being collected
- How it's being used
- Who has access to the data

To keep you safe, we strive to store and process all data according to best practices. We'll only collect the minimum amount of data necessary to achieve our stated objectives.

Privacy and Consent

T&L believes that privacy is your right. We strive to honor your privacy by never releasing any personally identifiable information unless it is to your instructor of record who is using the digital learning object within their class.

Occasionally, we may share aggregates of de-identified or anonymized data internally (e.g., with Library administrators) or externally (e.g., at Library or industry conferences). We do this to continuously improve effectiveness, evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching and learning program, or to help evolve and shape the practices of our profession. Aggregating the data means that the data is in summary form and no individual student can be identified.

Finally, we will never sell or otherwise commodify your data, and will always prioritize the use of vendors and resources that do the same.

Confidentiality and Security

T&L takes great strides to ensure that any and all data we collect is kept confidential and secure.

We use several vendors to help us create and host digital learning objects and collect analytics. Sometimes, these vendors have access to your personally identifiable information for operational purposes, so we intentionally investigate and select vendors that also prioritize confidentiality and security.

Access

Sometimes we do collect and store personally identifiable information so we can do things like retain records for your instructor of record or keep track of event registrations. In these cases, T&L believes you have the right to know what that data is, request corrections if you think it's incorrect, and request that it be deleted. Please note, we'll always make every effort to honor deletion requests, but sometimes we're required to retain records for various reasons. If that's the case, we'll be open about why we can't delete it now, and if and when it can be deleted.

Acknowledgements

Library Teaching and Learning would like to acknowledge several projects that helped inform our *Guidelines*. We extend our sincerest gratitude for the effort and dedication that individuals invested in these works.

- [The Open University's Student Policies and Regulations: Ethical Use of Student Data for Learning Analytics](#)
- [The JISC Code of Practice for Learning Analytics](#)
- [National Information Standards Organization's \(NISO\) Consensus Principles on User's Digital Privacy in Library, Publisher, and Software-Provider Systems](#)
- [Stanford CAROL & Ithaka S+R Project of Responsible Use of Student Data in Higher](#)

Education

- [UC Berkeley Research, Teaching, and Learning's Learning Data Principles](#)
- [University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Resolution Supporting Learning Data Privacy Principles and Practices](#)

Last updated 8/10/2021 by Kathy Essmiller.

PART I: MARKETING PRINCIPLES

Marketing in the Age of COVID-19 - When the World Went Digital and Toilet Paper Became Gold

CHERYL LAWSON

So, remember when COVID-19 hit and the world turned upside down? Yeah, me too. We had to change the way we lived and worked in the blink of an eye. And boy, did we realize how vital social media and digital platforms were for our professional and personal lives. Just think about companies like Zoom, Instacart, TikTok, and YouTube – they were the real MVPs during the pandemic. Let's dive into how the global crisis shook up marketing and made social media the star of the show.

1.1 Embracing the Digital Life (and Hoarding Toilet Paper)

When the pandemic struck, we quickly learned that working from home was the new norm. We didn't need to be at the office to get stuff done – all we needed was a laptop and a decent internet connection (and maybe some pants, but who's checking?).

Oh, and speaking of the pandemic, can we talk about how we all suddenly became obsessed with toilet paper? It turns out, people were using 40% more of it while stuck at home ([source](#)). That's a lot of TP, folks. But let's get back to the topic at hand...



Illustration 201534357 / Business © Regina Tolgyesi | Dreamstime.com

1.2 Social Media: Our Lifeline in Lockdown

As we hunkered down in our homes, social media became more crucial than ever. It was our connection to the outside world, our source of news, and a way to keep in touch with friends and family. Businesses caught on, and those who hadn't already embraced social media marketing were suddenly scrambling to get on board.

Let me give you a personal example. I've been producing an annual social media conference since 2011, and we were all set to celebrate our 10th anniversary in March 2020. Talk about bad timing, right? With just a few weeks to spare, I had to make the tough call to postpone the conference until September (because, you know, maybe the pandemic would be over by then... oh, how naive we were).

But here's the silver lining: between March and September, the mobile app we'd been using as a bonus feature for our conference – Whova – became our saving grace. It created a community for event organizers like myself, where we could swap best practices for transitioning our events from in-person to virtual. And you know what? Even though we couldn't all meet up in Tulsa like we'd planned, our virtual conference went off without a hitch, thanks to Zoom, Vimeo, and Whova.

So there you have it – a firsthand example of how social media and digital platforms

swooped in to save the day during the chaos of COVID-19. And if that's not a testament to their power, I don't know what is.

1.3 What Is Marketing?

Alright, let's get down to the nitty-gritty: what the heck is marketing, anyway? I know what you're thinking – isn't it just selling and advertising? Well, hold on to your hats, because there's a lot more to it than that.

The [American Marketing Association](#) gives us this definition:

“The activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.”

In plain English, marketing pros help businesses win over new customers by offering them something they can't resist – and then keeping them happy so they'll stick around and spread the word. It's all about creating a value proposition that's simply too good to pass up.

1.4 What is Marketing Today? With Seth Godin

In Seth Godin's video “What is Marketing Today?”, he emphasizes that marketing has shifted from being a side effect to the core of what businesses do. In the past, companies would simply produce average products and rely on marketing teams to sell them. However, today's marketing landscape is centered around telling a story, connecting with customers, and focusing on how products can make a difference in people's lives.

Godin argues that old-school marketing, which involved buying mass media ads to reach average consumers, is fading away. The internet has turned into a medium of micro-segments, where companies can no longer buy attention in the same way they did with TV advertising. Instead, businesses need to pick their niche, measure when necessary, and focus on building connections, trust, and attention.

Godin emphasizes the importance of understanding your “why” but also recognizing that it's often a general concept. The key is to identify who you seek to serve and make things better for them. By continuously improving, earning trust, and transforming

attention into a promise and a brand, you can achieve success regardless of your profession.

Lastly, Godin stresses the responsibility that comes with marketing, as every action has an effect. Marketers must own the consequences of their campaigns and strive to create products and messages they're proud of. By focusing on making things better and inventing products that positively impact the world, marketers can contribute to meaningful change.

Exercise: Watch the video in class



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=231#oembed-1>

[What is Marketing Today? With Seth Godin](#)

1.2 What Is Digital Marketing?

At a high level, digital marketing refers to advertising delivered through digital channels such as search engines, websites, social media, email, and mobile apps. Using these online media channels, digital marketing is the method by which companies endorse goods, services, and brands. Consumers heavily rely on digital means to research products. For example, Think with Google marketing insights found that 48% of consumers start their inquiries on search engines, whereas 33% prefer to consult brand websites and the remaining 26% consumers search within mobile applications.

While modern day digital marketing is an enormous system of channels to which marketers simply must onboard their brands, advertising online is much more complex than the channels alone. In order to achieve the true potential of digital marketing, marketers have to dig deep into today's vast and intricate cross-channel world to discover strategies that make an impact through engagement marketing. Engagement marketing is the method of forming meaningful interactions with potential and returning customers based on the data you collect over time. By engaging customers in a digital landscape, you build brand awareness, set yourself as an industry thought leader, and place your business at the forefront when the customer is ready to buy.

By implementing an omnichannel digital marketing strategy, marketers can collect valuable insights into target audience behaviors while opening the door to new methods of customer engagement. Additionally, companies can expect to see an increase in retention. According to a report by Invesp, companies with strong omnichannel customer engagement strategies can retain around 89% of their customers as compared to companies with weaker omnichannel programs that have a retention rate of just 33%.

As for the future of digital marketing, we can expect to see a continued increase in the variety of wearable devices available to consumers. Forbes also forecasts that social media will become increasingly conversational in the B2B space, video content will be refined for search engine optimization (SEO) purposes, and email marketing will become even more personalized.

“Digital is at the core of everything in marketing today—it has gone from ‘one of the things marketing does’ to ‘THE thing that marketing does.’”

– Sanjay Dholakia, Former Chief Marketing Officer, Marketo

QUIZ



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=231#h5p-1>

How Many P's are in Marketing Now?

CHERYL LAWSON

While we're learning Marketing concepts, let's talk about the Marketing Mix. Even though the marketing world has gone digital, this "old-school" concept is very relevant today. We're talking about the 4 P's of Marketing. First, who do we have to thank for this? Neil Borden first came up with the term Marketing Mix, but it was Jerome McCarthy from Notre Dame University who really made it famous. He called it "the Four P's of Marketing" in his guide, "Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach".

The legendary marketing guru, Philip Kotler, said it best: "Marketing Mix is the set of controllable variables that a firm can use to influence the buyer's response." What's cool about this is that digital and social media marketing still use these age-old concepts. We're just adapting them to new tools and methods, making them work in the digital world. So, the 4 P's are still alive and kicking, even in the age of Instagram and TikTok!



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[Dmytro121287 |](#)
[Dreamstime.com](#)

Let's dive into the 4 P's of marketing, keeping it short and sweet:

Product: This is the good or service you're offering to your customers. It includes everything from the design, features, packaging, and even the product life cycle. The goal is to create something that solves a problem or fulfills a need.

Price: This is how much you charge for your product. It's about finding the sweet spot

between making a profit and offering value to your customers. Factors like production costs, competition, and perceived value all come into play when setting the right price.

Place: This is where and how you distribute your product to reach your target audience. It includes choosing the right channels, such as online stores, brick-and-mortar shops, or both. The goal is to make your product accessible and convenient for your customers to buy.

Promotion: This is how you communicate your product's value to your target audience. It involves a mix of marketing strategies like advertising, public relations, social media, and content marketing. The goal is to create awareness, generate interest, and ultimately, persuade people to buy your product.

EXERCISE - ESSAY



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=84#h5p-2>

Applying Basic Marketing Principles to Social Media Marketing

CHERYL LAWSON



Some people are confused about social media, but it's essential to understand that social marketing has been around for a long time. Digital and social media marketing are not new philosophies; they are traditional practices adapted to new tools.

Historically, business was conducted in social settings like door-to-door sales or marketplaces. These gatherings allowed people to share ideas and communicate across networks. Similarly, event marketing created connections between buyers and sellers

through dealer conferences or even extravagant parties attended by influential individuals.

Nowadays, many of these connections happen online through platforms like LinkedIn or Facebook. However, some businesspeople shy away from using these modern technologies as they appear daunting compared to traditional methods such as television, radio, newspaper advertising or direct mail campaigns.

The ease of digital marketing allows businesses to quickly share their stories by taking pictures or conducting interviews with just a smartphone. Despite the low cost of entry into this form of promotion, many entrepreneurs still find it challenging due to lack of education in marketing principles and strategy creation.

Social media is simply another way to market a product or service using traditional theories adapted for new mediums. Each platform has its own language and style which requires tailored communication strategies for success.

The main difference between traditional and modern-day digital/social media marketing lies in the technology available today rather than any significant change in underlying principles.

Before we move forward, let's go back to some of our earlier definitions of marketing by Seth Godin;

“Marketing is at the core of what we do. It is the story you tell, who you're telling it to, and why people are going to buy your product or service.”

He also said, ***“Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make, but about the stories you tell”.***

The 4Ps Reimagined: Translating Marketing Mix to Social Media

While social media marketing is relatively recent in the grand scheme of things, marketing itself isn't new at all. Applying foundational marketing concepts to social media is not just essential, but also incredibly effective. By grounding your social media strategy in these tried-and-true marketing principles, you'll be better equipped to leverage these platforms and communicate your brand message powerfully and persuasively.

Product is where we begin. (When I use 'product' here, I mean product or service) It's critical to understand what sets your product apart and how it enriches your customer's life. These unique insights allow you to effectively utilize platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, or YouTube to tell your product story. Keep in mind that savvy customers today

are not just buying a product; they're investing in your brand's narrative, which can include your connection to community, your social and environmental responsibility, and or your family connection to the product.

Then, let's discuss **Price**. This isn't just about the dollar value; it's about the perceived value your product delivers. Striking the right balance in pricing is paramount. You don't want to scare off customers by being too expensive, nor do you want to sell yourself short. E-commerce and social media have changed the pricing landscape, allowing you to operate with leaner margins and potentially pass the savings onto your customers. Techniques such as Dropshipping and Just-In-Time manufacturing can be powerful tools in your arsenal to manage costs.

Now, we move on to **Place**. This term encapsulates all the platforms where customers can find or access your offerings. Social media has revolutionized this aspect, making it possible for customers to shop from their living room while allowing you to engage, respond, and improve the customer experience in real-time.

Last, but definitely not least, **Promotion**. Traditional marketing techniques still have their place, but the digital landscape, especially social media, has opened up new possibilities. You can foster lasting relationships with your customers, earn their trust, and transform them into advocates for your brand. Promoting your brand on social media, optimizing your website for search engines, and leveraging email marketing can be cost-effective ways to enhance your visibility and reach.

As you craft your social media strategy, keep these principles at the forefront. Each one provides a lens to view your product, your customers, and the market. They aren't mere steps, but ongoing considerations that can help your brand connect, engage, and grow in the dynamic world of social media.

What's it All For?

CHERYL LAWSON

In the complex world of marketing, social media has emerged as a powerful tool, greatly influencing tactics and strategies. Businesses are constantly urged to invest in social media marketing, leaving many to question why it garners such emphasis amidst a plethora of alternatives. Unveiling the benefits of social media for businesses, we shall explore the tangible returns one can expect from a robust social media strategy.

Social media allows you to convey the narrative behind your product, appealing to your audience's emotions and values, thereby spreading your brand message. Crafting compelling visuals or stories around the genesis of your business, your team, or products can foster a strong brand reputation.

A significant advantage of social media marketing lies in its cost-effectiveness compared to traditional marketing approaches. It provides a level playing field for small and medium-sized businesses to compete with established brands without exorbitant expenses, thereby offering excellent return on investment.

Engaging your followers with captivating content not only retains them as loyal customers but can also turn them into brand ambassadors, extending your reach to their network. This organic promotion can reap rich dividends for your brand.

Social media's targeted advertising capability ensures that your investment is put to optimal use by reaching your desired audience. Moreover, retargeting options help keep your brand at the forefront of potential customers' minds, gently nudging them towards conversion. As we delve deeper into the purpose and significance of an impactful social media presence for businesses, it's important to highlight six key benefits that underscore why so many businesses prioritize this form of digital marketing.

These advantages are integral to a thriving online presence, influencing various aspects of a business's growth and success. They include SEO and Search Engine Optimization, Increasing Website Traffic, Decreasing Customer Acquisition Cost, Direct-to-Consumer engagement, PR and Brand Awareness, and Lead Generation. Each of these elements plays a crucial role in leveraging the power of social media to advance your brand and drive results.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a powerful digital marketing tool that focuses on increasing your brand's visibility on search engines. With the right SEO strategies in place, your social media platforms and website can rank higher in search engine results. This is crucial as studies show that the top results on search engine pages get the majority of clicks. By optimizing your social media profiles and creating SEO-friendly content, you can enhance your brand's online presence and reach.

Increase Website Traffic

Social media marketing can significantly drive traffic to your website. By sharing engaging content, promotional offers, blogs, product launches, and more on your social media platforms, you can entice your followers to click through to your website. This increased traffic not only brings in potential customers but also contributes to improving your site's SEO rankings. Over time, a robust social media strategy can help create a cycle of higher search rankings and increased website traffic.

Decrease Customer Acquisition Cost

Social media is a cost-effective platform for reaching potential customers and nurturing relationships with existing ones. The cost of acquiring customers through social media is often lower than traditional marketing channels due to its organic reach and precise targeting. Moreover, through retargeting capabilities, you can re-engage users who have shown interest in your brand or product, further reducing the cost of customer acquisition.

Direct to Consumer (Avoid Traditional Wholesale and Third-Party Sellers)

In traditional business models, products often go through several intermediaries such as wholesalers and retailers before reaching the end consumer. This can inflate the final price of the product and dilute the brand's control over the customer experience.

By using social media as a direct-to-consumer channel, you can sidestep these intermediaries, lowering costs and retaining more control over the customer journey. This model allows you to understand your customers' preferences, needs, and behaviors in real-time, enabling you to tailor your products and services accordingly. In addition, direct interaction with consumers can foster a stronger sense of community and loyalty around your brand.

PR Brand Awareness

Public Relations (PR) and brand awareness go hand in hand. Social media provides a platform where businesses can not only promote their products or services but also shape public perception by sharing their company's mission, values, and stories. It is an opportunity to humanize your brand and build a reputation that resonates with your audience.

Social media platforms are ideal for conducting PR campaigns. They allow you to reach a wider audience and give you the opportunity to engage directly with them. This could involve answering customer queries, addressing concerns, or simply thanking them for their support. Such interaction fosters a positive image of your brand and enhances your reputation.

Moreover, social media enables real-time communication during crisis situations, allowing you to manage your reputation effectively. By proactively responding to issues and demonstrating your commitment to customer satisfaction, you can maintain and even improve your brand image.

Lead Generation

Lead generation is another key benefit of social media marketing. Social media platforms offer various tools and features that can assist in collecting potential leads. This includes call-to-action buttons, direct messaging, and ad campaigns specifically designed to capture user information.

By sharing engaging content and building relationships with your audience on social media, you can attract potential customers who may be interested in your products or services. Once these potential leads are identified, they can be nurtured through targeted content and personalized engagement, ultimately guiding them through the sales funnel.

Moreover, social media platforms offer advanced targeting options, allowing you to reach out to the right audience who are more likely to become quality leads. In this way, social media can efficiently and effectively enhance your lead generation efforts.

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Social Media Marketing. A Brief History

CHERYL LAWSON

Social media is a broad term that encompasses a wide range of online platforms and tools that allow users to connect and share content with each other. The history of social media is long and complex, but it can be traced back to the early days of the internet.

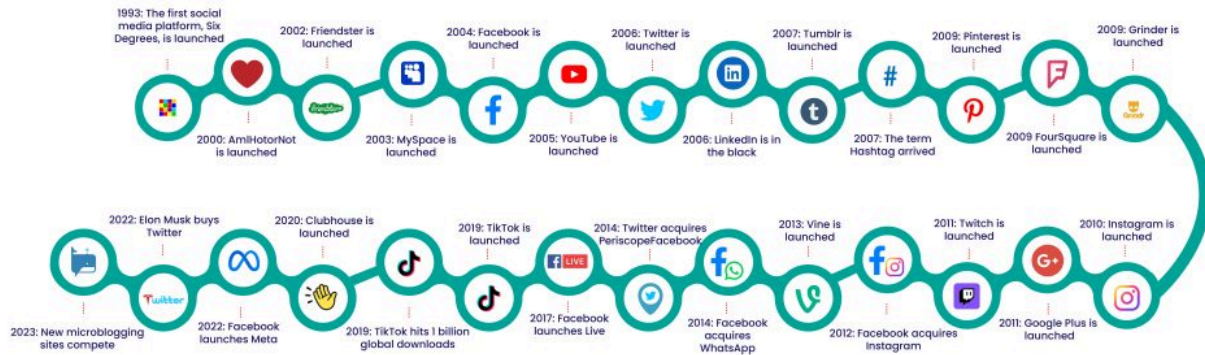
One of the earliest examples of social media was Usenet, which was created in 1982. Usenet was a system of discussion forums where users could post messages and reply to each other. Another early example of social media was Six Degrees, which was launched in 1997. Six Degrees was a social networking site that allowed users to connect with friends and family members.

In the early 2000s, social media began to take off. In 2004, Facebook was launched, and it quickly became one of the most popular social media platforms in the world. In 2005, YouTube was launched, and it revolutionized the way people watch and share videos. In 2006, Twitter was launched, and it became the go-to platform for sharing short updates and news.

In the years since, social media has continued to evolve. New platforms have been launched, and existing platforms have been updated with new features. Social media has also become increasingly important in our lives. We use it to stay connected with friends and family, to learn about current events, and to share our thoughts and ideas with the world.

Social media has had a profound impact on our society. It has changed the way we communicate, the way we consume news, and the way we interact with the world around us. It is still too early to say what the future holds for social media, but it is clear that it will continue to play an important role in our lives and our businesses.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIMELINE



Social Media Tulsa

Storytime

Let me tell you about December 2005. I saw a Business Week cover headline, “The Myspace Generation,” and it just clicked. I was only a year into starting my own event planning biz, and my new client was a dance conference who’s audience was 18-25-year-old women. Myspace was their jam – seriously, it was the new mall hangout.

So, what did I do? I hopped on the Myspace train and used it for the dance conference to dish out resources like tryout dates, dance makeup, and clothing recommendations. We became the ultimate one-stop-shop for all things dance and our efforts resulted in the conference being in the black for the first time.

A bunch of us Gen Xers credit Myspace for teaching us HTML back in the day. It’s crazy to think about it now with TikTok ruling the roost, but Myspace was our first taste of being social online.

Do You Even Google?

CHERYL LAWSON

Get ready for this chapter, “Do You Even Google?”, where we dive into the significance of search engine optimization (SEO) and how it impacts everything we do online. Our main goal? Make sure our social media posts and website content are super easy to find.

Let’s not forget platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, which have their own search engines for users to discover content. Fun fact: YouTube is the world’s second-largest search engine, giving birth to the term “YouTube University.”

Oh, and can we talk about “near me” searches on mobile devices? It’s a game-changer when people are hunting for products or services.

Big brain business name  pic.twitter.com/iY1lhi4gAJ

— Alicia Tatone (@AliciaTatone) [March 28, 2023](#)

As savvy business owners and marketers, we need to know how folks find us online. Sure, ROI and engagement metrics matter, but creating searchable content should be top of mind.

That means getting found on big-time search engines like Google and Bing, as well as individual social networks. And hey, let’s not forget about Google Business profiles. Though not technically social media, they can be part of our social media strategies. Pop those eye-catching social campaign creatives on your Google Business pages too! **Bottom line:** Optimize everything from image titles to alt text descriptions, so search engines can’t resist indexing your content.

In Class Exercise: Google yourself!

Google your name and take note of the results that show up. This activity can help you understand the importance of your online presence and how search engines present information about you. It can also encourage discussions about personal branding, digital footprints, and strategies to improve visibility in search results.

Creating SEO with Your Photos Using Flickr

Taking advantage of every SEO opportunity is crucial for your online visibility, and this includes optimizing your images. Using platforms like Flickr to host your photos allows you to enhance your photo SEO, as it provides fields for adding titles and descriptions to individual and bulk images. These additional details not only make your photos more accessible to people browsing the web but also to search engine algorithms. When uploading photos to your website, take the time to rename them using relevant keywords and phrases. This simple step ensures your images contribute positively to your website's SEO. Remember, every bit of "search engine juice" matters, and properly optimizing your photos can give you an edge in the increasingly visual digital landscape.



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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=90#h5p-7>

Wrapping up this section, let's discuss an invaluable tool that can help you stay informed and monitor your brand or personal brand online: Google Alerts.

Google Alerts is a free service provided by Google that allows you to set up alerts for specific keywords or phrases. When new content containing those keywords or phrases is published on the web, you'll receive an email notification. This tool is especially useful for discovering content to share on social media platforms, as well as keeping track of mentions about your brand or personal brand.

By setting up Google Alerts for your business name, industry keywords, or even your own name, you can keep a pulse on what's being said about you, your business, or your industry. This information can not only help you curate content to share with your audience, but it can also provide valuable insights into public perception and enable you to address any potential issues or concerns.



[“Google alerts.jpg”](#)
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Furthermore, Google Alerts can be a helpful tool for competitor analysis. By monitoring your competitors' online presence and content, you can gain insights into their marketing strategies, identify gaps or opportunities, and stay ahead of the game.

In summary, utilizing Google Alerts can be an essential part of your overall digital marketing and social media strategy. It allows you to stay informed, monitor your brand, find shareable content, and keep an eye on the competition. With just a few simple steps, you can set up alerts tailored to your needs and ensure you never miss out on vital information in the digital world.

PART 2: CRAFTING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

What Business Are You Even In?

CHERYL LAWSON

In this section, we'll dive into the art of crafting a rock-solid social media strategy that's custom-made for your business. But first things first: let's nail down what type of business you're running. Are you in the apparel game, living that lifestyle brand life, flexing your creative muscles, schooling folks in education, or hustling in the service or B2B/B2C support industry? Pinpointing your business type is crucial, but remember, you're not boxed in – think of how Amazon evolved from a mere online bookstore to an everything store.

Now, before we go all-in on marketing strategies (be it traditional or social media), we need to make sure we can explain our business in a way that's snappy and easy to grasp. No, you don't have to cram it all into a 30-second elevator pitch, but you should be able to convey your message clearly and efficiently across different organizations and industries. Your message should scream, "This is who we are, and this is why we do what we do!" Easy peasy.

So, what's next? Let's dig deeper into the components of a killer social media strategy. We'll talk about how to align your social media goals with your overall business objectives, define your target audience, and create content that speaks their language. We'll also explore the importance of analyzing your competition and staying on top of trends that are relevant to your industry.

And, of course, we'll dive into the nitty-gritty of choosing the right social media platforms and tools that suit your unique business needs. With the right blend of creativity, analytics, and good ol' fashioned hustle, you'll be well on your way to crafting a social media strategy that gets your message out there, engages your audience, and drives results for your business.

It's time to make your social media game unstoppable with a strategy that's tailored to your one-of-a-kind business. Let's do this!

Additional Reading

[Understanding the Business You Are In | by B. L. Teague | The Startup | Medium](#)

[New insights for new growth: What it takes to understand your customers today \(mckinsey.com\)](#)

Case Study: Amazon in 2023 By Sunil Gupta and Margaret L. Rodriguez

CHERYL LAWSON

I like to bring in the Harvard Business Publishing case [“Amazon in 2023” by Sunil Gupta and Margaret Rodriguez](#) to give students a solid, real-world example.

Abstract: *Amazon kicked off its journey in July 1995, selling books online. Fast forward to 2020, and it’s a digital behemoth raking in over \$280 billion in yearly sales. A significant chunk of its growth comes from branching out into various businesses that some might consider unrelated. So, is Amazon spreading itself too thin, or is it strategically positioning itself for future success?*

Now, your students might not have access to the actual case, but let me break down some core concepts from the authors, so everyone can grasp the essentials without the case. Plus, this’ll help anyone teaching with the textbook to integrate the case more effectively.

In today’s market landscape, broad differentiation – being cheaper or better – is no longer enough to succeed. The digital era requires businesses to connect consumers and products through network effects and complementary offerings. This “winner-take-all” strategy creates connections between different industries, as seen with Amazon Studios videos offered for free with Prime memberships, leading to increased spending on their e-commerce platform.

Sunil Gupta, a professor at Harvard Business School, has spent over 12 years researching how technologies are changing consumer behavior and business strategies. His case study “Amazon in 2023” examines Amazon’s expansion into seemingly unrelated businesses and raises questions about whether this lack of focus is detrimental or if it’s positioning the company for future success.

Gupta emphasizes that differentiation alone is not enough in the digital era. Instead, businesses need to connect consumers and products through network effects and complementary offerings. This approach allows companies to be a “razor” in one industry and a “blade” in another, such as Amazon offering free videos through Prime to increase spending on their e-commerce platform.

When teaching this case, Gupta encourages pushing students to think more deeply

about Amazon's various ventures and question who the company is competing with. This case study can be easily taught online and appeals to a wide range of student groups. The key is to enjoy the case, stay updated on the latest developments, and engage in meaningful discussions about Amazon's evolving strategies.



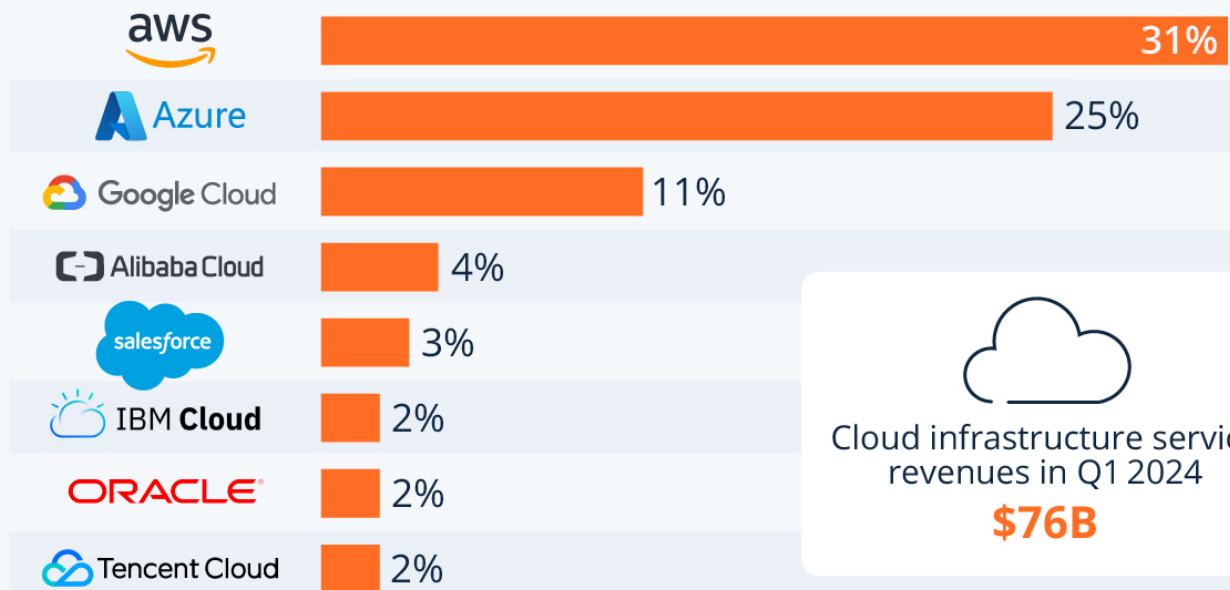
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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=310#oembed-1>

In this 2010 interview with Charlie Rose, Jeff Bezos, the founder and former CEO of Amazon, shares his insights on Amazon's competitive advantage, how they approach competition. Bezos explains that Amazon's approach to maintaining a competitive edge consists of three key factors: a wide selection, low prices, and fast, convenient, reliable delivery. He also emphasizes the importance of being customer-obsessed, focusing on the customer more than on competitors. Bezos highlights that Amazon's online business model allows for cost structure advantages and that their purchasing power is now comparable to that of Walmart. Additionally, Bezos it's almost scary how much foresight Bezos had regarding Amazon Web Services

Amazon Maintains Cloud Lead as Microsoft Edges Closer

Worldwide market share of leading cloud infrastructure service providers in Q1 2024*



* Includes platform as a service (PaaS) and infrastructure as a service (IaaS) as well as hosted private cloud services

Source: Synergy Research Group



statista

You will find more infographics at [Statista](https://www.statista.com)

Questions for discussion or quiz

- What business is Amazon in? Are they spreading themselves too thin or are they well-positioned for the future?
- Who are Amazon's competitors? And what is Amazon's competitive advantage?

- What should traditional retailers like Best Buy do to compete with Amazon?

Who Is Your Customer?

CHERYL LAWSON

Creating Buyer Persona

NAME: Chris **AGE:** 22

FROM: Epe, Nigeria

LIVES: Rural Epe, Nigeria

OCCUPATION: Student (Final Year)

BIOGRAPHY

Chris has lived in rural Epe his entire life and now attends the local satellite campus of Lagos State University, where the entrance requirements were less rigorous. He is studying mathematics but would like to one day teach history. Chris enjoys discussing politics and history with friends and would like to share this interest with others.

Heated debates about politics are a key reason Chris goes online—he wants to be informed in order to show off his knowledge and win arguments. His other main motivation is sports. He loves chatting with his Epe Arsenal supporters group on WhatsApp and uses Livescores to get updates whenever he misses a live match due to school or church commitments. The only websites he knows by name are sports sites: Goal.com, ESPN.com, and the like.

Chris uses Facebook to connect with secondary school friends who have left Epe and WhatsApp to chat with them—doing so saves him a great deal on airtime costs. He is also in a WhatsApp school study group but doesn't spend much time on it.

Although Chris likes going online, he is annoyed by frequent internet service disruptions. He uses Etisalat, one of the better networks in rural Epe, but its service quality really depends on location. Around his own home, Chris knows exactly where to stand and how to hold his phone for the best reception.

Chris struggles to articulate what Wikipedia is (“an app?”) but appreciates how it organizes information. “I like Wikipedia because it gives me all the background I need, especially for profiles of people.” Wikipedia is his go-to source for resolving arguments with friends, e.g., the height of a famous footballer. For schoolwork, Wikipedia is not a default source; Chris only uses it when it appears on the first page of a set of search results. Once he clicks through to the Wikipedia page, he will scan headings and selectively read (or copy) content for assignments; he doesn't look at the references.

DEVICE USE

XOLO Q700s Android Smartphone
PRIMARY USE: Sports news and updates, voice calling, instant messaging, and social media.
NETWORK: Etisalat: N500 (\$1.80) for airtime and N200 (\$0.70) for 200MB of data each week.

Tecno T345 (single sim)
PRIMARY USE: Voice calling.
NETWORK: Glo: N100 (\$0.35) every two weeks.

Hewlett Packard
PRIMARY USE: Web surfing. Research and writing for thesis. Downloading and watching movies.
DETAILS: Takes laptop to the campus WiFi Zone or nearby cybercafes to access the internet.

Let's talk about creating customer personas! A customer persona is like a character sketch of your perfect customer. You base it on actual data from your current customers and research into your target market. Knowing your customers' needs, wants, and pain points helps you tailor marketing and sales strategies that really click with them.

So, how do you create a customer persona? First, gather data about your target market. You can get this from:

- Customer surveys
- Website analytics
- Social media insights
- Industry reports

Now, with your data in hand, let's build that persona. Give them a name and a job title. Then, dive into the details:

- Demographics: Age, gender, location, income level, and so on.
- Psychographics: Interests, hobbies, values, and more.
- Challenges: What big hurdles does your persona face?
- Goals: What's your persona aiming for?
- Pain points: What bothers or frustrates your persona?
- Needs: What does your persona need to reach their goals?

With your customer persona complete, use it to shape your marketing and sales strategies. For instance, craft targeted content that speaks to their interests, or develop sales pitches that address their specific needs and pain points.

Creating customer personas is super helpful for boosting your marketing and sales results. By really understanding your target market, you can design campaigns that convert leads into customers more effectively.

A few extra tips for creating customer personas:

- Get different perspectives by involving multiple people in the process.
- Be as specific as possible—the more details, the better.
- Keep your personas up-to-date as your target market evolves.

Storytime:

Here's a personal example of how creating customer personas can be a valuable exercise. When I was working as the marketing director for the Route 66 Marathon in Tulsa, we started working on our customer personas. The good news was that through the registration process, we already had a lot of information about each of our participants. A lot of that information even showed up on their runner bib, such as which distance they

were running or walking, If they were a member of a running club, which start corral they were in. Being in corral A or B meant they were more likely a fast runner, while C or D indicated they were either one of our “party runners,” back-of-the-packers, or they simply registered late.



During the registration process, we also asked if they would like to participate in our bloggers/social media panel and inquired about their job. So, by looking at photos on a plane ride back from a conference, we were able to identify and create our personas. By understanding the different types of participants, we could then create targeted marketing campaigns that catered to the various runner profiles, enhancing our overall marketing strategy.

In summary, gathering as much information as possible about your customers from the very beginning is crucial to creating effective customer personas. The more data you have about their demographics, psychographics, challenges, goals, pain points, and needs, the better you can tailor your marketing and sales strategies to resonate with them. By understanding your customers' unique characteristics, you can create targeted campaigns that drive engagement and conversions, ultimately leading to a more successful business.

How to Create a Buyer Persona



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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=92#oembed-1>

Free Buyer Person Template by SEMrush: <http://smr.sh/Kdc>

Customer Personas and D.I.S.C

CHERYL LAWSON

I have been using the DISC (D-I-S-C) method for many years in various classes, ranging from event planning to social media marketing. This technique is not only helpful for understanding how to communicate with customers, coworkers, colleagues, or family members but also enables us to know ourselves better.

Early in my career at General Motors, we participated in a Myers-Briggs personality style assessment. It was an eye-opening experience as I began to understand my communication preferences and recognize that others may have different styles. People want to be treated according to their preferences.

At Fleetwood RV, we incorporated DISC training into our sales system. Understanding your own communication style and identifying the customer's profile (whether they are D, I, S or C) greatly aids the sales process and helps tailor presentations accordingly.

This same concept applies in marketing when identifying customer personas. Recognizing that our preferred communication style may differ from our target audience allows us to adapt our marketing visuals, tone of voice and overall presentation on platforms such as websites or social media pages like Instagram and Facebook.

Utilizing the DISC method can significantly improve your understanding of yourself and others while enhancing your professional skills in areas like sales and marketing. There are numerous places where you can take this test – even simple versions can be found online for use during class or while reading at home.

THE SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDING:

In the space provided below, you'll find different behaviors relating to a specific situation. Your task is to rank these behaviors based on how well they represent you, from most to least characteristic. Start from the left and assign "4" points to the behavior that best describes you in that situation. Then, assign "3" points to the next most characteristic behavior, followed by "2" points for the next one, and finally, "1" point for the behavior that least resembles you. Download the [survey](#)

EXAMPLE

3 Directing 4 Influencing 2 Steady 1 Cautious

	Dan		Iris		Shelia		Curtis
	Self-Certain		Optimistic		Deliberate		Restrained
	Adventurous		Enthusiastic		Predictable		Logical
	Decisive		Open		Patient		Analytical
	Fearless		Impulsive		Stabilizing		Precise
	Restless		Emotional		Protective		Doubting
	Competitive		Persuading		Accommodating		Curious
	Assertive		Talkative		Modest		Tactful
	Experimenting		Charming		Easy-Going		Consistent
	Forceful		Sensitive		Sincere		Perfectionists
	TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COUNTING AND GRAPHING:

First, sum up the numbers in each of the four columns. Write the total number for each column in the empty space labeled “TOTAL” at the bottom of the column. To ensure accuracy, add all the columns together. The sum of all four columns should equal 100.

Next, plot the numbers from the totals columns on the graph provided below. For instance, if the total number in the “D” column was 15, you would place the plotting point (dot) halfway between the 14 and the 16 on the graph for that dimension.

D	I	S	C
40	40	40	40
38	38	38	38
36	36	36	36
34	34	34	34
32	32	32	32
30	30	30	30
28	28	28	28
26	26	26	26
24	24	24	24
22	22	22	22
20	20	20	20
18	18	18	18
16	16	16	16
14	14	14	14
12	12	12	12
10	10	10	10

After completing your graph, circle the highest visual point. This represents your strongest behavioral characteristic. The higher you score on the graph, the more intensity you bring to this particular behavioral characteristic. Look at the letter at the graph on page one which corresponds to the highest visual point. Using this letter look up your behavioral style

(D=Dan, I=Iris, S=Sheila, C=Curtis) Watch the video below for explanations or click here.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=325#oembed-1>

D=Dominance, I=Influencing, S=Steady, C=Cautious

Okay, now that you've got a handle on DISC styles, it's time to think about how you can apply this to your customers and enhance your marketing strategy. Using DISC styles can

help you pinpoint the right social media platforms to reach your customers, and tailor your content, tone, and style to match their preferences. Let's explore this:

If your customers fall into the **'S' or Steady Shelia** category, they might appreciate the familiar communities on Facebook or the professional connections on LinkedIn. They value consistency, patience, and long-term relationships. So, platforms that facilitate regular, meaningful engagement could be their digital hangout spots.

Those in the **'C' or Compliant Curtis** group are all about details and clarity. They might be drawn to the defined guidelines and clear communication of LinkedIn or the fast-paced, information-dense environment of Twitter. These platforms could be their go-to sources for in-depth information and precise updates. You might also find Cs in the [Dataisbeautiful subReddit](#).

For our **'D' or Dominant Dan** category customers, quick, result-oriented platforms like Instagram or TikTok could be their arena. They're dynamic, decisive, and enjoy seeing the impact of their actions. These platforms can offer them immediate engagement, inspiration, and opportunities to take action.

And for the **'I' or Influencing Iris** types, the networking-friendly environments of Instagram or Twitter could be their stomping grounds. They're all about expressing their thoughts and making connections. These platforms allow them to network widely and share their influential ideas.

Remember, these are general tendencies and real-world preferences can vary. People might engage with multiple platforms for different reasons. So, it's crucial for you as a marketer to keep your approach flexible and adaptable. Monitor your engagement, adjust your strategy, and most importantly, keep learning about your customers!

Incorporating DISC into your customer personas can give you valuable insight into how your customers think, behave, and communicate. With this in your tool kit, you can create targeted, relevant content and connect with your customers in a way that resonates with them. It's all about meeting them where they are and speaking their language.



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Competition Check

CHERYL LAWSON

“If you make the opportunity, you’ll be the first in the position to take advantage of it.”

– Biz Stone Co-Founder of Twitter

let’s dive into the realm of social media competitive analysis. As a business, you’ve got competition, those pesky folks selling similar products or services as you, targeting the same crowd. With e-commerce, these competitors aren’t just on the next block, they could be across the globe.

The web has removed geographical barriers, exposing your business to a worldwide wrestling ring. Your competition isn’t just the store down the street; it’s also that trendy online shop based halfway around the globe. And believe me, their Instagram ads can be pretty slick.

Ignoring what your competitors are doing on social media? Not an option. It’s about learning their tactics, their successes, their failures. It’s about staying one step ahead. But this isn’t about being creepy, spying, or doing anything sketchy. It’s just good business sense.

Your competition could be publicly listed companies whose financial reports are easily accessible. You get a peek at their financial health, and you know what you’re up against. It’s not always a David vs Goliath scenario; often, the smaller, more innovative companies outperform their larger competitors.

When we chat about competition, it’s not always a bad thing. It keeps you on your toes, pushing you to improve your product, your customer service. Plus, you get to learn from those who’ve been around the block.

So, who are these competitors? Here’s the breakdown:

- **Direct Competition:** These are your most obvious competitors. If you’re selling pizzas, it’s the other pizza joints. Picture the Pepsi-Coca-Cola rivalry.
- **Indirect Competition:** These are a bit sneakier. If you have a toy shop downtown, your indirect competition might be that online toy store who’s also targeting your city’s kiddos.
- **Replacement Competition:** This one’s tricky. It’s about the alternatives, the substitutes. The folks who sell something different, but it can still replace what

you're offering. Like Kindle becoming the replacement for traditional books.

Coke vs. Pepsi The Ultimate Rivalry

The soft drink industry has been dominated by two cola giants for decades – Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Their fierce rivalry has fueled some of the most memorable marketing campaigns, and among them, none is more iconic than the “Pepsi Challenge.” This bold initiative, launched by Pepsi in the mid-1970s, invited consumers to participate in a blind taste test to determine which cola they preferred. The results became a pivotal moment in advertising history and sparked an ongoing debate about brand loyalty and consumer behavior. In the video, “Marketing Experts Break Down the Coke vs. Pepsi Rivalry” by Vanity Fair, experts delve into the dynamics of this legendary rivalry, revealing key insights and strategies that continue to shape the world of marketing today. Buckle up, as we take you through a rollercoaster ride of one of the most heated battles in the business landscape.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=94#oembed-1>

Why Perform Competitor Analysis

Why should you bother to perform a social media competitor analysis for your strategy?

First and foremost, understanding your competition gives you an understanding of your customers. It's easy for businesses to get tunnel vision, focusing on their strengths while forgetting to take a look around at what's happening in the marketplace. Competitive analysis, especially on social media, gives you a fresh set of eyes and a clearer perspective on what your customers want and need.

Secondly, it helps you identify potential threats. Keeping tabs on your competitors' social media activities gives you a heads-up on potential threats lurking around the corner. Whether it's a new market entrant or a disruptive technology, a thorough analysis of your competitors' social media activities will alert you well in advance.

Thirdly, it allows you to set relevant benchmarks. Businesses often set performance

standards or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), but without a solid understanding of the competitive landscape, these benchmarks may be out of step with the market realities. Monitoring your competitors on social media helps ensure your benchmarks are in line with industry standards.

Moreover, a social media competitor analysis is a fantastic tool for recognizing market gaps. Even in a crowded market, there's always a blind spot your competition is missing. Through a careful study of your competitors' social media activities, you could discover an untapped niche or a customer group that's been overlooked.

For instance, say you're in the furniture business. You might find that none of your competitors are targeting the millennial market on social media. There's your gap. You can then develop a social media strategy to engage millennials with modern furniture designs and grow your customer base.

A deep dive into your competitors' social media might uncover some struggling businesses. Here's where potential opportunities for acquisitions or mergers could come up. By merging with or acquiring these businesses, you could expand your operation, improve your product quality, and tap into their distribution network to reach new markets.

In conclusion, a social media competitor analysis isn't just a "nice-to-have" for your social media strategy; it's a vital tool that can steer your business in the right direction, help you stay ahead of the curve, and ultimately, succeed in the marketplace.

How to Perform a Social Media Competitive Analysis

The article from [Hootsuite](#) outlines a step-by-step process for conducting a social media competitive analysis, which is a critical tool for any business wanting to excel in the online space. Here's a summary of the key points:

1. **Identify Your Competitors:** Start by listing out who your competitors are. These could be businesses that offer similar products or services, operate in the same geographical area, or target the same audience demographic. You can use social listening tools or conduct a simple Google search to identify these competitors.
2. **Choose Which Social Networks to Analyze:** Your competitors may not be active on all social networks, and neither should you. Prioritize the platforms where your target audience is most active. You could use a social media demographics guide to

help identify these platforms.

3. **Analyze Your Competitors' Social Media Presence:** Look at your competitors' overall presence on each platform. How many followers do they have? How frequently do they post? What's their brand voice and personality?
4. **Evaluate Your Competitors' Content:** Study the types of content your competitors share. What gets the most likes, shares, or comments? Is it videos, images, infographics, or user-generated content? Use this information to inform your own content strategy.
5. **Measure Your Competitors' Engagement:** Look at how your competitors interact with their audience. How do they respond to comments or complaints? Do they use any specific hashtags? Do they run contests or giveaways?
6. **Track Your Competitors' Posting Frequency:** How often are your competitors posting? This can help inform your own posting strategy.
7. **Analyze Your Competitors' Audience:** This involves studying the demographic details of your competitors' followers. What's their age, gender, location, and interests?
8. **Use Tools for Social Media Competitive Analysis:** There are various tools available that can help streamline this process, such as Hootsuite, Sprout Social, or BuzzSumo.
9. **Document Your Findings:** As you gather all of this information, document it in a way that allows you to make direct comparisons between your social media performance and that of your competitors.
10. **Make Strategic Decisions:** Finally, use all this information to make strategic decisions about your own social media strategy. Maybe you need to post more frequently, diversify your content, or engage more with your audience. Whatever it is, a competitive analysis will help you spot the areas where you can improve.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a useful tool for evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to your business – or in this context, your social media marketing strategy. Here's how it applies to social media:

Strengths: These are the things your business does well on social media. Maybe you have a highly engaged community, your video content receives massive views, or your customer service via direct messaging is top-notch. This could also include factors like

having a well-defined brand voice that resonates with your audience, or having influencers or brand advocates who regularly share your content.

Weaknesses: These are the areas where your social media marketing could use some improvement. Perhaps your post frequency is inconsistent, your engagement rate is low, or your content isn't resonating well with your audience. Or maybe your response time to customer queries is too long. Identifying these weak points can help you devise strategies to improve them.

Opportunities: Opportunities are external factors in your business environment that could provide a boost to your social media presence. Maybe there's an emerging social media platform where your competitors are not yet active, or a trending topic that aligns with your brand which you can capitalize on. Perhaps there are industry events, holidays, or popular hashtags related to your business that you could leverage for increased visibility.

Threats: Threats are external factors that could potentially harm your social media presence. This could be anything from changes in social media algorithms that decrease your organic reach, to negative reviews or public relations crises that emerge online. Also, it could be potential actions of your competitors – if they're planning to launch a big social media campaign, for example, it could overshadow your own efforts.

Conducting a SWOT analysis in the context of a social media competitive analysis involves not just looking at your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, but also those of your competitors. This can give you a clearer picture of where you stand in the social media landscape and help you identify ways to improve your performance and gain a competitive edge.

Remember, the goal isn't to copy your competitors, but to understand what they're doing well and identify areas where you can differentiate yourself.

Social Media Competitive Analysis Template

A	B	C	D		E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	NETWORKS	TOTAL FOLLOWERS	FOLLOWERS		TOP FOLLOWERS	TOP FOLLOWING	POST FREQUENCY	PERFORMANCE	SHARE OF VOICE	HASHTAGS	
			FOLLOWER GROWTH RATE					ENGAGEMENT RATE		MOST USED HASHTAGS	AVERAGE # OF HASHTAGS
YOUR BRAND	FACEBOOK										
	TWITTER										
	INSTAGRAM										
	PINTEREST										
	LINKEDIN										
COMPETITOR 1	FACEBOOK										
	TWITTER										
	INSTAGRAM										
	PINTEREST										
COMPETITOR 2	FACEBOOK										
	INSTAGRAM										
COMPETITOR 3	FACEBOOK										
	TWITTER										
	INSTAGRAM										
	PINTEREST										
COMPETITOR 4	FACEBOOK										
	INSTAGRAM										
COMPETITOR 5	FACEBOOK										
	TWITTER										
	INSTAGRAM										
	PINTEREST										

Click on the image above to open the template or click below to download the excel spreadsheet.

[Social Media Competitive Analysis \[To use the template, click the File tab and select Make a copy...\]](#)

Exploring Meta Ad Library

The [Meta Ad Library](#) is a treasure trove of information about the strategies your competitors are using to reach their target audience. Here's an exercise to get you familiar with it. We'll be doing three searches for your competitor or a brand you are familiar with. Here's how to do it:

Search for a Competitor: Go to the Meta Ad Library and type in the name of your competitor or a brand that you're interested in. Browse through the ads that are currently active. What kinds of messages are they promoting? What is their call to action? How does their ad design reflect their brand identity?

Winning Combo: Content, Marketing, and Measurement: The "See, Think, Do, Care" Framework

CHERYL LAWSON

Introducing [Avinash Kaushik's "See, Think, Do, Care" framework](#) – a snappy, innovative strategy to understand your customer's journey and align it with your social and digital content. Imagine it as a cycle that your customers are constantly flowing through, with each stage reflecting a different state of mind, a different need, a different level of engagement.

Here's a brief rundown:

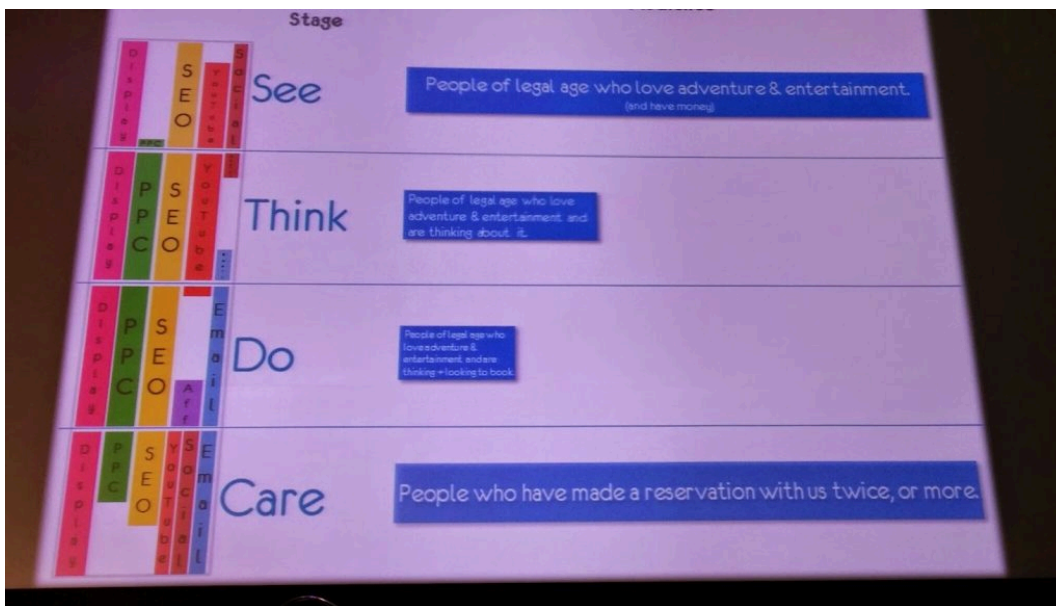
See: This is the largest possible audience, all the folks out there who could potentially be interested in your products or services. They may not know they need your product yet, but we're trying to catch their eye.

Think: This is a subset of the "See" crowd. These are the people who are actively thinking about a product or service like yours, but haven't quite made the decision to purchase yet.

Do: Now we're getting into serious territory. This group is smaller still, made up of people who are ready to make a move. They're ready to buy, subscribe, download, you name it.

Care: This last group is the cream of the crop. These are your most loyal customers. They've bought, they're happy, and they're likely to do it again. Not only that, but they're also likely to tell their friends about how great you are.

Now, how do we tackle content for each of these stages? This is where the fun begins. Each stage requires a different approach.



The image illustrates Avinash Kaushik's See-Think-Do-Care framework applied to a specific audience. Travel & Adventure Business.

See-Think-Do-Care framework for Social Media Content

The beauty of the See-Think-Do-Care framework lies in its versatility and applicability to virtually any content marketing strategy, including social media. It provides a clear roadmap to content creation, helping you address the unique needs of audiences at different stages in their customer journey. Let's break down how to use it in your social media strategy:

See: At this stage, your aim is to raise awareness and attract potential customers. Content here should be engaging, informative, and shareable, but it doesn't need to directly promote your product or service. Think of blog posts, infographics, and videos that answer common questions or solve problems in your industry. Share this content on your social platforms to attract a broad audience, gain followers, and build your brand reputation.

Think: Here, your audience is contemplating their options. They're aware of their needs and are actively seeking solutions. Your social media content should guide them towards your offerings without being overly promotional. Case studies, customer testimonials, product comparison posts, and 'how-to' content that features your product or service can be effective here. This type of content can help sway their opinion in your favor and push them further down the funnel.

Do: At this stage, your audience is ready to take action. They've done their research, they've weighed their options, and they're ready to make a decision. The content here should be targeted, direct, and persuasive, with clear calls to action. Offer exclusive

discounts, highlight the unique selling points of your product or service, share product demos, or promote free trials.

Care: This stage is all about nurturing and retaining your existing customers. Engage with your loyal customers on social media by sharing user-generated content, offering exclusive promotions or sneak peeks at new products, and asking for their input on upcoming features or products. Your goal here is to keep them interested and engaged with your brand, transforming them into brand advocates.

By understanding and implementing the See-Think-Do-Care framework, you can ensure that your social media content marketing is hitting all the necessary touchpoints, effectively guiding your audience from awareness to conversion, and beyond.



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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introtosocialmedia/?p=374#h5p-10>

PART 3: SOCIAL MEDIA 101

Every Network is an Island

CHERYL LAWSON

Navigating your path through the terrain of social media marketing can seem daunting, particularly when deciding which social media platform is most suitable for your business. You've defined your objectives; you may be aiming to hone your skills as a social media marketer for an enterprise or leveraging your knowledge to boost your startup's growth. In either scenario, the question of "Which social media platform is the best for my business?" inevitably arises.

This is a longstanding debate, yet it's important to realize that each network carries its own significance. The choice of platform hinges not on general perceptions of 'the best', but on what best aligns with your unique business goals and fits the specific needs of your customer personas.

Social media platforms were developed with distinct objectives in mind. Facebook sought to unify individuals worldwide, LinkedIn established an avenue for professional networking, Instagram provided a platform for all age groups to capture and chronicle their significant moments. Consequently, understanding the benefits unique to each platform is vital. It's about deciding which platform offers the capabilities that best serve your business goals, aligns with your industry and resonates with your defined customer personas.

Remember the initial chapters: "What business are you in?" and "Who is your customer?" Keeping your specific industry and your target customer personas in mind is key when assessing these platforms. Each one offers unique benefits and reaches specific demographics, so consider where your customers are most likely to be active and engaged. The platform that best reaches your customers and aligns with your business objectives is the one you want to focus on.

Side Note:

Regardless of whether you're a budding startup or an established brand, it's wise to secure your brand name across all social media networks, even if you're not actively using them in your current strategy. This

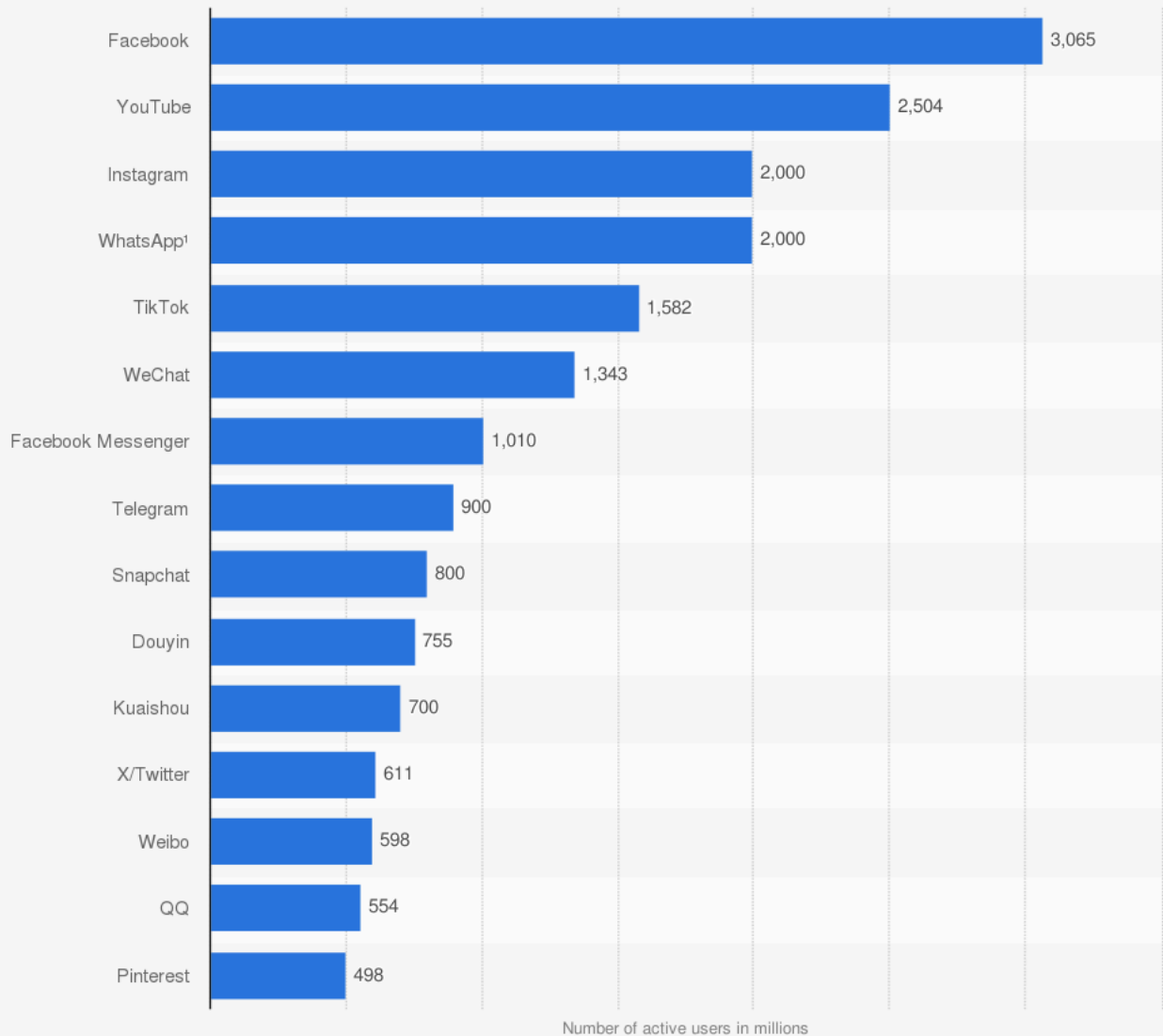
preemptive measure ensures your brand name isn't hijacked or misused by others. The last thing you want is for someone else to lay claim to your brand's name.

Who Lives There?

A primary appeal of social media for marketers is the extensive targeting options it provides. Unlike traditional marketing which often focuses on mass marketing, social media marketing allows you to precisely target the audience for your marketing campaigns.

Before launching any marketing campaign, it's essential to set clear goals, including defining the type of audience who should view your ads and how they should interact with your business. For this, it's essential to know the demographics of users on each social platform. Let's talk Statistics for a bit.

Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2024, by number of monthly active users (in millions)



Sources

We Are Social; DataReportal; Meltwater
© Statista 2024

Additional Information:

Worldwide; DataReportal; April 2024; social networks and messenger/chat app/voip included; figures for TikTok does not i

Find more statistics at [Statista](https://www.statista.com)

Facebook

Facebook is populated mostly by adults of 25-34 years age group. The second largest

group is 18-24 years who make up 23.8% of Facebook's population and only 4.8% of users fall into the senior age group. The biggest country present on the platform is India, while users from the US and Canada are only 10% of the total Facebook population. As for gender, males dominate the platform with 56% of the total population. Also, 51% active users visit the website several times a day and 75% of Facebook users are at least college graduates.

Instagram

On Instagram, the highest population is of 25-34 year olds who make up 33.1% of all users and age group of 18-24 years is second with 29.6% share. Most of them come from the US, whereas India and Brazil hold second and third positions respectively. 43% of these users are college graduates and 42% earn over \$75,000 per annum.

Over 510 million users are females and males are behind with a difference of 20 million. These users spend around 28 minutes a day on Insta. Most users follow at least a single brand on the app and 73% of teens in the US find Instagram the easiest way to reach and interact with a brand.

TikTok

TikTok is a customer favorite app and stands second among the most popular free apps of 2019. Its users are present in 141 countries while China, India, United States, and Turkey are among the countries where it is more frequently downloaded and used.

44% TikTok users are females and 56% are males. Out of these, 41% users are aged 16-24 years who spend at least 52 minutes every day on the app, watching videos related to entertainment, dance, pranks, fitness and other categories.

90% of TikTok or Douyin users access the app via Android smartphones and maintain a healthy engagement rate of 52%. In 2019, people spent \$115.3 million on the app for in-app purchases, influencer marketing, etc.

This was a brief overview of some popular social platforms. You can opt for the platform that suits your business needs.

What Language Do They Speak?

Whether you're talking to friends in a party, communicating with little kids in social gatherings, or sharing thoughts with business associates in a professional setting, you should always be aware of your audience. When you choose the language or tone they understand, you can conveniently communicate with each other without misunderstandings.

Don't forget this rule when communicating with your audience on social media. Creating a profile on social websites is easy. What's difficult is to spread your message and get people talking about the brand in a positive manner. However, this objective can be achieved by determining what type of content the audience prefers and creating posts accordingly.

Hashtags (#)

Hashtags were introduced by Chris Messina in an attempt to organize content on social media. Twitter platform first introduced this unique feature in 2007, but it was later adopted by Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and LinkedIn due to its usability.

A hashtag categorizes content on the basis of topic. If you want to reach the right audience for your business, you need to target popular and relevant ones. Moreover, you can also create custom hashtags to promote your products.

Let's discuss this concept with an example. Imagine that a roofing service provider hires you as a social media marketer. To build their business online, you need to come up with suitable hashtags for the social marketing strategy. Here are a few trends and hashtags that may prove useful:

#roofing #roofingcontractor #construction #greenroofing #roofrepair #roofgutters

Long Form vs. Short Form Content

The internet users tend to have short attention spans. They easily get distracted and can ignore your posts if they don't find it interesting. This is why content marketing in digital

media focuses on captivating and concise content that can keep readers hooked till the last line.

If we need to keep the content short, how can we share important information or news with the target audience?

It's common for social media marketers to get confused about the length of content. But you should remember that the content length depends on the interest of your audience as well as the platform where you intend to post it.

If you are planning to set up a company blog, it's best to opt for long-form content. The purpose of blogging is to educate people about a relevant topic and offer comprehensive solutions to problems. For example, if you are an expert in providing electrical installation and repair services, you may want to write posts about safety tips for customers. Blog posts can be 500-1,000 words, but you should aim for publishing blogs of 2,000-2,500 words to boost SEO score.

LinkedIn is also suitable for posting long-form content. You can write about your area of expertise and experiences to share knowledge with other professionals.

Other social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. may be suitable for short-term content. Whether you are thinking of creating text posts, videos, or images, it's a better option to keep the content short for better engagement.

Also, don't forget that long form videos aren't compatible with most social websites. Instagram supports videos of up to 15 seconds. So, if you are creating long form informative videos, it may be a good option to post it on YouTube and share a brief snippet on Twitter and other social websites. Your followers who find the topic interesting will visit your YouTube channel to watch the entire video.

What's Their Favorite Dish?

Back in the day, social media marketing was all about text posts and still images. With technology advancements, a wide variety of content is now available to internet users. Let's first take a look at the most popular types of digital content. After that, we will discuss which content goes well with popular social websites.

- Blogs or articles
- eBooks
- Images (still images, GIFs, 360° images)

- Videos (recorded videos and live streaming)
- Infographics
- Testimonials
- Contests
- Polls
- Podcasts
- Webinars
- How-to guides

Instagram is an image-based platform. To promote your brand, you can share high-quality images of products, team members, as well as stills from networking events. Adding relevant captions and hashtags is also essential. A similar strategy is suitable for **Pinterest** where you can capture attention via images.

As for **Facebook**, videos perform far better than any other type of content. This includes live streams as well as processed images for coverage of organizational events. You can also post videos developed with the aim of advertising on your Facebook page.

With the increasing population of **TikTok**, you shouldn't ignore its importance in the marketing plan. You can complement videos with captions and can include links to your website to increase web traffic.

Twitter network was mostly known for its credibility when it comes to news and information. Users of this platform show more interest in professionally processed content which includes informational infographics and videos. Lately, in 2024, the credibility of the platform has suffered as Elon Musk's pay for verified status has blurred the lines of trustworthiness on the platform.

For **LinkedIn**, you can turn to long form articles, user guides, and eBooks to increase engagement. We all know **YouTube** is one of the most popular video streaming websites. So, you can post videos on this platform regardless of their size or length.

Reading:

<https://www.oberlo.com/blog/social-media-marketing-statistics>

<https://backlinko.com/social-media-users>

Analyzing Twitter's Evolution: BM to AM

CHERYL LAWSON

Discussing Twitter is a necessity, even if its demise seems imminent. The platform's significance in communication, news sharing and societal movements since its establishment remains noteworthy. Essentially, we should analyze it during two eras: before Elon Musk (BM) and after his acquisition (AM).

Presently viewed as a colossal disaster under Musk's ownership, Twitter's integrity has suffered. Launching with mass firings of developers and alienating advertisers to the point where major companies retracted their support—despite not being an optimal advertising choice compared to Facebook, Instagram or Google—Twitter was still patronized due to its large audience base.

Musk intended for Twitter users to freely voice their opinions without censorship despite his controversial business tactics leading many to dub the situation as a “dumpster fire.” Though you can interact with acquaintances on the platform, engaging becomes more challenging due primarily to bots proliferating hate speech and explicit content.

The decline in active users is evident; most only log in occasionally for mentions or event interactions via sponsors that maintain accounts there. However, sustaining such activity increasingly becomes burdensome.



However, to appreciate Twitter's true potential, we need to look back to the era before Musk. This was a time when Twitter's original purpose, as encapsulated by co-founder Biz Stone, was at its purest.



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In a series of captivating anecdotes from Twitter co-founder Biz Stone at the Cannes Lions 2009, the birth, growth, and global impact of Twitter are traced. Born out of the inspirations from simplicity and ease of communication present in platforms like AOL Instant Messenger, Twitter grew into a real-time communication network, facilitating an intriguing sense of connection among users. Initially, the allure of Twitter was the real-time updates, as mundane as they may be, lending an intriguing peek into the lives of others.

A remarkable example includes a tweet from Stone announcing a pub change that led to the new pub reaching its capacity within 10 minutes. This showcased Twitter's ability to facilitate group coordination in real-time, akin to a flock of birds moving as a single unit.

This potential was also visible when Twitter's presence at a festival created a buzz and brought people together.

Twitter's potential extended beyond casual coordination, manifesting in profound impacts on journalism and activism. One example saw a man in Egypt using Twitter to document protests, demonstrating how social media could capture and spread significant moments globally. Furthermore, a single-word tweet even managed to secure legal assistance for someone in trouble, exemplifying Twitter's potential to affect real-world change.

The platform itself, however, wasn't just about technology but also about the triumph of humanity. As seen in instances where Twitter was used to coordinate efforts during wildfires, gas shortages, breaking news events, and natural disasters, the platform proved to be a facilitator for collective human action.

The notion of collective action is further strengthened by Twitter's open network and ecosystem, fostering growth and diversification on a global scale. By opening its infrastructure to developers, Twitter sparked the creation of over 11,000 registered applications that generate three times the traffic of twitter.com itself. This approach allowed Twitter to tap into the power of billions of mobile and internet users globally, creating a potentially impactful and unpredictable open network.

On the commercial side, Twitter has proven to be a valuable tool for businesses, leading to increased revenue and customer engagement. Brands used Twitter for customer service, monitoring customer complaints and providing immediate responses. Even small businesses could stay connected with local customers without incurring substantial costs, by using Twitter for marketing and customer service.

Stone's recounting of Twitter's history not only presents the platform as a means of communication and information sharing but also as an instrument of global connectivity and collective action. The ability for businesses to leverage this platform for commercial gain is significant, but equally, if not more important, is the potential of Twitter, or any social media platform, to address complex global challenges by fostering a culture of collaboration, openness, and interoperability.

on a personal note:

On a personal note, I am deeply saddened by Twitter's dramatic decline since Musk acquired the company in October 2022. Twitter was my favorite social network, primarily because of the conversations and connections

it facilitated. I fondly recall receiving an email from then-Senator Barack Obama, inviting me to join him on this new platform. It was a thrilling era, seeing politicians and news outlets begin to leverage the power of social media.

In 2009/10, Jeff Pulver initiated the 140 conference (named after Twitter's character limit at the time), bringing together enthusiasts who recognized Twitter's potential to connect the world. This inspired me to launch the SMTULSA Conference to unite social media enthusiasts in my own region.



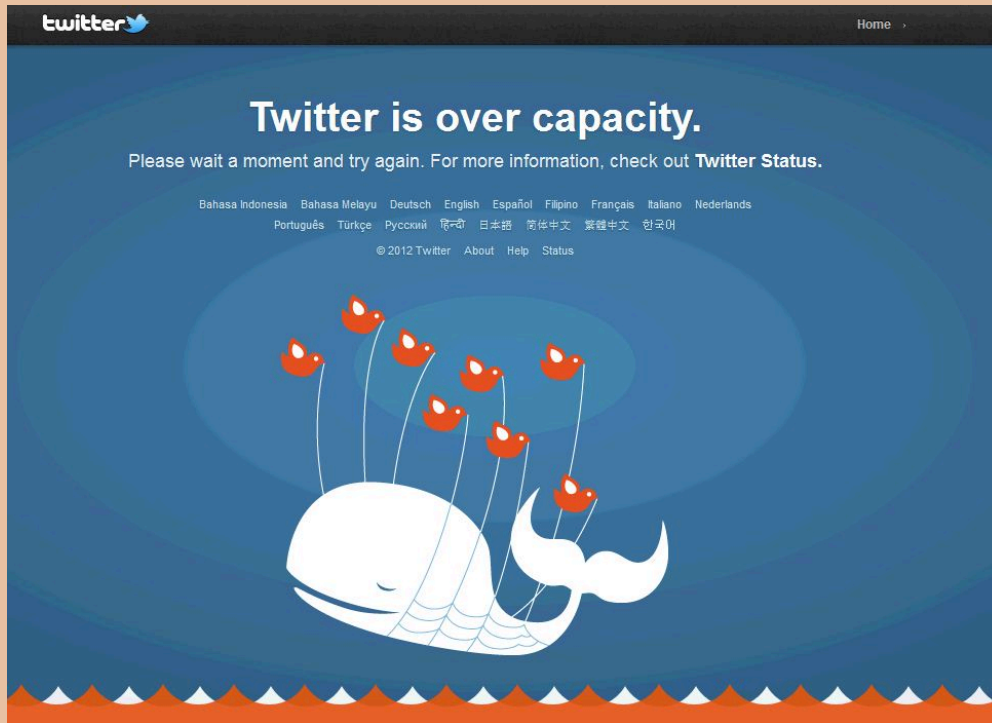
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Twitter changed the trajectory of my career/personal brand.

1. My dog's Twitter account [@imajackrussell](#) brought me speaking gigs, and sponsorships
2. I created and sustained the annual [SMTULSA Conference](#) for 10 years & it all started with Twitter.

Today, my visits to Twitter are limited to learning about new AI tools and receiving local weather updates through the #okwx hashtag, which remains invaluable for Oklahoma residents. However, the majority of my time is now spent on platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and as of yesterday, (July 2023) Instagram's new Twitter competitor, Threads. We'll delve into the rise of these emerging social platforms later, but for now, it's a solemn farewell to the Twitter we once knew.

The good old days were when the worst thing that happened on Twitter was the 'fail whale'.



Twitter Fail Whale

Enough with the nostalgia about Twitter. It's probably evident from my reminiscing that it held a special place in my heart during the BM era. However, let's shift our focus back to the present. If you're considering Twitter as a part of your brand or project's social media strategy, I have a couple of valuable exercises to help you learn how to effectively leverage the platform.

Exercise

Exercise 1: Live Tweet a YouTube Video

Objective: To enhance your ability to create compelling, real-time content and learn how to incorporate relevant hashtags effectively.

Steps:

1. Choose an interesting and relevant video from YouTube. This could be related to your industry, a motivational talk, or a tutorial – anything that provides value to your audience.

2. As you watch the video, compose live tweets that summarize key points, insights, or interesting facts. Remember, each tweet is a standalone message, so it should be comprehensible on its own.
3. Incorporate the official hashtag in your tweets. This could be the video title, the speaker's name, the event hashtag (ie: #TedxTulsa) or the topic being discussed.
4. Engage with your audience. If they reply to your tweets or ask questions, respond promptly and keep the conversation going.

This exercise not only helps you understand the dynamics of live-tweeting but also enables you to observe how your audience engages with different types of content.

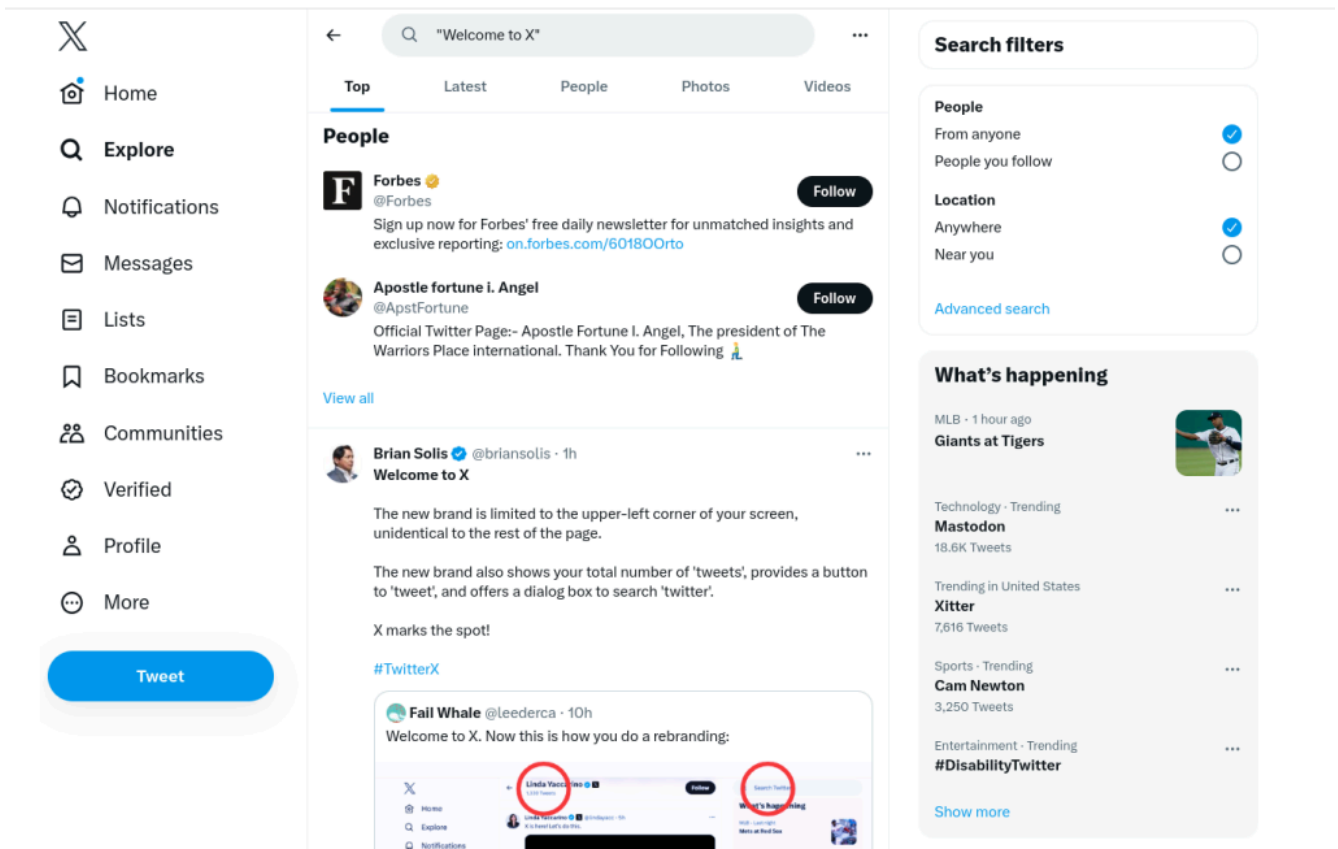
Exercise 2: Twitter for Search - #ai

Objective: To explore the power of Twitter as a search tool and identify valuable content in your area of interest.

Steps:

1. Log in to your Twitter account or visit <https://twitter.com/explore>
2. In the search bar at the top, enter the hashtag #ai and press enter.
3. Browse through the resulting tweets to identify threads or individual tweets that catch your attention.
4. Look for content that provides new insights, challenges your thinking, or offers a fresh perspective on artificial intelligence.
5. Retweet your favorite thread or tweet, and consider adding a comment of your own to spark conversation.
6. Make a note of any new influencers, thought leaders, or interesting accounts you come across during your search.
7. This exercise will help you realize the vast amount of information available on Twitter, and how effectively using hashtags can streamline your search for quality content. **Caution!** Due to the increased prevalence of spam and inappropriate content on Twitter, particularly after Elon Musk's acquisition (AM), your search results may include potentially offensive tweets. For this reason, it's not recommended to conduct this exercise via a projected screen.

Just when I thought the Twitter Chapter was over, Elon Musk strikes again. This time, it's changing the name of Twitter to X.



CNN posts “obituary” for Twitter:

“Twitter, the text-based social media platform that played an outsized role on society by serving as a digital town square, was killed by its unhinged owner Elon Musk on Sunday. It was 17 years old.

A zombie Twitter, known only as X,... pic.twitter.com/NQKLWLANfZ
 – Mike Sington (@MikeSington) [July 25, 2023](#)

Facebook a Metaverse

CHERYL LAWSON

Facebook

Facebook: Pioneering a Digital Revolution

From the hallowed halls of Harvard to practically every corner of the globe, Facebook's journey is nothing short of iconic. Whether you've been captivated by the dramatization of its inception in "[The Social Network](#)" movie, or pored over early interviews of a young Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's revolutionary impact on our societal fabric is undeniable.



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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=396#oembed-1>

The video, harking back to a time twelve years prior, beautifully captures the essence of Facebook's mission and the groundbreaking vision its founders had:

Breaking Convention: Facebook's approach wasn't just to be different for the sake of it. They yearned to challenge the status quo, urging not just to opt for conventional choices. The aim was to find a distinctive path because their vision was unlike any that had come before. "Don't just make the conventional decisions, but think about how we can do something differently than everyone else because what we're attempting is distinct from prior endeavors."

The Ripple Effect: It's a testimony to the power of ideas. The musings and efforts of a handful can ripple out, influencing the lives of hundreds of millions globally. "The impact of a small group of people's ideas can touch the lives of hundreds of millions of real individuals every day."

Embracing Failure: The Facebook ethos was to take chances, fueled by the right intentions. Mistakes were part of the journey, but they believed in the support of their

community. “Don’t fear trying something if the intentions are genuine. Even if you falter, there’s a community to support you, and undue criticism won’t be your portion.”

Critical Creativity: Facebook’s work environment thrived on fostering a blend of analytical thinking and imagination. They didn’t just want employees; they wanted visionaries who could identify gaps and make monumental impacts. “Facebook urges its workforce to be analytical and innovative, enabling them to identify voids and effect significant changes.”

Expanding Horizons: Even at its inception, Facebook was never just about ‘status updates’. It was about tapping into the potential of shared human experiences and the complexities of the world around us. “The possibility for individuals to disseminate intricate and meaningful insights about their environment is just at its dawn at Facebook.”

A Global Footprint: Beyond likes, shares, and pokes, Facebook facilitated heartwarming adoptions and became the backbone of pivotal political movements, like during the Iranian elections. “Facebook’s influence spans the globe, from playing a role in adoption processes to bolstering political revolutions such as the Iranian elections.”

The Future is Personal: Facebook was just scratching the surface. They foresaw a future where every digital interaction would be deeply personal and interconnected. “We’re on the threshold of a future where every site and gadget feels like an extension of the individuals we cherish and are familiar with.”

In retrospect, Facebook’s journey underscores the idea that when a vision is powered by genuine intent, resilience, and innovation, it can not only change the course of technology but also deeply intertwine with the fabric of human lives and their experiences.

Facebook’s Societal Imprint: The Good, The Bad, and The Legal

Facebook, or Meta as it’s now known, stands as one of the towering giants in the digital realm. Its influence touches almost every facet of modern life, and with such expansive reach comes a series of undeniable societal impacts, both positive and negative.

Positive Societal Impact

Global Economic Catalyst: Facebook has drastically altered the landscape of global

economic activity. By connecting businesses with potential consumers and clients, it has made marketing more accessible and cost-effective. Small businesses, artisans, and even hobbyists have found a global audience, leading to economic prosperity and encouraging a spirit of entrepreneurship.

Sharing Memories: In the age of smartphones and the internet, Facebook has become a go-to platform to share cherished moments. By posting photos, videos, and tagging friends and family, it has made it seamless for people to reminisce about memories, rekindling connections and bridging the physical distance.

Negative Societal Impact

Mental Health Concerns: A dark cloud over the realm of social media, especially platforms as vast as Facebook, is the evident link between its heavy usage and detrimental mental health outcomes. Several research studies have painted a concerning picture, linking excessive social media usage with depression, anxiety, loneliness, and even self-harm or suicidal tendencies.

Political Tampering: The platform hasn't been immune to controversies, with allegations and evidence of it being used as a tool for political tampering. From the spread of misinformation to the Cambridge Analytica scandal, Facebook has faced criticism for its role in influencing elections and public opinion, intentionally or otherwise.

The Legal Battlefield: Class Action Lawsuit

Amidst the melange of pros and cons, the platform has also found itself embroiled in legal turmoil. A [class-action lawsuit](#), named In re: Facebook, Inc. Consumer Privacy User Profile Litigation, has been brought against Facebook on behalf of its users. The allegations are severe – claiming Facebook shared or otherwise provided unauthorized access to third parties about users and their connections. This includes a vast spectrum ranging from third-party app developers to advertisers and data brokers.

The gravity of these allegations emphasizes the lack of stringent monitoring and enforcement of data access and usage by these third parties. Facebook, now under the name Meta Platforms, Inc., has faced this lawsuit under the vigilant eyes of the Honorable Vince Chhabria of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

Despite the allegations and the consolidation of these lawsuits, Meta has categorically denied any wrongdoing or liability.

Reflection

In reflection, Facebook's odyssey serves as a vivid testament to the power of vision, genuine intent, resilience, and innovation. Such a combination can not only reshape technological landscapes but also intricately weave into the tapestry of human experiences and emotions. Boasting over 3 billion users, Facebook presents an undeniable resource for business owners and organizations. It allows them to organically tap into an expansive audience and leverage affordable paid options to reach their desired consumers. This journey encapsulates the dual nature of the digital age. While it has undeniably empowered businesses, fostered connections, and championed expression, it also casts a spotlight on the profound responsibility tech giants bear. They must prioritize users' mental well-being and staunchly defend the pillars of democracy. As we transition to the next segment, we'll delve into the continued utility of Facebook for businesses and showcase its transformative potential through real-world examples.

Business Optimization on Facebook:

While the digital landscape is constantly evolving, the tenets of a robust online presence often remain consistent. Facebook, despite its occasional tumult, remains a bastion for businesses keen on tapping into its vast user base. A proactive approach, centered around optimizing and enriching a Facebook business page, can create a marked difference in how a brand resonates with its audience. In 2021, I offered to audit a Facebook business page for members of one of our facebook groups. All of this advise still rings true: Here's a summary.



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1. Visually Engaging Imagery:

- Regularly refresh your profile and cover photos to echo your brand's current themes or offerings.
- Infuse important business information in these visuals, such as contact info or promotional details.
- Use captions not just for clarity, but to engage or steer actions.

2. Responsive Engagement:

- Always be there; acknowledge comments, encourage sharing and tagging.
- Set up auto-replies for your messages. Quick responses can leave lasting impressions. We do this a lot during big events and festivals. Adding the most frequently asked questions as auto replies is a great time saver.

3. Content Curation:

- Share the love – when you share content from other sources, give them a shoutout by tagging.
- Lean on visuals – whether it's vivid photos or captivating videos, let them tell your story. Think about videos to answer FAQs or to give a sneak peek into your operations.
- Align with the world – time your posts with events or global happenings to remain in sync.

4. Competitive Intelligence:

- Use the [Ad Library](#) to explore ads running across Meta. It's a goldmine not just to see competitor ads, but also to understand the broader industry's pulse.
- Dive deep into ads concerning social issues, politics, or elections. Understanding who's funding these and their target audience can offer intriguing insights.
- Utilize Facebook's page transparency feature. When choosing a competitor for comparison, ensure you're on a level playing field.

5. Experiment and Adapt:

- Stay curious. With features like Reels gaining momentum, ponder how they might fit

into your brand story.

- Monitor, learn, and tweak. Celebrate the content that's a hit and recalibrate what doesn't quite land.

And hey, while the digital toolbox might be ever-expanding, the essence remains: be genuine, offer real value, and always have your ear to the ground. Facebook's gigantic user base is not just a statistic; it's an array of opportunities. Conversations, connections, conversions – it's all there, waiting for you. Up next, let's dive into some real-life examples of businesses acing their Facebook game! Shall we?

Facebook Business Page Analysis Exercise (Can be in class exercise and discussion or homework)

For this exercise, we're going to deep dive into the social media presence of a brand you love or frequently use. Analyzing established brands can provide a wealth of insights for your own social media strategy.

Step 1: Choose Your Brand

Select a brand that resonates with you. It could be one you admire, are curious about, or even critique. Share the Facebook page URL of your chosen brand:

Brand's Facebook URL: facebook.com/brandpage

Step 2: Profile & Page Essentials

A brand's cover and profile images are like the storefront of a physical store. They should be inviting, relevant, and in sync with the brand's identity.

Cover & Profile Image: Does the brand have both? Are they relevant and updated?

Description & Call to Action (CTA): Is the brand's purpose or offering clearly mentioned? Do they have an active CTA, like 'Shop Now' or 'Learn More'?

Step 3: Community Engagement

Understanding the brand's follower count and their interaction can provide insights into their community management efforts.

Follower Count: How many followers do they have?

Engagement Metrics: Analyze their general post metrics. Look at likes/reactions, shares, and comments.

Brand Responses: Is the brand actively engaging with its followers by responding to comments?

Step 4: Post Analysis

Choose the brand's most recent post for this analysis.

Target Persona: Based on the content, tone, and visuals of the post, can you identify which customer persona they are targeting?

Post Enhancement: What changes would you suggest for their post or caption to make it more engaging or effective?

A Personal Note on Privacy

In addition to the intricacies of using Facebook for business, there's another essential aspect I always emphasize to my students: **Privacy**. Given the vast amount of personal information and content we share on Facebook, it's paramount to understand and control who sees what.

If you've been away from Facebook for some time, or if during our "Google Yourself" assignment you noticed content from your Facebook profile popping up, it's a clear sign you need to revisit your privacy settings.

I strongly recommend doing a **Facebook Privacy Checkup**. It's a user-friendly tool offered by Facebook to help you review and adjust who can see your posts, profile details, and more. You can find a step-by-step guide [here](#).

Remember, it's your content and data. Make sure it's accessed only by those you truly intend to share it with. Privacy isn't just about safeguarding data; it's about preserving your personal boundaries in the digital realm.

Facebook a Metaverse: Instagram

CHERYL LAWSON

The Acquisition and Rapid Growth

In 2012, Facebook made a strategic move by acquiring a burgeoning photo-sharing app, Instagram, for approximately [\\$1 billion](#). This acquisition signaled the potential and importance of visual-based social platforms in the ever-evolving digital landscape. The purchase not only bolstered Facebook's portfolio but also ushered in an era of rapid growth for Instagram.

The Rise to a Cult-like User Base

Instagram quickly transcended its initial status as a simple photo-sharing app. Its easy-to-use interface, paired with a range of editing tools, allowed even amateur photographers to produce captivating, professional-grade images. This democratization of photography, combined with the app's social features, cultivated a devout and ever-expanding user base.

The 'Platform Killer' Image

Instagram's continuous evolution made it a formidable contender in the social media realm. With its innovative features and consistent updates, it began overshadowing other platforms, earning it the moniker of a '(insert social platform here) killer'.

Stories and the Snapchat Influence

In 2016, Instagram introduced 'Stories,' a feature allowing users to share transient, 24-hour content. This was undeniably inspired by Snapchat's primary function. Instagram's rendition, however, boasted a more intuitive interface and integration with an already robust platform, making it instantly popular.

A Hub for Photographers and Artists

Instagram became an essential platform for photographers, both amateur and professional. Its focus on visuals allowed artists to showcase their work, gain followers, and even monetize their artistry through collaborations and sponsorships.

Enter Reels: The TikTok Resemblance

Continuing its trend of integrating successful external features, Instagram launched 'Reels' in 2020. A clear nod to TikTok's short-form video content, Reels gave users the ability to create and explore short, engaging videos on a new dedicated Feed.

The Rise of the Instagram Model and Influencer

As Instagram grew, so did its influence on popular culture. The platform saw the rise

of the ‘Instagram Model’ and the ‘Instagram Influencer’ – individuals who leveraged their substantial follower base to shape trends, promote brands, and in many cases, carve out lucrative careers.

Empowering Businesses: Tools, Shop, and More

Instagram recognized the immense potential of its platform for businesses. It rolled out a suite of features tailored for brands and entrepreneurs: from detailed insights and advertising options to the ‘Shop’ feature, transforming profiles into storefronts. Today, businesses, big and small, harness the power of Instagram to reach audiences, drive sales, and bolster their brand image.

The Rule of Thirds in Photography:

For many aspiring photographers and Instagram enthusiasts, understanding the fundamentals of framing can enhance the quality of photos tremendously. One such fundamental concept is the “Rule of Thirds.”



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Key Insights from the Video:

- The rule of thirds is paramount in both photography and cinematography. It’s a key principle that paves the way for dynamic, aesthetically pleasing compositions.
- The concept involves imagining your image divided into nine equal segments by two vertical and two horizontal lines. The idea is to position the essential elements in your scene along these lines, or at the points where they intersect.
- Placing your subject at any of the four intersections or aligning them with these lines, be it horizontally or vertically, results in an engaging and balanced composition.
- By deliberately placing focal points off-center and providing negative space, a photograph can convey a richer story or mood. For instance, aligning a subject’s eyes with the top horizontal line can create a compelling portrait.
- It’s also crucial to consider multiple dimensions within a frame – left vs. right, up vs.

down, or forward vs. backward. This multi-dimensional approach can lead to a more dynamic visual narrative.

Exercise: Photography with the Rule of Thirds

Objective: To understand and apply the Rule of Thirds in photography, leading to the creation of dynamic and visually pleasing images. (Instructors, I usually allow students time during class to explore campus and take their photos, then we discuss them as a class)

Instructions:

Choose Your Subject: This could be anything – a friend, a pet, a building, a tree, or any object that catches your eye. Remember, the goal is to emphasize the subject using the Rule of Thirds.

Frame with the Grid: Imagine your camera or phone screen is divided into nine equal rectangles, split by two horizontal and two vertical lines. Most smartphones and digital cameras have a built-in grid feature you can activate.

Place Your Subject: Position your subject along one of the vertical or horizontal lines, or ideally, at one of the four intersections. Remember, this rule is a guide, not a strict directive. Feel free to experiment!

Capture the Photo: Once you're satisfied with your composition, capture the image.

Reflect: Look at the photo. Does your subject draw the eye? Does the surrounding space in the photo lead viewers to explore the rest of the image?

Share and Discuss: Share your photo with peers or on a discussion platform. Discuss:

Why did you choose the particular subject.

The placement of the subject in accordance to the Rule of Thirds.

Where you intend viewers to focus and how you hope they will explore the entire frame.

Note: Save these photos as we'll be revisiting them later in the chapter for further exercises and discussions.

Understanding the theory behind photography principles is one thing, but seeing its application in your photos will solidify your grasp on the concept!

Boosting Engagement with Reels and Stories: Tips and Tools

Instagram (and Facebook) Reels and Stories offer a great way to boost engagement and visibility. Here are some tips and tools, including AI-driven ones, to optimize your content:

Understand Your Audience: Before diving into tools, identify the content your audience enjoys. Insights will show which Stories or Reels get the most engagement.

Embrace AI for Content Creation: Tools like [ChatGPT](#) and [Bard](#) can help generate creative ideas or even draft engaging captions for Reels, especially when experiencing creative blocks.

Efficient Video Editing: For those who find video editing time-consuming, Time Bolt can expedite the process, and Magic Studio can help refine Instagram photos.

Maximize Reel Potential: With Video dot AI, you can auto-detect the highlights of longer videos, making it simpler to create engaging reels. This saves content creation time and ensures the best parts of your videos are showcased.

Optimize for YouTube Too: If you're also active on YouTube, TubeBuddy is an invaluable tool. It aids in everything from keyword research to A/B testing video metadata.

CapCut: This mobile video editing tool is a favorite among many social media enthusiasts, particularly for TikTok and Instagram Reels and Stories. It offers a range of intuitive features to enhance videos: from adding music, transitions, and text to specialized visual effects. Plus, it's free to use, making it accessible for all creators, from beginners to pros.

Advanced Video Edits: For those looking for intricate video edits like background removal or replacement, [Runwayml](#) is a fantastic solution. It's an excellent tool for creating dynamic TikTok-style edits for other platforms.

Stay Updated: Instagram often releases new features for Reels and Stories. Always explore these features as they can give you an edge in engagement.

Instagram Threads

We discussed Threads a bit in our Twitter / X section, however fast it's rise has been, it appears that over half of its users have already given up on the new platform.

[Meta plans retention 'hooks' for Threads as more than half of users leave app](#)

Youtube: The World's Second Largest Search Engine

CHERYL LAWSON

YouTube: A Deep Dive

A Brief History of YouTube

YouTube was founded in February 2005 by three former PayPal employees: Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim. What began as a dating site ([Yes, a dating site](#)) quickly pivoted to a user-generated video platform. In a little over a year, it grew so rapidly that Google acquired the platform in November 2006 for \$1.65 billion in stock.

The platform underwent rapid evolution, introducing monetization for creators with the Partner Program, expanding into mobile streaming, and eventually becoming the go-to destination for video content of all kinds: from DIY tutorials to news, music videos, and even full-length movies.

Today, YouTube boasts over 2 billion logged-in monthly users, with videos in more than 80 languages, making it a truly global platform.

YouTube for Business: Unlocking Potential

1. Second Largest Search Engine:

It's not just a video platform. YouTube is the world's second-largest search engine after Google. This means businesses have a prime opportunity to ensure their content is discoverable to billions, just by optimizing their video descriptions, titles, and tags.

2. Telling Your Brand's Story:

There's no medium quite as compelling as video to convey a story. It's visceral, it's emotive, and it's immersive. Businesses can utilize YouTube to craft and share their brand

narratives, be it their company history, customer testimonials, product showcases, or behind-the-scenes looks.

3. Challenges – Camera Shyness:

One common hurdle many face is the discomfort or apprehension of appearing on camera. It's a genuine concern, especially if you're representing your brand. Here are some strategies to consider:

Animated Videos: Use animated videos or explainer videos to convey information without needing to appear on camera.

Slideshows: Combine images and voiceovers to produce content. This can be particularly useful for informational or tutorial-style content.

Hire Presenters or Influencers: There are many YouTubers or presenters who can represent your brand on your behalf.

Practice Makes Perfect: The more you do it, the more comfortable you'll become. Start by making unlisted videos or practicing live streams to gain confidence.

4. Optimization Tips:

Keyword Research: Just like SEO for websites, YouTube videos thrive on good keyword research. Use tools like TubeBuddy or vidIQ to identify keywords that are relevant to your business and have a good search volume.

Engaging Thumbnails: A captivating thumbnail can be the difference between a click and a miss.

Consistent Posting: Like any platform, consistency is key. Regular uploads can boost your channel's visibility and subscriber base.

Engage with Your Community: Respond to comments, engage with other creators, and be an active participant in your niche. This fosters a sense of community and can amplify your reach.

Examples

My Mom's Unexpected YouTube Stardom

If you ever need a heartwarming testament to the unpredictable charm of YouTube, I have a personal story for you.

About a decade ago, armed with nothing but my smartphone and a heartfelt intention to preserve my family's oral traditions, I began recording my mother. She's an exceptional cook and a passionate gardener, having her

roots (pun intended!) in the countryside of Arkansas. With the sheer amount of wisdom she possesses about the natural world and the kitchen, I thought, “Why not immortalize it?”

One particular day, her garden was bursting with okra – a rich harvest that was too bountiful to consume immediately. As she started preparing the okra for freezing, a method she used to preserve their freshness, I instinctively began recording the process. Once done, I uploaded the footage to her dedicated YouTube account and, admittedly, it slipped my mind soon after.



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Imagine my astonishment when, months later, I stumbled upon that very video and found it had garnered over 30,000 views! The comments section was a heartening mix of nostalgia and gratitude. Many mentioned how her technique mirrored their own grandmothers’, while others playfully remarked they’d love to be guests at her Sunday dinners. To date, that video stands proudly with over 50,000 views.

But the story doesn’t end there. At the vibrant age of 86, my mom continues to be the star of her own little corner of YouTube. This year, she’s been caught in a playful battle of wits with backyard squirrels who have a penchant for her tomato plants. Her strategy to pick the tomatoes before the cheeky critters get to them has resonated with many, and it’s one of our popular uploads this year. (Note the upgraded kitchen)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=420#oembed-2>

The moral of this tale? In the words of a certain sneaker brand and slightly modified by the essence of our experience: [Just do it](#). You never know whose life you might touch, or how the simple acts we take for granted can resonate deeply with others.

The Meteoric Rise of TikTok and its Business Implications

CHERYL LAWSON

A Brief History of TikTok:

TikTok, initially launched as Douyin in China in 2016, entered the global market a year later. In 2018, after acquiring the app Musical.ly, TikTok merged its platforms, quickly capturing the hearts and screens of millions, especially Gen Z. Known for its short-form videos, catchy soundtracks, and user-friendly editing tools, the app has transformed from a fun platform for sharing lip-syncs and dance challenges into a significant force in social media marketing.

The ‘Keith Lee Effect’ – An Exemplary Success Story:

One of the most fascinating success stories emerging from TikTok is that of food critic Keith Lee. His journey began with heartwarming content centered around [cooking](#) for his postpartum wife, and it evolved as viewers got a front-row seat to her [pregnancy cravings](#) with their second child. Today, Keith’s reviews have taken a charitable turn. He’s turned the spotlight on small mom-and-pop restaurants, often struggling with marketing budgets.

The “**Keith Lee Effect**” is a real phenomenon in the TikTok world. When he graces a restaurant with a favorable rating, it isn’t surprising to see lines stretching around the block the very next day. Keith’s organic and genuine approach to food reviews has made him a beacon for local businesses. His story is a testament to the power of authenticity on TikTok and how the platform can rapidly amplify a message or a brand.

[@keith_lee125](#) Pretty Soul Kitchen taste test 🍷 would you try it ? 🍷 [#foodcritic](#)
[🎵 original sound – Keith Lee](#)

Harnessing TikTok for Business:

While TikTok's spontaneity is its charm, there's a method to the madness for businesses:

Educational Content: Much like YouTube, TikTok has become a hub for 'how-tos' and tips. Brands can leverage this by sharing expertise in bite-sized clips.

Trend Integration: TikTok's algorithm places a heavy emphasis on trending sounds and challenges. Brands can use these trends, integrating them smartly with their message. It not only displays cultural relevance but can also boost visibility.

Authenticity Over Polish: While high-production value videos are appreciated, the TikTok community has always leaned towards raw and genuine content. Brands should not shy away from candid moments.

Engage, Don't Broadcast: Unlike traditional advertising platforms, TikTok is about two-way communication. Engage with your followers, participate in challenges, and respond to comments.

Exercise: Dive into TikTok for Your Business!

Objective:

Leverage a trending sound on TikTok to create a promotional video for your school or project business. Analyze and understand the dynamics of engagement based on your video.

Steps:

Research Trending Sounds:

Open the TikTok app.

Go to the 'Discover' tab. Here, you'll find current trending sounds and challenges.

Listen to a few and select one that resonates with the message or vibe you want to convey for your school or business.

Plan Your Content:

Think about how the sound can be integrated with your business or school's promotional content. Does it evoke humor, sentimentality, motivation, or any other emotion that aligns with your brand voice?

Draft a storyboard or jot down the primary elements you want in the video. This helps in ensuring that your video is cohesive and in sync with the sound.

Shoot Your TikTok Video:

Utilize the external tools discussed in the previous chapters for shooting and editing if needed. Remember, while quality is essential, TikTok appreciates authenticity. It doesn't have to be a high-production video. Incorporate branding elements subtly, like wearing branded merchandise, including the business logo, or showcasing your product or service.

Upload & Analyze:

If you have a test account or are comfortable with your main account, upload the video. Add relevant hashtags, an engaging caption, and ensure the video is set to 'public.' Monitor the engagement over a period. Look for likes, shares, comments, and new followers. This will give you insights into what works and what doesn't. Reflect & Discuss (For those not uploading):

Share your video concept with the class or a group.

Discuss why you chose the particular sound and how it complements the business voice. Get feedback and refine your strategy for future videos.

Note: Engaging with your audience is crucial on platforms like TikTok. If you receive comments or questions, make an effort to respond, as this can foster community and enhance brand loyalty.

Good luck, TikTokers! Remember, consistency and authenticity are key. Happy filming!

LinkedIn: Building Professional Bridges in the Digital Age

CHERYL LAWSON

A Brief History of LinkedIn Established in 2002 by Reid Hoffman and launched in 2003, LinkedIn began as a vision to create a platform specifically tailored for professionals. With its user base reaching a million within its first year, LinkedIn soon distinguished itself from other social networks by emphasizing on professional networking rather than personal social interactions. Over the years, it has introduced numerous features like endorsements, company pages, and a thriving job marketplace, making it the premier platform for professional growth and B2B interactions.

Personal Profiles: Amplifying Your Professional Image

Benefits:

1. **Career Opportunities:** LinkedIn serves as a global marketplace for job opportunities across various sectors.
2. **Networking:** The platform allows you to connect with professionals from your industry, opening doors for collaborations and partnerships.
3. **Learning and Skill Development:** With 'LinkedIn Learning', users have access to a plethora of courses tailored for professional growth.

Tips:

1. **Complete Your Profile:** A comprehensive profile including a professional photo, compelling headline, detailed work experience, and educational background increases your visibility.
2. **Engage Authentically:** Share articles, comment on posts, and engage in meaningful discussions related to your field.
3. **Recommendations:** Seek endorsements and recommendations from colleagues,

which act as ‘testimonials’ for your skills and professional credibility.

Business on LinkedIn: Making B2B Connections Count

Benefits:

1. **B2B Networking:** LinkedIn is renowned for its B2B opportunities, allowing businesses to connect and collaborate.
2. **Talent Acquisition:** With its vast user base, LinkedIn is an ideal platform for businesses to scout for talent.
3. **Brand Visibility:** A well-maintained LinkedIn business page enhances brand credibility and visibility among other professionals and businesses.

Tips for Incorporating LinkedIn in Your Strategy:

1. **Optimize Your Business Profile:** Ensure your logo, banner, and company description are up-to-date and reflect your brand identity.
2. **Publish Regular Updates:** Share insights, company milestones, and industry news. Engaging content positions your brand as an industry leader.
3. **Engage with Followers:** Respond to comments, participate in discussions, and appreciate feedback. It fosters a positive brand image.
4. **LinkedIn Ads:** Consider leveraging LinkedIn’s advertising solutions to reach a more targeted audience, especially for B2B products or services.
5. **Analyze and Refine:** Use LinkedIn analytics to understand post engagement, follower growth, and other key metrics. Refine your strategy based on these insights.

LinkedIn offers a unique blend of opportunities for both individuals and businesses. A well-executed LinkedIn strategy can significantly boost one’s professional journey or business growth in the digital age.

Trending Social Networks: A Dive into the Digital Age

CHERYL LAWSON

In the infancy of the digital age, the competition between emerging social networks often seemed like a zero-sum game: one network's gain was another's loss. Fast forward to today, and the digital landscape has radically evolved. With an array of platforms, users now enjoy the luxury of choice, and businesses have multiple avenues to market their brand.

The Rise of New Challengers

Twitter, once a singular giant in the micro-blogging arena, is now feeling the competitive heat. With Elon Musk's recent forays causing ripples on the platform, competitors are emerging to potentially dethrone the once-unchallenged king. Platforms like Sproutable and Mastodon are coming up as potential rivals, providing alternative spaces for conversation and content.

Threads, once (just weeks ago) celebrated as the future of intimate topic-centric discussions, now faces challenges in retaining its users despite its unique approach to fostering deep engagements on particular subjects. Meanwhile, Twitter itself seems to be evolving, aiming to be more comprehensive. Its efforts to emulate China's super app, WeChat, are evident with features that go beyond just tweeting.

Moreover, the audio-chat renaissance with Twitter Spaces and Clubhouse is reshaping how we engage online. Lemon8 and Discord further emphasize this shift, blending traditional messaging with voice channels, making communication more dynamic than ever.

The Power of Strategy in the Age of Diversity

The digitized world's beauty lies in its diversity; a vast array of platforms catering to various user needs. With a correct digital marketing strategy, businesses can tap into this diversity, promoting brand awareness, engaging their target audience, and fostering enduring relationships.

Remember the days of Myspace's dominance? It was the giant of its time, only to be overshadowed by Facebook's meteoric rise. Such transitions teach businesses the importance of adaptability and the dangers of complacency. As Circuit City fell to Best Buy, and Polaroid was overshadowed by digital cameras, the message is clear: innovation and adaptability are keys to enduring success.

Competition breeds excellence. With multiple platforms vying for user attention, each strives to outdo the other, leading to innovative features, better user experiences, and more value for marketers.

Why Choose Just One?

Businesses often grapple with the 'right platform' for their marketing efforts. In the age of multiplicity, why choose just one? Leveraging different platforms for various marketing needs can be a game-changer. An Instagram reel might be perfect for showcasing a product, while a thoughtful thread on Threads could be ideal for brand storytelling.

However, with great power comes great responsibility. It's not about being everywhere but being where it matters. Understanding where your audience resides and how they engage is pivotal.

Dive into the Now

2023 paints a vibrant picture of the social media landscape:

Facebook remains a dominant force with its 2.7 billion users.

YouTube stands strong as the second-largest search engine with 2 billion users.

WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger cater to the instant messaging realm, boasting 2

billion and 1.3 billion users respectively.

WeChat holds its ground with 1.2 billion, especially strong in the Asian markets.

Instagram continues to be the go-to for visual content with 1.15 billion.

TikTok, the newcomer, has swiftly captured hearts, boasting nearly 700 million users.

Setting Sail in Digital Waters

Embarking on the digital journey requires not just a ship but a map. As you navigate the vast waters of social media:

Understand Your Audience: Know where they hang out, what they like, and how they engage.

Content is King: Craft content that resonates. Authenticity matters.

Engage: Social media is not a monologue. Engage with your audience, respond to comments, and foster a community.

Adapt and Evolve: The digital landscape is ever-changing. Stay updated with trends and be ready to pivot when needed.

Analytics - The Backbone of Your Social Media Strategy

CHERYL LAWSON

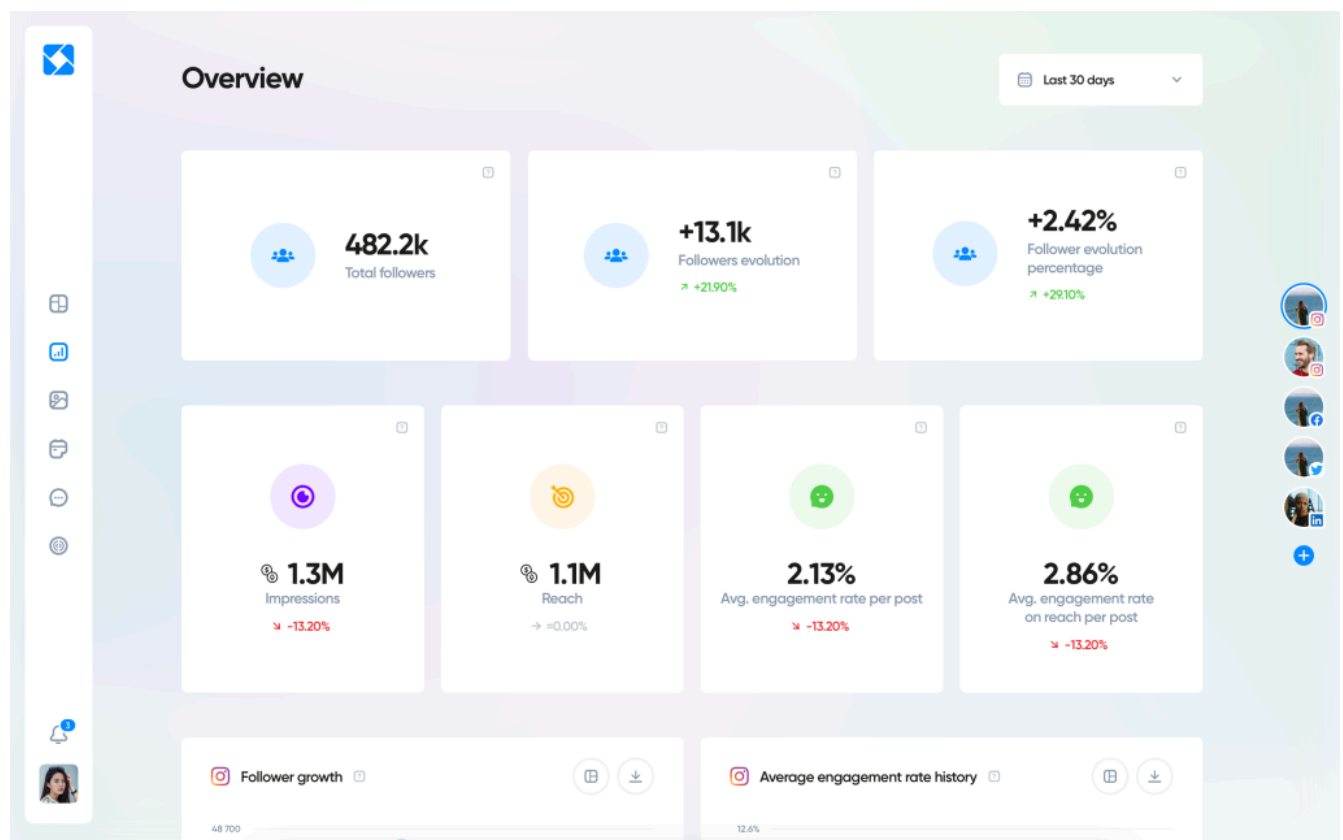
In the modern digital landscape, there's a saying: "If it can't be measured, it can't be managed." This holds particular resonance in the realm of social media, where the sheer volume of data can be dizzying. Yet, tucked within this deluge of data are the golden insights that can steer campaigns to success and refine content to engage more effectively.

Why Analytics Matter

Every interaction a user has on social media, whether it's clicking a link, liking a post, or watching a video, generates data. When interpreted, these actions offer deep insights into user behaviors, preferences, and trends. Armed with this understanding, businesses can tailor their strategies, ensuring their content hits the mark with their target audience.

Built-in Analytics and Third-party Tools

While most major social media platforms come with their own suite of analytics (Facebook with its Insights, Instagram with its analytics for business accounts, and so forth), those looking for more granular, cross-platform insights often turn to third-party tools:



- **Iconosquare:** Initially centered around Instagram and Facebook, Iconosquare has expanded its reach, now offering support for Twitter and TikTok as well. Its visual analytics platform, complemented by easy-to-download graphs and graphics, makes reporting a breeze.
- **Hootsuite:** Not just a scheduling tool, Hootsuite provides in-depth analytics across a range of platforms, aiding in both content planning and performance review.
- **Sprout Social:** This is a comprehensive tool providing analytics, scheduling, listening, and reporting for a cross-channel perspective.
- **HubSpot:** Beyond its renowned inbound marketing tools, HubSpot offers a robust suite of social media analytics.
- **Falcon.io:** It integrates analytics insights with engagement, listening, and publishing features, offering a holistic view of a brand's social presence.
- **Zoho Social:** Tailored for growing businesses, it provides real-time monitoring coupled with actionable insights.
- **Meta Business Suite:** Designed for Facebook and its associated apps, this suite delivers profound insights and advertising tools.

Key Metrics to Monitor

For those steering organic social media campaigns, defining and adhering to specific metrics that echo with your overarching business goals is essential. Some of these metrics could include:

- Engagement rates (likes, shares, comments)
- Video views or play duration
- Click-through rates on shared content
- Growth trajectory in followers or subscribers

Remember, the key lies in consistency. Pinpoint metrics that align with your goals and monitor them at regular intervals, be it weekly, monthly, or annually. This not only helps in recognizing trends but also in course correction whenever needed.

Running Ads? Here's Your Guide to Measurement

The success of social media advertisements can be gauged robustly. Platforms, be it Facebook, Instagram, or others, provide a rich tapestry of metrics, from click-through rates and leads generated to sales conversions and user interactions. However, measuring is just step one. To truly harness the power of ads, brands must be willing to analyze and iterate based on what the data reveals.

In the vast expanse of social media, analytics stands as a lighthouse, guiding strategies towards success. By decoding what truly engages audiences, businesses can fine-tune their approach, resulting in content that resonates and campaigns that deliver. As we journey ahead, we'll dive deeper into each analytical tool, unveiling how to derive actionable insights from them. So, stay engaged and let's navigate this analytical odyssey together!

Keep Calm and Be Platform Agnostic: A Content-First Approach

CHERYL LAWSON

In an ever-evolving digital landscape, myriad social media platforms beckon businesses and content creators. While tempting to plunge into every platform available, a wiser strategy revolves around the essence of your message—the content itself. Instead of spreading too thin, take a content-first approach, which means prioritizing your message and then tailoring it to each platform you deem beneficial.

Why Content-First?

Content, at its core, is the foundation of any marketing strategy. Before determining which platform best serves your needs, establish your message, voice, and desired impact. Your content represents your brand; platforms are merely channels to convey it.

Crafting a Robust Content Strategy

- **Understand Your Goals:** Whether you're aiming for brand awareness, engagement, or sales conversions, your goals will shape your content.
- **Know Your Audience:** Platforms are diverse because audiences are. Tailor your content based on where your target audience primarily hangs out.
- **Type & Frequency:** From blog posts and infographics to podcasts and videos, the type and frequency of content should align with both your resources and audience preferences.
- **Measure and Adjust:** Use KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to monitor performance. Adjust content and strategy accordingly.

Brand Voice & Authenticity

Your brand voice should be consistent across platforms but adapted to each platform's language and culture. Authenticity reigns supreme; hence, storytelling should be genuine, reflecting your brand's ethos.

The Art of Content Repurposing

Given the energy and time devoted to content creation, repurposing offers a smart way to maximize reach without reinventing the wheel. An infographic can be broken down into bite-sized visuals for Instagram, or a blog post can be transformed into a podcast.

Mastering Live vs. Processed Content

The spontaneity of live videos offers authenticity, whereas polished and processed videos project professionalism. A blend of both caters to varied audience preferences.

Essential Tools for the Trade

Even on a budget, there are tools to enhance content quality. From smartphones and tripods for video to Canva for graphics, investing in a few tools can significantly amplify your content.

Engaging Through Captions & Hashtags

Pair your visuals with compelling captions. While brevity often wins, occasional deep

dives can engage audiences differently. Hashtags, when used judiciously, enhance discoverability and community engagement.

Understanding the Younger Demographic

If targeting Gen Z or younger millennials, consider engaging them in content brainstorming. Their tech-savviness and understanding of current trends can offer fresh perspectives.

Navigating Ethical Waters

While daring content can gain attention, it's pivotal to approach with sensitivity and awareness. Avoid cultural appropriation, offensive content, or anything that can tarnish your brand reputation.

Persistence Pays Off

In the digital arena, overnight success stories are rare. Patience, consistency, and adaptability are the hallmarks of a sustainable content-first approach.

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In the maze of platforms, a content-first approach ensures you never lose sight of your brand's essence. Platforms will evolve, emerge, or even disappear, but genuine, high-quality content will always find its audience. Prioritize content, be adaptable, and the right platform will amplify your message.

Rachel Miller speaks on “Tactics to Get Engagement And Grow a Brand to reach 1 Million Fans and Beyond”

Anyone can achieve great results with video content by consistently posting engaging content, focusing on providing value to the audience, and utilizing various strategies to promote and engage with the content. I love this video from Rachel Miller.



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<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introsocialmedia/?p=110#oembed-1>

[Ways to Promote Posts](#)

Time Management and Social Media: Let AI Be Your Sidekick

CHERYL LAWSON

Remember when we chatted about analytics tools? Many of those tools can also help schedule content.

I'll add one more recommendation,

The Social Media Time-Trap

We all know the charm of social media for businesses. But, without some discipline and cool tools, you'll be endlessly scrolling instead of strategizing. Been there, done that!

Two big things to keep in mind:

1. **Don't Spread Too Thin:** You don't need to be on every platform. Pick ones that align with your goals.
2. **Stay Focused:** It's super easy to get distracted. Set timers for tasks. Got a tweet to post? Set aside specific time for it.

Juggling different accounts? Grab a password manager. Trust me, it's a lifesaver. No more forgotten passwords or those risky sticky notes!

AI to the Rescue: Social Media Automation

Here's where AI steps in and makes magic:

- **Chatbots:** Tools like **MobileMonkey** or **ManyChat** can handle common questions, bookings, or even lead generation on platforms like Facebook Messenger. It's like having a 24/7 customer service rep!
- **Image Recognition:** Tools like **Google Cloud Vision** can scan user-generated content for images related to your brand. This way, you can jump into conversations you didn't even know were happening.
- **Predictive Analysis:** Platforms like **Crimson Hexagon** can predict future trends based on social media chatter. Talk about staying ahead of the curve!
- **Tailwindapp Ghostwriter:** [Tailwindapp's](#) new AI-based technology generates natural-sounding, engaging copy in half the time. Maximize your time creating content, and power through brain fog and writer's block with ideas and inspiration.

Plan Your Social Media Like a Pro

Planning is still key. And with a content calendar, you're golden. Find a template or whip up your own. Schedule a month ahead, tweak as events unfold, and make sure everyone's in sync.

If time zones or odd hours have you tied up, scheduling tools like SocialPilot, HootSuite, or Feedly have got your back.

Watch Out for Those Oops Moments!

Automated scheduling is fantastic, but remember [Sephora's hashtag mishap](#)? Double, no, triple-check before scheduling. And keep up with current events. Even the best content can seem insensitive if a world event has happened.

IFTTT and Beyond

Heard of "If This, Then That"? IFTTT lets you automate content across platforms. It's nifty, but remember to review. Automation's neat, but you want that genuine touch – always.

AI's a game-changer, but it doesn't replace the human touch. Use it to free up time, avoid repetition, and get insights. Just always add your personal flavor. After all, social media is about making genuine connections.

I keep a spreadsheet of my favorite ai tools. [Ai Toolbox by Cheryl Lawson](#)

Nurturing Engagement for Business Growth

CHERYL LAWSON

In the age of digitization, businesses are increasingly turning to social media to amplify their reach. While boosting follower counts is one metric of success, true growth is driven by fostering deeper connections and active interactions. This chapter delves into the importance of engagement and how it plays a pivotal role in elevating your brand's social media presence.

The Depth of Engagement

Merely having a presence on social media isn't enough. Sure, the number of followers can look impressive, but what really counts is how many of them actively engage with your content. Whether it's a like, a share, or a comment, these engagements signal that your audience isn't just passively scrolling past, but is genuinely invested in what you're offering.

Let's put it this way – having followers is good, but having engaged followers? That's the gold standard. Why? Because consistent interaction ensures your content keeps popping up on their timelines, keeping your brand at the forefront of their minds.

The Digital Competition Arena

Today, the digital world offers countless avenues for brands to make their mark. But with increased accessibility comes increased competition. If your content doesn't spark interest, users will swiftly move on to something that does. So, keeping them hooked is essential. And how do you do that? By regularly posting engaging content and staying responsive to their interactions.

Social Listening

Want to monitor how your brand is faring in terms of engagement? There's a toolkit for that. Platforms like Iconosquare, Buzzlogix, Zoho Social, and Agorapulse not only track engagement rates but also gauge your brand's reputation across the social sphere.

Silence Isn't Always Golden

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, the interaction just doesn't pour in. Before hitting the panic button, pause and reassess. Is it your content? Or perhaps the platform? Tweaking your strategy based on honest introspection can turn things around.

Also, remember, your brand isn't just a logo and a tagline. It's a personality. And personalities connect best when they're genuine. Hosting live Q&A sessions, showcasing your team, and leveraging user-generated content can humanize your brand and drive meaningful interactions.

Influencers: The New-Age Brand Ambassadors

For an added engagement boost, consider influencer collaborations. Their endorsement can introduce your brand to a broader audience, boosting visibility and, in turn, engagement.

Why Email Isn't Outdated

Think email's had its day? Think again. Regular emailers, newsletters, and targeted campaigns are a proven way to keep your audience in the loop. By directing them to your website or latest blog post, you're nurturing a deeper brand-consumer relationship.

Handling Negative Feedback

In the business world, you can't please everyone. But how you handle dissatisfaction says a lot about your brand. Instead of viewing negative feedback as a setback, consider it an opportunity for growth. Address concerns with empathy, offer solutions, and always strive to better your service.

Troll Alert!

Navigating the social media landscape also means encountering trolls. It's crucial to distinguish genuine feedback from baseless criticism. Set community guidelines and stick to them. Always engage with grace and never let trolls dictate your brand narrative.

Transforming Feedback into Strategy

Negative comments, though challenging, can be your road map to improvement. Instead of shying away, lean into constructive criticism. Address concerns, tweak your strategies, and let your audience know you value their input. This not only builds trust but strengthens brand loyalty.

Prioritizing Customer Relations

At the heart of every thriving business is a loyal customer base. Prioritize their needs, address their concerns, and always aim for excellence in service. By cultivating a customer-centric culture, you not only bolster brand reputation but ensure long-term success.

While growing your follower base is essential, true success lies in meaningful engagement. Value your audience, prioritize their feedback, and consistently deliver quality – the pillars of a robust social media strategy.

The Social Media Job Guide: Tips for Aspiring Professionals

CHERYL LAWSON

For those aspiring to forge a career in social media, this chapter's for you. While organizations like Social Media Tulsa excel in project management and event-based social media, the journey for beginners can be a roller-coaster.

Decoding the Social Media Myth

It's a misconception that success in social media revolves only around fluency with platforms and content creation. Social media expertise is deeply rooted in marketing principles. Once you internalize these foundational concepts, you'll be leagues ahead of others in the game. Although technology gifts us myriad platforms, the essence of marketing remains consistent.

Lessons from the Internship Trenches

Early in your career, internships provide valuable firsthand experience. While they're a gateway to invaluable insights, they can also be a whirlwind of tasks. As the new kid on the block, you might sometimes find the blame landing on your desk. Embrace these moments; they shape resilience and equip you for future roles.

Does Your Resume Stand Out?

Your resume is more than just a document; it's your first impression. A bland or incomplete resume can close doors even before they open. Highlight your skills, experiences, and strengths in a captivating design that grabs attention. Before sending it out, ensure it's error-free and tailor-made to align with the roles you're targeting.

Is LinkedIn Still Relevant?

LinkedIn, established in 2003, has aged like fine wine. While some argue its golden days are over, the platform remains a potent tool for professionals. Many recruiters actively source and even interview candidates here. Engage, share insights, and foster connections on LinkedIn—it could be your ticket to your dream job.

Venturing Out Alone

Joining a seasoned team offers rich learning experiences, but solo ventures might appeal to the entrepreneurial spirit in you. Freelancing can be the first step, eventually

leading to your own agency. Before embarking on this journey, devise a solid business plan, from strategies to resources, and consider creating a professional online presence.

Showcasing Your Skills: The Portfolio

Your portfolio is a testament to your abilities. Employers and clients alike will ask to see proof of your expertise. If you're starting out and lacking in substantial work to showcase, consider crafting your own personal brand on various platforms. This can serve as tangible evidence of your proficiency.

Mastering Social Media Strategy: Drawing Insights from “How Benjamin Button Got His Face”

CHERYL LAWSON

In the iconic TED talk by Ed Ulbrich on how Benjamin Button was brought to life, a profound journey of innovation, collaboration, and persistence was unfolded. Taking inspiration from the dedication and creativity of that team, we’ve curated a guide to craft your own social media strategy. Just as Benjamin Button’s face was a masterpiece, so too can be your digital footprint.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
<https://open.library.okstate.edu/introtosocialmedia/?p=118#oembed-1>

1. ADMIT YOU HAVE A PROBLEM (Understanding Your Current Position)

- **History & Background:** Before you can solve a problem, you must recognize and understand it. Dive into the history of your brand’s social media presence and understand its evolution.
- **Current Environment:** Examine the current digital landscape, how your brand is positioned, and the challenges you’re facing.

2. BREAK DOWN THE PROBLEM (Setting Smart Goals)

- **Identify Objectives:** List everything you hope to accomplish. This could be increasing followers, boosting engagement, or driving website traffic.
- **Analyze the Details:** Dive into the intricacies of your current strategy. As Ulbrich explored the markers in Benjamin’s aging, you too must understand the pivotal moments and elements in your social media journey.
- **Challenge the Norm:** Sometimes, it’s essential to reconsider and even discard long-

held beliefs or practices. Be willing to pivot or completely revamp your strategy.

3. TECHNOLOGY STEW (Conducting a Social Media Audit)

- **Seek Inspiration:** Just as the creators looked to other industries for technology solutions, so should you. There might be a strategy, tool, or platform in another industry that's perfect for your needs.
- **The Aha Moment:** This is when things begin to click. When you find that strategy, tool, or idea that promises to revolutionize your approach.
- **Imagine the Possibilities:** Always be open to innovative approaches. Pose the question, "What if?"

4. SANDBLAST THE EDGES (Formulating a Plan)

- Based on your audit, objectives, and inspiration, carve out a tailored social media strategy. This is the blueprint that will guide all your actions on digital platforms.

5. BOX OFFICE (Measuring Performance)

- **Quantify Outcomes:** Just as box office numbers reflect a movie's success, your metrics – followers count, engagement rate, click-throughs – will depict the success of your strategy.
- **Test, Test, Test:** The digital world is ever-evolving. Consistently test new strategies, tools, and content types to see what resonates best with your audience.

In conclusion, crafting a successful social media strategy requires understanding, innovation, and adaptation, much like the journey of creating Benjamin Button's face. As you embark on this journey, let persistence be your guide and creativity your tool. Happy strategizing!

PART 4: COURSE PROJECT

Course Project: Create a Social Media Strategy

CHERYL LAWSON

Course Project: Social Media Strategy

Throughout this semester, you'll develop a social media marketing strategy for a specific company or department within the university. You'll pick a client/company (real or fictional), focusing on an organization with a decision-maker for whom you'll design the marketing strategy. No need for actual access to the organization – 'client' simply means you can't choose an industry for this project.

Due Dates:

Steps 1-2: February 23

Steps 3-4: March 9

Steps 5-7: April 6

Steps 8-10: May 4

We'll also have assignments to create content for posting along the way. Your final submission will include a written proposal of all 10 steps and a short video (20 minutes max) to describe your strategy to the client. Due May 4 (In-person classes will present in class).

Step 1. Business Scope

Gather intel on the client's mission, product/service, market, and competitors. If possible, define their Why, How, and What; if not, suggest creating one.

Step 2. Aiming High

Outline the client's business and social media goals – engagement, growth, or ROI.

Step 3. Eye on the Customer

Identify target audiences using client criteria or platform data, and create customer personas with demographics and psychographics.

Step 4. Know the Competition

Examine competitors' social media performance and compare it to the client's. Identify standout tactics for both.

Step 5. Social Media Checkup

Assess what's working or not, audience engagement, target audience network usage, and comparison to the competition.

Step 6. Tone It Up

Decide on a communication style for your strategy based on audience, personas, and platform suggestions. Include a hashtag strategy.

Step 7. Content Countdown

Pick the networks to use based on target audience and persona data. Create a content calendar for March, April, and May.

Step 8. Content Crafting

Develop content, captions, posting dates/times, including photos, videos, links, reposts, and captions.

Step 9. Platform Play

Choose platforms and software for scheduling, posting, and engaging with content (Meta Business Manager/ Creator Studio, Tailwind, Iconosquare, Buffer, Hootsuite, Creator Studio, IFTTT, etc.).

Step 10. Measure and Report

Submit your overall strategy, content plan, and any analytics available from posted content.

Turn in your written strategy and record a video describing your plan and any available analytics (for in-person class, present to the class).

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