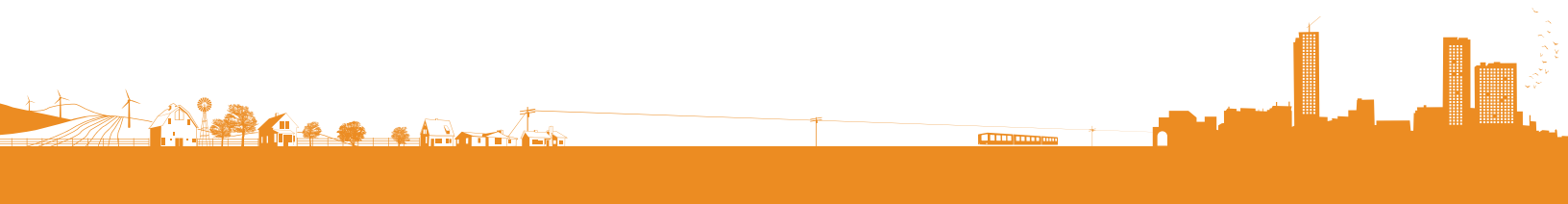# THE ART OF LISTENING
SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT FOR NONPROFITS

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Communications Coordinator

Braelan Murray
Communications Director

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THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

About the Greenlining Institute

Founded in 1993, The Greenlining Institute is a policy, research, organizing, and leadership institute working for racial and economic justice. We work to bring the American Dream within reach of all, regardless of race or income. In a nation where people of color will make up the majority of our population by 2040, we believe that America will prosper only if communities of color prosper.

About the Authors

JC De Vera
Greenlining Communications Coordinator

JC De Vera is a Bay Area native from San Jose, California. He graduated magna cum laude from UCLA in 2011 with a dual B.A. degree in Sociology and Asian American Studies, and a concentration in Pilipino Studies. At UCLA, he developed his passion for community empowerment and solidified his life's mission: ridding the world of hate and inequality. As a student activist, organizer, and elected student government official, JC advocated tirelessly for college affordability, the expansion of ethnic studies, and increased access and retention for students of color in higher education. He strongly believes that education has the ability to be an opportunity creator and a pathway out of poverty. JC joined the Greenlining team as the 2011-2012 Communications Fellow, during which he developed and implemented the organization's social media strategy. Today, he works to develop online campaigns and strategies to expand the organization's reach and advocacy impact.

Braelan Murray
Greenlining Communications Director

Braelan Murray is a graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz, where he received his B.F.A. in Film and Video Production. An award-winning filmmaker with over a decade of experience using media as a tool for advancing social change, his portfolio includes work for local unions, progressive nonprofits and cutting-edge media design firms — notably as editor and videographer on Annie Leonard's world-renowned animated short, *The Story of Stuff*. As Communications Director at The Greenlining Institute, Braelan has expanded and transformed Greenlining's use of all forms of media to tell the stories of the issues and communities we advocate for, greatly expanding the organization's presence in all forms of new media.

The Greenlining Institute   @Greenlining   The Greenlining Institute

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INTRODUCTION

Social Media: A New Way to Communicate

Social media* tools are changing the way that people communicate. Advances in mobile technology have made social media more accessible, allowing them to become a part of people's daily lives and routines. Moving into a Digital Age, where information spreads through new forms of online media with greater reach and speed than traditional media, there is no doubt that social media like **Facebook** and **Twitter** will continue to play an ever increasing role in informing and connecting people worldwide. Just how many people? There are currently over 500 million users on Twitter and over 1.11 billion on Facebook,[1] and these numbers are growing every second. Not engaging in social media could result in missed opportunities. The communications landscape is evolving, and social media have assumed a prominent place in the marketing and public relations equation.

Nonprofit organizations are beginning to understand how social media can be an impactful tool to advance their goals and missions. While nonprofits have embraced traditional media, the sector lags behind in incorporating social media into overall communications strategies, often due to a lack of resources. Being successful at social media won't be easy or free, and will take diligence, time, and in many cases, money. Investing in social media will require goal setting, strategic thinking, risk taking, and an understanding that these tools have the potential to help create positive change. By utilizing social media, nonprofits can build online communities and audiences, develop relationships with major **influencers**, improve organizational branding, and tell stories of important work and impact. There is no better time to join the online conversations than now.

Social media* *Bolded words throughout this guide represent common social media terms. Detailed definitions of these terms are included in the glossary found in Appendix A.*

Greenlining's Story

We'd love to be able to tell you that Greenlining's experience with social media has been an unbroken string of successes, but to be honest, it has been a bit of a roller coaster ride. We started out in 2007 by hopping on the bandwagon without a clear vision in mind. We created social media accounts and posted items here and there, but made the critical mistake of not understanding why we were using these tools. Instead of viewing social media as necessary tools in our communications strategy, we used them sporadically and randomly, and at times neglected them. We mistakenly thought we would instantly reap the benefits of social media after posting a few things, a common mistake in the nonprofit sector. After all, using social media is supposed to be free and easy right?

Wrong.

We learned the hard way, but that allowed us to refocus and envision what we wanted out of social media. With the help of the good folks at Aspiration Technology, we learned an important lesson: "Be intentional to achieve success." In 2011, after years of frustration, we approached social media with a purpose. Being intentional meant three main things to us: (1) having goals and a strategy (2) investing resources (staff and money), and (3) believing in social media as a valuable tool to achieve organizational goals. We learned that using social media for an organization was completely different from managing a personal account. We hired interns and eventually full-time staff members to focus on building and implementing a social media strategy, and developed goals and objectives for utilizing different tools. The result was dramatic. In less than one year, we grew significantly, tripling our Twitter **followers,** for example, from a humble 500 to 1,500 in 10 months. But beyond just numbers, we were accomplishing something far greater: We were listening to what people were saying about our issues and building relationships as a result.

The Art of Listening

Listening is essential to communication. Just as in daily life, a common mistake in using social media is that we talk too much and don't listen enough. We don't hear what people are saying because we get absorbed in trying to get our own messages across. Listening is essential. Listening — also known as **social media monitoring** — was the critical first step that our organization took to craft our social media strategy and is the foundation for all of the gains we have made since. By listening to what's happening on social media, we can better understand our audience, become aware of content that people careabout, and identify online influencers who can reach and inform larger audiences.

Take it from us, a public policy think tank whose messages can often be lost in wonky policy language. Not every organization can draw large crowds instantaneously like the American Cancer Society and other well-established organizations whose work translates easily to plain language. The nature of our work — advocating for racial and economic justice for communities of color and low-income communities — appeals to a relatively small audience at first. For other audiences, we must learn to explain it in terms they can relate to. To reach a wider audience and build better brand recognition for our organizations, we need to listen and identify what makes people excited.

Social media challenge us to tell the story of our work succinctly, in a way that's accessible and attractive to a wider audience. It forces us to communicate simply and creatively in order to build relationships and develop a support base that takes an interest in the work we do.

How to Use This Guide

This guide seeks to provide a solid strategy for nonprofit organizations looking to utilize social media as advocacy tools. Whether your organization is a social media veteran or beginner, we hope that the tips and practices provided will be useful as refreshers or new ideas. It's important to keep in mind that what works for one organization may not work for another. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to social media growth. We dissent from what some others say about social media being easy to grasp and utilize; doing it well isn't easy. It takes time and risk-taking, especially if you're starting from scratch. The benefits may not come instantly, but once you get the hang of it, progress will eventually show. After all, you only get as much out of social media as you put into it. We hope you find value in this guide, and we look forward to joining conversations with you — online and offline.

STARTING OUT

Be Intentional: Have a Larger Vision

> "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."

In undertaking any sort of task, there needs to be a reason for doing it, strategic goals to achieve and strive for, and measurable objectives to track progress. Using social media blindly will not yield meaningful progress, and success will not eventually come simply by "doing." Developing a well thought-out vision is the first step towards an effective social media strategy.

Questions to Consider When Developing a Vision:

• Who is your target audience? Who do you want to reach? What specific demographics?

• What do you specifically want to accomplish by using social media? What are your goals?

> ❏ Raise awareness about your organization and the issues you work on? ;
>
> ❏ Better brand recognition? ;
>
> ❏ Develop meaningful relationships with online **influencers**? ;
>
> ❏ Get people to take action on campaigns? ;
>
> ❏ Fundraise for your organization? ;
>
> ❏ Increase attendance for an event? ;
>
> ❏ Educate and inform audiences about issues? ; etc.

• How do social media connect with your overall organizational vision and mission? Howcan they be used as a tool to advance your current work?

• How much time and resources will you invest to manage social media activity?

Before drafting larger goals for your social media vision, be wary of simply seeking "more followers and fans." Numbers are good, but numbers without a purpose are not. Ask yourself: WHY do we want more followers and fans? Your vision statement should answer this question. Remember, before you start using any social media tool, you have to return to your own organization's goals.

As a rule of thumb, have three to five solid goals for a vision statement. The statement should be clear, concise, and answer the questions of: "Why? Why social media?" The purpose derived from this vision will guide you throughout the process of developing a strategy and should act as a touch point to return to again and again.

Accomplish Your Vision with the Right Tools

After developing a vision, the next step is to determine which social media tools are most appropriate for achieving your goals. With an ever-growing number of platforms, picking and choosing the ones that make sense for your organization can be overwhelming. Remember: each platform has specific functions, audiences, and capabilities. There are different tools for different purposes:

- Social Networks: Facebook, Twitter, Google+
- Micro-Blogs: Tumblr
- Photo Sharing: Flickr, **Instagram**, Pinterest
- Professional Networks: LinkedIn
- Traditional Blogs: Blogger, WordPress
- Video Sharing: **YouTube**, Vimeo

Before creating an account for every platform out there, start out small by using one or two that will help you achieve your goals. Build a foundation for your social media presence before expanding to other platforms. For the purpose of this strategy guide, we will focus on how to best utilize Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook and Twitter

This strategy guide focuses on Facebook and Twitter for four reasons: (1) these networks have the greatest amount of users (Facebook has over one billion and Twitter has over 500 million), allowing nonprofits to reach a wider audience, (2) they allow you to build your online brand and voice, (3) news and information travels quickly through these channels around the clock, and (4) they are better equipped to directly connect with people. Facebook and Twitter have features that make it easy for organizations to engage with the public, including photo and video posts and social share options. Facebook and Twitter are unique because they focus on dialogue and engagement with users, which is critical for nonprofits looking to raise awareness about their organization and issues, and build relationships with a variety of individuals and groups.

There are currently over 500 million users on Twitter and over 1.11 billion on Facebook.

A study on nonprofit social media usage by Ventureneer categorized Facebook and Twitter as two of the "Big Four" in social media, the other two being YouTube and LinkedIn.[2] Specifically, Facebook and Twitter are effective at boosting a nonprofit's visibility, driving traffic to websites, mobilizing and coordinating people, and building community and advocacy around issues. For these reasons, organizations should start with Facebook and Twitter before venturing off to other social media tools.

Tip: Get comfortable with using Facebook first, move onto Twitter after, and then expand to other tools once you get a grasp of both of them.

For resources on how to set up accounts on Facebook and Twitter, see Appendix B.

Create SMART Objectives:
Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely[3]

The next step in developing your social media strategy is to create "**SMART Objectives**" that will help you track and monitor your progress. These objectives will allow you to constantly evaluate your strategy's effectiveness and make changes as needed throughout time.

SMART stands for:

• *Specific:* Answers the question, "What exactly are we going to do and for whom?" This identifies what will change in concrete terms, by identifying the particular population (audience) and/or setting (tools), and the specific actions that come as a result. It is advisable to indicate how the change will be implemented.

❏ Good verbs to use: provide, train, publish, increase, decrease, schedule, purchase, etc.

• *Measurable:* Objectives should be quantifiable and easy to measure as a means for evaluation. It should include the specific **metrics** you will be collecting.

• *Attainable:* Objectives should be feasibly achieved within a proposed time frame with the resources and support available. Don't make them unrealistic.

• *Relevant:* Your objective, strategy, and overall organizational vision and mission should align. Ask: does this objective have an effect on the desired goal?

• *Timely:* Good objectives have deadlines. Ask: When will this be accomplished? A specific and reasonable time frame should be included within an objective statement.

Developing SMART objectives can be applied to any endeavor that requires strategic planning. These objectives highlight the intentionality needed to be successful. Creating clear, effective objectives takes time and effort. The following template provides a simple, yet efficient way to conceptualize SMART objectives:

BY _____, we will _____
    (WHEN- Timely),   (WHO/WHAT – Specific/Attainable/Relevant),
from _____ to _____ through _____.
    (MEASURE – number rate, percentage of change – Measurable)   (HOW)

Using SMART objectives will help you continually evaluate your social media strategy. By identifying **key performance indicators (KPIs),** you can identify the aspects of your strategy that need to be continued, adjusted, or dropped.

Only through careful planning will a social media strategy achieve success. SMART objectives outline exactly what you want to accomplish and give you a clear direction for how it will be achieved. The tips and best practices provided in the upcoming sections can enhance and complement your efforts in developing a robust social media strategy.

STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The following sections provide best practices that can strengthen your social media strategy. Use a few or use them all, but remember: There is no one-size-fits-all formula for social media growth. Be ready to try new things and take risks because that is how you'll know whether your strategy is working. Remember to continually adapt practices to fit your organization's needs because once you get comfortable, you'll likely develop practices that are better for your particular needs than the ones presented here.

The structure of the strategy guide is laid out in seven main "how-to's," each with their own tips.

1. How to "Listen"

2. How to Communicate on Social Media

3. How to Build an Audience and Following

4. How to Manage Social Media Accounts

5. How to Generate Consistent and Engaging Content

6. How to Develop an Organizational Social Media Policy

7. How to Measure Effectiveness

@) not —

The process of developing a strategy isn't linear, but rather a spiral process. You will continually revisit each step of the process to evaluate and fine-tune your strategy. Read through each section, and identify which area your organization needs to focus on. Remember to evaluate your strategy often and make improvements to ensure continuous growth.

How to "Listen"

What does social media listening look like in practice? As the foundation for social media growth, it's important to listen to what happens inside and outside of your organization. Listening is something that you need to practice daily to shape your social media strategy and your usage of the different tools.

"Before you speak, listen."

1. Know Your Organization — In and Out

Before listening to what is being said online, you need to understand your own organization first. Know your organization from top to bottom — from its vision and mission to the specific work that different programs/projects are doing. Take time to develop a basic understanding of the issue(s) that your organization works on. Understanding your organization will allow you to effectively communicate your vision and mission through the content and messages you share on social media.

Meet with all of your in-house experts who manage your organization's different programs and initiatives, and get answers to the following questions:

- What is the vision and mission of the organization?
- What is the purpose of this specific program/initiative? How does this relate to the organization's vision and mission?
- What are the past and present goals of the program/initiative?
- What are the current issues that the program/initiative is working on?
- What are the mainstream topics/issues that the program/initiative covers?
- Who are the most influential individuals, organizations, and thought leaders on this issue?

2. Generate a List of Buzz Terms and Influencers

After meeting with key staff members, you'll have lots of information to synthesize, especially if your organization has multiple issue areas or programs. Organize all of the information in a document that you can continually update and refer to. Each of your programs/issue areas should outline their purpose and goals, and have a list of key concepts (**buzz terms**) and influencers. Having a list of buzz terms and influencers will aid you in determining what people are talking about online. Concepts allow you to identify **trending topics** on Twitter, and influencers will provide you with a group of key individuals and organizations to **follow** on Twitter and **like** on Facebook.

Example Document:

ISSUE AREA	PURPOSE	GOALS	CURRENT ISSUES	BUZZ TERMS
HEALTH PROGRAM	To develop solutions that improve health for communities of color by addressing issues related to access to health care, affordable prescription drugs, and the need for more diversity in the health workforce.	The goal is to promote policies that create and empower healthy communities, especially low-income and minority communities.	Being the voices for people of color in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Engaging and educating these communities about the new policies to get the word out Finding solutions to improve access to health care for low-income and minority communities.	Workforce diversity, Medicaid, MediCal, disease management apps, health insurance, digital inequality, healthcare reform, healthcare access, health wealth gap **Policies/Current Events** Affordable Care Act, AB 52 **People/Groups/Org** Health Benefit Exchange, CA Endowment, CA Wellness Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Center for American Progress, Covered California

3. Follow Mainstream and Alternative Media Sources

Social media have become the new source for breaking news. Follow popular media sources like CNN, Huffington Post, BBC, Al Jazeera, etc. These media sources constantly provide breaking news spanning a local to global reach. You may also want to follow other media sources depending on the nature of your organization's work, such as local, ethnic and alternative media outlets, etc. Following different media sources is advantageous because it gives you access to a plethora of news and information. Follow a manageable number of accounts that won't overburden your monitoring capability. Listening to traditional media sources will provide you the opportunity to immediately share important news related to your organization's work and contribute to mainstream conversations.

> **Social media have become the new source for breaking news.**

For resources on how to Like/Follow accounts on Facebook and Twitter, see Appendix B.

4. Determine What's Hot and What's Not

Use social media search tools to determine if something is buzzing online! Have your list of buzz terms on hand for your different programs/issues to help identify popular topics. We recommend these tools:

- **Twitter Search** – built right into the Twitter platform, this tool lets you search what keywords are being discussed in real-time on Twitter through the use of **hashtags**
- **Netvibes** – a tool that allows you to input a keyword and see if it is being discussed on Twitter and other various social media such as **blogs**
- **Facebook Graph Search** – the new search tool built into the Facebook platform that allows you to search user accounts and hashtags to listen to what is being said about particular topics

For resources on how to listen on Facebook and Twitter, see Appendix B.

After searching, aim to get around 4-5 buzz terms for each of your programs/issues that you can closely monitor. Often, you will find hashtags related to these buzz terms. Develop a set of criteria that outlines what is considered a trending topic for your organization to help you prioritize hashtags to follow closely.

Example Criteria:		
NON-TRENDING (TOSS)	**MEDIUM**	**HOT**
Frequency: no recent posts about topic (more than a week) **Users:** only a couple of users are talking about the topic **Relevancy:** difficult to make connections to organization	**Frequency:** Posts about topic have been made in the past couple of days, but not as heavy in volume **Users:** a sizable amount of users are discussing the topic, but may not be as consistent **Relevancy:** has connections to organization's work, and can easily reframe topic	**Frequency:** Posts about topic are being made consistently each day **Users:** more than 15 users are talking about the topic, posting original content, and sharing others' content **Relevancy:** has direct connections to the work of your organization

Keep in mind that the buzz always changes. With the 24-hour news cycle, new issues will take the forefront of mainstream media every day, so set a schedule to regularly update your terms.

How to Communicate on Social Media

The basis of social media is good old-fashioned communication. You are speaking and listening to people online, so knowing how to communicate is vital.

1. KISS = Keep It Short and Simple

In social media, being short and simple is key. The most effective messages are engaging, get straight to the point, and use links and images for enhancement. To make your content accessible to a wide audience, use plain English and avoid wonky, technical language that only people in your circle of work understand. Speak in a way that is understandable and conversational. You want to let the person who has no clue about your programs/issues to easily understand what you are saying. Invite people to join the conversation — don't leave them out of it.

> Invite people to join the conversation — don't leave them out of it.

On Twitter, you have a 140-character limit per **tweet,** so make the most of every character. The use of well-known acronyms is acceptable and encouraged, such as "CA" for California or "POTUS" for President of the United States. If you want to link your audience to important websites or news articles, use a link shortening tool like **bit.ly** to shorten website addresses to 20 characters (see Appendix B) and track **click-through rates.**

Anatomy of a Tweet

Mention

Hashtag

Link
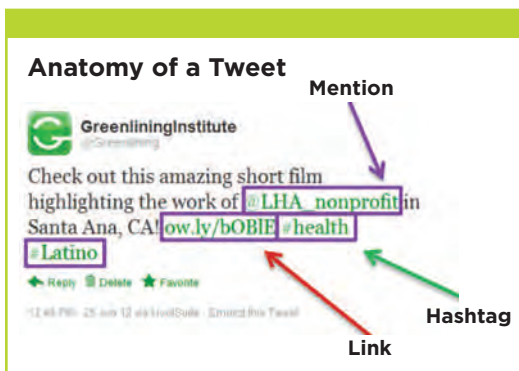
Facebook doesn't have a strict character limit, but the same rules of brevity and simplicity still apply. Engage your audience early by hooking them with short, effective messages.

2. Develop an Online Voice That Shows Your Personality

Just like in-person interactions, social media interactions revolve around relationships. Audiences want to know that there is a real person listening and speaking to them, so be yourself and showcase your organization's personality. An online voice that is conversational and authentic will get people excited to hear what you have to say.

Develop content filled with witty, funny, and snarky messages! Poke fun, crack a joke! Be serious when you need to be, but understand that you shouldn't be serious 24/7. Share good news, funny jokes, and entertaining tidbits that your audience can relate to. Craft a voice that moves your audience to share your organization's work and remember that it will take time and testing to pinpoint the online voice your audience is receptive to. Do you want your voice to be more academic or advocacy-based? Local or global? Experiment with different voices and find the one that engages your audience best.

> Social media interactions revolve around relationships.

3. Tag (Almost) Everything

Tagging allows organizations to build relationships and create focused conversations with others by showing them that you are talking about a specific topic, person, or group through a post. You can highlight and share the work of organizations and individuals by giving them "shout-outs" through tags. Social media tags help out other organizations and individuals by making their name, brand, or issues visible and searchable. In return for tagging users and topics on social media, your organization gains good social media karma by potentially getting tags, follows, likes, or shares reciprocated.

**Hashtags** on Facebook and Twitter, denoted by the "#" symbol, are used to mark clickable keywords or topics in a message. For example, if someone clicks on a hashtag for #healthcare, it will open up a search **stream** that shows all posts/tweets related to the topic, giving organizations and individuals the opportunity to listen, find people talking about the topic, and insert themselves into conversations. Thus, using hashtags to mark different topics and keywords is essential to listening and engagement.

@ On Twitter, the process of tagging other users is through **mentions,** denoted by the "@" symbol, which allow you to tag an organization or individual's Twitter account to let them know you are talking about them. Mentions are important to use if you seek to engage in direct conversation with other users.

On Facebook, you can tag other **Facebook Pages** in your messages by typing "@" followed by the name of the individual or organization you're looking to tag. You can only tag Pages, which are public, and not personal accounts, which are private. User tags are important for engaging in direct conversation.

For detailed instructions for tagging on Facebook and Twitter, see resources in Appendix B.

4. Be Responsive.

With an authentic voice, you're likely to receive regular feedback and responses from your audience. Make your audience a priority and reply promptly to any **comments** or **replies** that you receive. Prompt replies indicate that there's an attentive person behind your social media accounts. Even if you receive negative feedback, your replies should be respectful and constructive. Courtesy and respect are key! Being responsive to your audience will make them feel that their opinions and feedback are valued.

5. Share Good Content: Photos, Videos, and Links

Pictures really do speak a thousand words. Photos and videos are powerful at capturing the attention of social media users. In fact, Facebook gives more value to photo and video posts, and puts them at the top of **newsfeeds.** Visuals are more likely than plain text to grab and hold the attention of social media users. If you want your content to be visible, attaching a photo or video will generate more feedback in the form of likes, comments, and shares. Make sure the photos and videos you share are relevant to your work and the story you want to tell.

When you come across great content, like a news article or website, you need to share it out! Attaching links to posts on Facebook and Twitter is a best practice that will help you increase engagement.

Some examples of photo and video posts include: pictures from events that you hosted or attended; **infographics** that explain complicated issues; **YouTube** video clips of news segments and stories, etc. Links you may want to share include news articles, online resources, event invites, and important websites. At the end of the day, choose content that you think will resonate with your audience.

For instructions on how to post media on Facebook and Twitter, check out Appendix B.

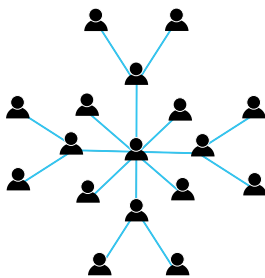**Examples:**

Facebook

Twitter

How to Build an Audience and Following

Communicating on social media is pointless if you don't have an audience listening to you. Building your audience and follower base is an integral part of any social media strategy, and one that takes time. Some people obsess over numbers of Facebook likes and Twitter followers, viewing these as the primary indicators of success. However, the quality of your followers is more important than the quantity. A large base helps, but quality followers and fans will get you there.

> The quality of your followers is more important than the quantity.

1. Start with Who You Know

Start building your audience with your immediate networks. Publicize your Facebook and Twitter accounts amongst your staff: Send out an email instructing them to like your Facebook page and Twitter account, then have them go a step further by asking them to share the accounts with their own networks. Tap into the close relationships and partnerships your organization has with other groups and individuals, and create a simple **ask** to have them follow you and publicize your accounts with their own networks as well. It's all about the **snowflake effect** when it comes to social media: After tapping into your close relationships, your audience should organically build and expand. Just don't forget the other crucial strategy elements that will help you build an audience, like sharing engaging content.

2. Follow Active Partner Organizations and Identified Influencers

Continue building your base by following and identifying organizations and influencers that do similar work. A compiled list of partner organizations and influencers will come in handy here (see How to Listen, Tip #2). Search for these organizations and individuals on Facebook and Twitter, and follow/like them if they have accounts. Once you follow these accounts, you can check out who they follow and like, thus expanding your list of organizations and individuals to follow.

- **Twitter Search** – suggests user accounts based on your search keywords
- **Facebook Graph Search** – can show you which Facebook Pages other organizations like

For resources on how to search for influencers and trending topics, see Appendix B.

Next, create criteria that will help you determine whether you should follow certain accounts. You want to follow accounts that are active and engaging.

Sample Criteria:					
Type of Accounts	**# of Followers/ Fans (Reach)**	**Post Frequency**	**Type of Activity**	**Intended Audience**	**Post Variation**
Organizations Reporters, Journalists, Public Figures, Media Sources, Supporters, Activists, etc.	Account **has at least 500** followers is a good indicator of effective reach, but may also depend on the quality of content.	Look for users **that post daily (multiple times),** or at least haven't been inactive for more than a week.	Accounts that share information on related issues, engages directly with other users, asks others for feedback	Look for accounts that cater to diverse audiences	Includes links to news articles, photos, videos, as well as promotion of websites/blogs.

3. Follow Back and Share!

Over time, individuals and organizations will naturally like your Facebook page and follow you on Twitter. Return the favor! Reciprocity creates good karma, and you may eventually see the favors returned. Like and follow accounts in return (though be wary of **spammers** and **bots** and make sure to screen profiles in advance), and don't forget to give them a quick shout-out and thank you for their support.

On Facebook, tag organizations and individuals in your status updates or comments whenever you want to highlight their work or thank them for something. On Twitter, you can mention new followers in **Follow Fridays (#FF),** which is the day in the week where Twitter users regularly give shout-outs to followers and user accounts they want to highlight and appreciate.

4. Listen to Conversations and Insert Your Voice

Another way to increase your visibility is to insert yourself into online conversations and start a dialogue! As you peruse your newsfeeds on Facebook and Twitter, you're likely to find posts that you feel inclined to comment on and respond to. If you're on Facebook, comment on the post with your organization's thoughts, especially if the post is asking a question and seeking a response. If you're on Twitter, send a reply to the tweet and get a conversation going. Pose questions and share original content to get a conversation flowing. By inserting yourself into conversations, users on Facebook and Twitter will notice your interest in a topic or issue, and will wonder what your organization is about. If they share similar interests, they may like/follow you.

On Facebook and Twitter, listen to conversations by searching **hashtags.** If there is already a conversation on a certain topic (i.e. Affordable Care Act, #ACA), then you can use **Twitter Search** and **Facebook Graph Search** to find all of the posts related to the conversation. This allows you to find users to reply to and engage with in conversation. This is an organic method of building online relationships with organizations and individuals that you may have never interacted with before.

5. Hashtag All of Your Major Events and Campaigns

Attending and hosting events provide opportunities to build online communities and expand your audience base. Create hashtags for every event that you host or attend, and for campaigns that you promote. This allows people to contribute to online conversations at events and throughout the duration of campaigns in real time. In addition, people who aren't physically present for events will still have an opportunity to follow conversations online, build relationships, and engage.

Tip: Create hashtags for every event that you host or attend, and for campaigns that you promote.

Brand your hashtag with something easy to remember and relevant to what your event or campaign is about. For example, at Greenlining, we host our annual Economic Summit and our theme for 2013 was "Vision 20/20: Our Legacy, Our Horizon." The hashtag we chose for the event was "#vision2020." We ran a campaign in 2012 to pass a bill in the California legislature, and used the hashtag "#SB1233," the number of the bill. Choose unique hashtags to make sure that the conversations are focused.

Since hashtags are public, many may already be in use, which can be a good thing. As long as the conversation is related to what you're talking about, then it's completely okay to use the existing hashtag. In fact, you'll be offering new perspectives to ongoing conversations. However, if existing conversations are out of scope, then you may want to find another unique hashtag to brand your event or campaign.

How to Manage Social Media Accounts

Managing multiple social media accounts may seem overwhelming, but there are tools and practices that can make everything manageable and fun.
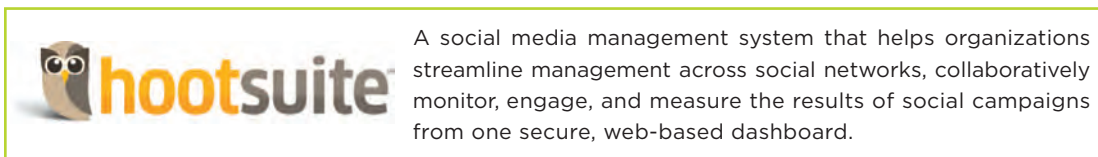
1. Update Accounts on a Regular Basis

Outdated information is frustrating, so update the information on your social media accounts regularly (contact information, the About section, etc.). Review your information once a month to make sure it reflects the current state of your organization. If you have important changes to contact information or staffing, update them immediately. Ensure that your phone numbers, addresses, staff rosters, and website information are all up to date so that your audience can easily reach you. Just like any healthy relationship, you want to be reliable and accessible.

2. Use a Content Management Tool

If you're already using Facebook and Twitter, a **content management tool** will be helpful to manage both at the same time. There are a variety of free and paid tools available for social media users, such as **Hootsuite,** Seesmic, Tweetdeck, etc. Each of these tools has advantages and disadvantages, so check out each one and find what works best for you.

If you're starting out, try Hootsuite first. The basic version of Hootsuite is free and allows you to manage your Facebook and Twitter accounts at the same time. You can create dashboards of all of the news feeds and **streams** you find relevant. Special built-in features allow you to focus your streams on specific keywords, hashtags or lists of users. You also have the ability to schedule social media posts throughout the day, week, and month, giving you the flexibility to ensure you have regular activity on Facebook and Twitter. You can efficiently schedule future posts anytime during the day, which can free up the rest of your day for other tasks and projects. Hootsuite also provides basic **analytics** that help you measure your social media impact. Bottom line: Content management tools will make your job easier!

A social media management system that helps organizations streamline management across social networks, collaboratively monitor, engage, and measure the results of social campaigns from one secure, web-based dashboard.

For resources on using Hootsuite, see Appendix B.

3. Follow and Like New Accounts on a Regular Basis

As you build your social media strategy, there will be points where you'll need new information and content. Following and liking new accounts on a regular basis will open up access to more shareable content and opportunities to build relationships with social media users. If capacity permits, follow and like new accounts on a weekly basis, advisably at the end of the week.

Opportunities will arise that will prompt you to follow and like new accounts, such as events you host or attend where there are organizational representatives in attendance. Do your research in advance and see whether these individuals and organizations have social media accounts, so you can follow and like them beforehand. By doing this, you can directly interact with them during events by mentioning them or tagging them, which allows you to engage and build relationships.

4. Create Lists of User Accounts on Twitter

The number of accounts you like and follow may become overwhelming to the point that your newsfeeds are overloaded with information. For example, what if you're searching through your news feed for content related to a specific issue area? It can be frustrating having to sift through the numerous updates on your Twitter and Facebook newsfeed to find relevant content.

Creating **Twitter lists** can make listening easy. For example, you can maintain lists for each of your issue areas (e.g. health, education, economic justice), lists for specific kinds of people (e.g. reporters, elected officials, staff members, etc.), and lists for different media sources (e.g. national, state, local, ethnic). By creating lists, you can sort user accounts into different groups and create focused streams of posts.

Additionally, creating Twitter lists allows other users to be notified that they have been added to a list, which gives them an incentive to give you a mention or follow you back. Users can also subscribe to your lists which can signify user appreciation for your social media activity. To make social media monitoring easier, sort each of the accounts you are following into a list, and have them categorized.
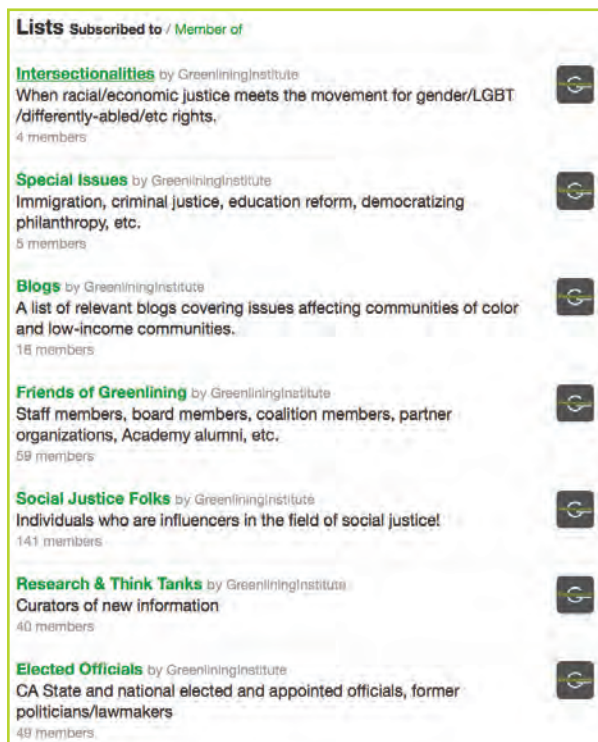
For resources on how to create Twitter lists, check out Appendix B.

How to Generate Consistent and Engaging Content

Creative, engaging content and consistency are key ingredients for an effective social media strategy. Engaging content is what gets your audience members hooked and establishes your organization as a reliable source for information. What you choose to share on social media helps you to determine what types of information your audience is most interested in. Once you get an idea of what interests them, you can build on this strength and continue generating similar content.

1. Aim for Daily Posts and Activity

Consistency is key! Constant activity on social media establishes your organization as a legitimate source of information on issues your organization works on. Consistency gains trust from other social media users. Inconsistency, on the other hand, not only highlights an organization's lack of presence and recognition, but might also cause users to forget about you altogether.

To avoid being forgotten, set goals for daily activity. Realistically, this is dependent on your staff capacity, but successful social media accounts are consistently posting and engaging. If capacity is an issue, aim for particular days to post, or at least have weekly activity. Set realistic objectives for how much activity you want to accomplish each day on social media. Here are some recommendations:

> What you choose to share on social media helps you to determine what types of information your audience is most interested in.

Set Realistic Objectives:

FACEBOOK	TWITTER
Share 1-2 posts each day, preferably photos and news articles	Share 9-12 tweets each day, a mixture of original tweets, retweets, and direct mentions
Like, comment, and share posts from other organizations and individuals	Favorite (like) other users' tweets
Like new Facebook Pages	Follow new Twitter accounts, and sort into appropriate Twitter lists

2. Diversify Types of Content You Share

Make an effort to mix up the types of content that you share. Sharing news article after news article can get boring. You want to ensure that your audience is engaged by varying your content: share a video or image, tell a story, highlight partner organizations, etc. Creating original content for social media is a gamechanger and requires creative brainstorming because you want to share content that will excite and engage your audience.

> You want to share content that will excite and engage your audience.

Some examples of engaging content include: infographics, quotes/photos/videos of the day, creative spins on mainstream events and holidays (i.e. Olympics, Thanksgiving, etc.), relevant statistics and resources, etc. Look to popular nonprofits like the AIDS Healthcare Foundation or Amnesty International for ideas on messaging, and test them out with your own audiences to see if they will work. Popular messaging techniques include posts that ask a question or "fill in the blank." Don't fall victim to the trap of being comfortable with your social media posts. Challenge yourself and take the time to brainstorm with others to think of new, engaging content to share.

Content Ideas:

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
Photo/Video/Quote of the Day	Hero/Villain of the Week	Social media campaigns that co-opt mainstream events (e.g. Olympics)
Articles and stories focusing on issue areas and program work	Song of the Week	Celebrate holidays, staff birthdays, cause/history month celebrations
Question of the day	Art Piece of the Week	Photo, video, and advocacy campaigns
Daily column (e.g. Diversity Today!)	Inspiring Story of the Week	Executive Director's Round-Up
Opportunity of the Day	Weekly ask to increase followers, fans, and email subscribers	
Statistic of the Day	Shoutouts and acknowledgements	

3. Develop a Flexible Weekly Post Schedule

The nonprofit work environment can be demanding, especially when juggling multiple hats, responsibilities, and projects. Social media work takes time and investment and requires an intentional effort to maintain constant activity. To sustain your focus on social media, develop a flexible weekly schedule that outlines the types of posts you share each day. By doing this, you can focus your efforts each day on finding specific content, rather than aimlessly fishing through your newsfeed for relevant material.

Tell stories that will excite and engage your audience!

When developing a weekly post schedule, take into account your organization's different programs and issues, and ensure that each are covered adequately. Be creative with other types of content. For example, you can give quotes of encouragement on Wednesdays (Hump Day), participate in Follow Fridays, celebrate staff birthdays, etc. Tell stories that will excite and engage your audience!

Sample Post Schedule					
MONDAY	**TUESDAY**	**WEDNESDAY**	**THURSDAY**	**FRIDAY**	**WEEKENDS**
Breaking/hot news related issues & programs	Breaking/hot news related to issues & programs	Breaking/hot news related to issues & programs	Breaking/hot news related to issues & programs	Breaking/hot news related to issues & programs	Breaking news related to issues & programs
Highlight Issue #1	Highlight Issue #2	Highlight Issue #3	Highlight Issue #4	Highlight Issue #5	Fun and personal posts with humor
Promote events for the week	Highlight on Social Media	Highlight on Research	Spotlight on Staff	Follow Friday (#FF)	
Share resources	Highlight on Leadership Academy	Encouraging and empowering quotes	Behind the scenes look at the organization	Promote local weekend events	
Mainstream news round-up	Promote current online campaign	Promote current online campaign	Share job opportunities	Fun Friday – share something fun	
			Throwback Thursday		

Once you create a flexible schedule that works for your organization, test it out and observe what types of content work well on particular days and times. For example, Mondays may not be great days to roll out online campaign content since a lot of people are easing themselves into the work week. As a result, you might want to focus on promoting this content during the middle of the week. The prime hours to post on weekdays are between 11a.m. – 2p.m. EST. Posts on the weekends are also effective. There will be a process of trial and error, but you will quickly learn how your post schedule needs to evolve and adjust.

4. Dedicate Time Each Day for Listening

Dedicate time each day to peruse your social media newsfeeds for the latest news and information. If capacity permits, spend at least 1-2 hours/day looking through your news feed for new material and to interact with other users. Utilize your weekly schedule to narrow your search for specific content. Take advantage of the various search tools that can help you look for trending topics, influencers, and join unique opportunities like **Twitter Chats.** Twitter Chats are scheduled ahead of time and provide an opportunity for users to join a focused dialogue on a specific topic. As a result, organizations can experience increased engagement and follows after a successful Twitter Chat. Utilize Hootsuite or a similar content management tool to schedule your posts throughout the day to give you more time for listening and responding to others in real-time.

Split your listening time into two different parts of the day — in the morning and in the afternoon. Your morning listening session gives you information and news that developed overnight, while your afternoon session provides information that happened throughout the day. If capacity permits, increase the amount of time that you spend listening on social media. Make efficient use of your time — curate content for your audience, comment and reply to users, and like/retweet/schedule posts.

How to Develop a Social Media Policy

There will come a time when the social media fever spreads to your staff. This is exciting! However, this excitement also poses some challenges and potential dangers. For example, how do you manage the content that various staff members post and send out? What is considered an appropriate post as a nonprofit employee? Where do the lines between the personal and professional lie? These are questions that need clearly defined answers. Developing a **social media policy** allows you to clear up any confusion by giving your organization clear guidelines for what should and shouldn't be done on social media. A good policy outlines your organization's values and social media goals, and indicates the roles and responsibilities that staff members have. This can both prevent problems and ease wariness regarding social media usage.

For an example of a social media policy, see Appendix B.

> A good policy outlines your organization's values and social media goals, and indicates the roles and responsibilities that staff members have.

1. Define Roles and Responsibilities

Determining the specific roles and responsibilities regarding social media for your organization will help with efficiency and management. It's a good practice to have at least one person focused on developing and implementing your social media strategy. In addition to defining roles, consider creating a system of checks and balances. Do your posts have to get approved by a superior? If so, what kinds of posts? Who speaks officially about your organization, and about which topics? Figuring out this system ahead of time will give your organization the peace of mind it needs to confidently participate in social media.

Make sure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. If you have an intern working on social media, what is he/she able to do? Create clear guidelines for what everyone is expected to do so you can easily facilitate damage control if issues arise.

2. Create Do's and Don'ts

One way to define expectations is to create a "Do's and Don'ts" of social media for your organization. Keep your restrictions limited and reasonable since you want to incentivize your staff to use social media, but also be clear about what is not acceptable. The "do's" should give encouraging reasons for participating in social media, while the "don'ts" provide guidelines that everyone should follow in order to protect his/her reputation as well as the reputation of the organization.

Sample Do's and Don'ts:	
DO	**DON'T**
1. Be professional — in and out of work. What you share still reflects on the organization.	**1.** Post anything that will jeopardize the organization (i.e. partisan endorsements if you're a tax-exempt nonprofit)
2. Be responsible — remember what you publish will be attributed to you	**2.** Post anything that you don't want the public to see (inappropriate activities, etc.) — a good rule of thumb: if you don't want your parents to see it, don't post it!
3. Be transparent — use a disclaimer that states views are your own.	**3.** Post anything obscene, offensive, or profane (without good cause)
4. Be respectful and civil — don't make defamatory or insulting comments	**4.** Reveal confidential information, especially if it is work-related
5. Think before you post — keep in mind the global audience you're sharing with	**5.** Intentionally mislead or misrepresent the truth
6. Be factual — make sure you can back up what you say	
7. Ask questions — if ever in doubt, ask the point person for social media	

3. Develop Plans for Troubleshooting and Damage Control

The essence of social media is dialogue, but stimulating a conversation means that sooner or later you will get reactions that are negative or even hostile. What do you do if you receive negative comments on your Facebook page or Twitter account? Do you reply? Ignore it? It helps to think about these issues in advance.

The first thing to remember is that constructive criticism and respectful disagreement are healthy. They show that people are listening, and can be opportunities to educate, inform, and explain. But you may also receive "hate mail" — messages intended to insult and provoke rather than promote dialogue. You want to develop conversations that forward constructive solutions rather than continue pointless arguments.

> Constructive criticism and respectful disagreement are healthy.

When these issues arise, we recommend using Idealware's matrix to respond to negative feedback.

Using Idealware's Matrix	
If someone says something bad...[4]	
1. Can you turn a complaint into an opportunity?	**IF YES,** you should probably respond. Figure out who will respond and what you will say. Be respectful, courteous, and solution-oriented in your reply.
2. Does the post have misinformation in it?	**IF YES,** you should probably respond. Figure out who will respond and what you will say. Clear up any misleading information.
3. Will it damage your community?	**IF YES,** consider taking the post down.
4. Does it include vulgarity or purposefully inflammatory language?	**IF YES,** consider taking the post down.
5. Are they likely to keep posting objectionable things simply because you're responding?	**IF YES,** you may want to stop responding after a certain point.

4. Defining the Personal/Professional Line

Social media have increasingly blurred the line between personal and professional. For example, if you identify with an organization on Twitter or Facebook, you can become associated as a voice of that organization on the web. It's difficult to keep the personal and professional worlds completely separate. While privacy settings can hide some information, there are still ways to make connections. For these reasons, it's important to be conscious of how you use social media. The customs governing social media usage are still new and developing, so it's hard to say what is and isn't allowed.

Common Advice:

1. Do not post anything that you do not want your parents, CNN, or your boss to see.

2. As a nonprofit employee, use caution when posting partisan political messages. You want to be explicit that the views you share are your own, and not necessarily those of your employer.

3. Make sure you explicitly state that the views you provide on your personal page do not represent the views of your organization or employer. Include a disclaimer on your profiles.

4. It's okay to express your viewpoints, just be respectful.

5. Remember, the Internet is forever! Don't post anything that you don't want to be available indefinitely.

The personal and professional balance shows why guidelines are important. Once you create them, you can move on and tackle the fun parts of social media, like telling your story and building an audience.

Tip: Include a disclaimer on your profiles.

Sample Disclaimer:

Opinions expressed are solely my own and do not express the views or opinions of my employer.

How to Measure Effectiveness

Social media managers constantly wonder if we're creating an impact within our organization's goals: "Are we getting a return on our investment?" It depends on the social media goals you set for your organization. In order to measure how effective your social media strategy is, you need to revisit your goals and define **markers** that will track your progress. And you need to do this consistently. Aiming for growth requires constant reflection and re-strategizing. As you evaluate your strategy, you'll adapt it to incorporate tactics that work and improve those that don't.

1. Identify Objectives and Goals

In the "Starting Out" section of this guide, we emphasized, the importance of creating a vision and **SMART objectives.** It is easy to get caught up in the common "I want more followers" goal. What you really need to ask yourself is WHY you want more followers and exactly WHAT you are going to do with them once you get them. Goals outline your purpose for using social media, while your objectives specifically state what you want to accomplish to achieve your goal.

SMART Objectives
Example:
GOAL: engage our social media audience on our issues
OBJECTIVE: get at least 50 Facebook comments on our posts and 150 mentions on Twitter each month

Goals are broad and speak more to your vision of using social media, while your objectives are more specific. Identifying a list of goals and their corresponding objectives will define exactly what you want out of social media. Not all organizations have the same goals and objectives. Some may want to use social media to raise money, while others want to build an extensive network for actions. Your goals and objectives depend on your organization's vision and mission, which is why there is no one-size-fits-all formula for social media.

> Your goals and objectives depend on your organization's vision and mission, which is why there is no one-size-fits-all formula for social media.

2. Define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Metrics

Key performance indicators (KPIs) help you track your progress towards achieving your goals and objectives. **Metrics** are the numbers that you capture. KPIs and metrics can be confusing, but remember you're not tracking numbers for fun, but rather to tie these numbers to your goals. Don't obsess about the number of followers you have, but think of the related KPIs to get a better sense of your effectiveness. There are different KPIs you can measure, such as: total amount of followers and fans, your growth rate over a period of time, the reach you have on Facebook and Twitter, etc. Choose KPIs that speak to your goals and objectives, and make sure they are quantitative and measurable.

Example:					
Goal	**Objective**	**Strategy**	**Tactic**	**KPI**	**Metric Goal**
Engage our audience to talk about our issues	Regular comments on Facebook posts and Twitter mentions	Pose questions on Facebook. Participate in chats on Twitter to mention other users.	Ask questions on current issues. Listen to the current hashtags trending on Twitter.	# of Facebook comments, # of Twitter mentions	50 Facebook comments, 150 Twitter mentions

For a guide to creating key performance indicators, see Appendix B.

3. Collect Metrics on a Consistent Basis

Collect and measure your KPIs at least monthly, at the end of the month. A month's measurement will provide a good sense of growth. When you measure, look into specific details, such as the types of posts that were the most effective, and take note of them. Evaluate your social media strategy each month and continue tactics that seem to be effective, and get rid of tactics that were not. You may notice trends in your metrics that can be explained by factors such as the types of content you share, events that you attended, and others that can explain performance in a given month. Take note of these trends because they will help you evaluate and improve your social media strategy moving forward.

For resources on analytics and measurement, see Appendix B.

4. Create a Master Spreadsheet

Be organized! Keep all of your metrics in a central spreadsheet. An Excel document will be a handy tool that can help you create graphs and tables of your social media progress throughout a given time period. You can use this information to figure out why you performed a certain way during particular months. Match up your metrics to your goals and objectives to analyze how well you do in each area. Keep a folder of all social media analytics reports and dedicate time to analyze and understand the numbers to develop better social media tactics and strategies for the future.

Example: Facebook Metrics									
Goal	**Metric**	**Jan-12**	**Feb-12**	**Mar-12**	**Apr-12**	**May-12**	**Jun-12**	**Jul-12**	**Aug-12**
Active Community Engagement	# Comments on Posts	7	7	12	5	16	12	9	12
	Average # Engaged Users per Post	14	9	9	13	10	22	16	32
	# Likes on Posts	89	70	134	89	111	129	159	296

CONCLUSION

The beauty and curse of social media is that the landscape is always changing. Platforms are always updating the way that users experience social media and new tools are being introduced. Nonetheless, the future of social media is hopeful and exciting, and its potential will continue growing as new individuals and organizations join each day. The goal is to figure out ways to harness this potential, and drive it to create the change that we are seeking in our work. We hope that this strategy guide has helped you master the basics of social media and prepared you for the inevitable changes to come.

As you embark on your social media journey, we want to end with key lessons we've learned from being in the same situation:

There's no one-size-fits-all solution to being "good" at social media. Organizations have different priorities and audiences, and you need to determine what strategies work best for yours.

Getting good at social media will require time and risks. Don't expect overnight success. Remember to try out new things and learn from your mistakes. Put in the time and effort, and you will be rewarded.

Embrace the inevitable changes and adapt to them. Facebook and Twitter will always introduce new functions and tools. Don't be afraid of them! Adapt and determine how you can leverage them.

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APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF SOCIAL MEDIA TERMS[5,6]

Analytics | Quantitative and qualitative measures of social media activity used to evaluate impact and effectiveness

Ask | A clear demand that is articulated through a statement (Ex: "LIKE this post if you agree!")

Bit.ly | A free URL shortening service that shrinks links to 25 characters and provides statistics for links that users share online to measure effectiveness

Blog | Short for "web log." Essentially an online collection of entries focusing on commentary or discussions around certain topics and issues

Bot | An account managed by a computer that sends out automated messages to spam other users.

Buzz terms | Terms that are drawing attention around a certain issue or topic. A term creates buzz when it is well-known in wide circles

Comment | A response that is often provided as an answer or reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of two-way communication on the social web

Content management tool | An online tool like Hootsuite used to manage different social media accounts at the same time

Event hashtag | (see Hashtag) A hashtag used to brand a sponsored or hosted event to make it easy for social media users to engage with updates from the event and contribute to conversations

Facebook | Facebook is a social network that connects individuals and organizations globally and allows people to easily share information and interact with one another. Facebook is the largest social network in the world with more than 1.1 billion users

Facebook Graph Search | The new search tool built into the Facebook platform that allows you to create targeted searches on user accounts and hashtags to listen to what is being said about specific topics

Facebook Page | Pages allows organizations to publicly connect with people on Facebook through the sharing of content. Admins can post information and newsfeed updates to people who Like their pages.

Facebook Timeline | The Facebook profile page for an individual or organization that shows the collection of photos, stories, and updates that a user shares

Follow | On a social network, when you follow a user, you subscribe to the content that they share with others, which will be displayed through your newsfeed

Follow Friday (#FF) | Follow Friday is a trend via the hashtag #ff every Friday on Twitter. Users select other usernames and tweet them with #ff in their post, meaning they recommend following those Twitter users

Followers | People who have signed up on social networks to receive your shared content

Hashtag | A tag used on social networks indicated by the "#" symbol used to aggregate and organize messages for the purpose of centralizing and marking topics in conversations. Hashtags are searchable and allow social media users to zone in and listen to conversations regarding specific topics. (Ex: #healthcare, #race, #SanFrancisco)

Hootsuite | A social media management system that helps organizations streamline management across social networks such as Twitter and Facebook. Teams can collaboratively monitor, engage, and measure the results of social campaigns from one secure, web-based dashboard

Influencer | A social media user/personality that is actively engaged and has a large audience base, especially within their specific sector/industry

Infographics | Graphics that are used to visually display information and data in a simple, engaging way

Insights | Facebook's built-in analytics tool that is used to track Page activity and user demographics

Instagram | Instagram is a photo sharing application that lets users take photos, apply filters to their images, and share the photos instantly on the Instagram network and other social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) | (see Metrics) Metrics that help you understand how well you are achieving your objectives and goals

Like | A feature in social networks that allows users to recommend content or demonstrate agreement with commentary, and also serves to move popular content up in the news feed or search rankings. In Facebook, when users Like a page, they subscribe to the respective page's updates.

List | A way to combine select people you follow on Twitter into a smaller feed. A list can be made up of friends, influencers in different topics, types of people, etc. Lists let you view a slice of your followers at a time and are a great way to focus on specific folks when you're following a large number of people.

Markers | Benchmarks that help define your progress towards reaching goals and objectives

Mention | Mentioning another user in your Tweet by including the "@" sign followed directly by their username is called a 'mention.' Also refers to Tweets in which your username was included.

Metrics | Numbers and quantities collected based on different measures to evaluate goals and strategies

Netvibes | A free online social media management and dashboard service that allows users to monitor and analyze conversations to determine buzz worthy topics.

Newsfeed | A continuous feed of updates and news that you want to receive or have subscribed to. On Twitter, it is the collection of tweets from accounts you have followed. On Facebook, it is the collection of posts and updates from your "friends" and fan pages you have liked.

Reply | An @reply is a Tweet posted in reply to another user's message. This is usually done by clicking the "reply" button in their Tweet. @replies always begin with the "@" symbol, follwed by the username.

Retweet | A Retweet is a repeated tweet. It is sometimes used in a reply to allow everyone to see the original tweet. It is also used to forward a message onto one's own followers.

SMART objectives | A statement that is specific, measurable, attainable, result-oriented, and timely outlining the goals and purpose of engaging in an activity

Snowflake effect | the organic process of building an online audience that first starts with the people in your immediate networks, with the aim of eventually reaching people you don't know.

Social media | Social media are works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment such as a social network. Social media refers to any online technology that lets people publish, converse and share content online

Social media monitoring | The process of sifting through social media feeds to listen and zone in on the issues and topics that online audiences are engaged with and talking about

Spammer | a bot that sends out spam (masses of automated, unwanted content or junk mail)

Stream | (see News Feed) Similar to a news feed, a stream is a continually updated list of content related to a specific topic or issue area

Trending topics | A word, phrase, or topic that is popular at any given moment. In Twitter, trending topics are the collection of hashtags and keywords that are being used extensively at a given moment.

Tweet | A message shared through Twitter, limited by 140 characters

Twitter | Twitter is a real-time information social network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting. Tweets (or updates) are 140 characters long.

Twitter Chat | An online conversation scheduled and hosted by Twitter users focusing on a specific topic. A great way to build community with like-minded users interested and invested a particular topic.

Twitter lists | Curated groups of other Twitter users created so that users can have specific streams of content related to a particular group of Twitter users. (Ex: Reporters, Elected Officials, Social Justice)

Twitter Search | A box on your Twitter homepage that allows you to search all public Tweets for keywords, usernames, hashtags, or subjects

YouTube | YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch, and share originally-created videos. YouTube is a video-sharing network that provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe through the use of video.

APPENDIX B: SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS & RESOURCES

Twitter Tools & Resources
- **How to Set Up A Twitter Account** | Twitter tutorial for setting up an account and getting started
- **How to Follow Twitter Accounts** | Twitter tutorial that outlines the steps for following others
- **How to Post Media on Twitter** | Twitter tutorial that outlines the directions for posting media
- **Twitter Search** | search Twitter in real time via keywords and discover trending topics
- **The Archivist** | a tool that gives you a range of Twitter analytics to visually display top Tweets based on mentions and retweets, and how keywords/hashtags have trended over time
- **Retweet Rank** | gives you detailed and aggregated retweet analytics and users
- **Twitter Counter** | tool that shows you weekly, monthly, 3-month, and 6-month statistics of your account
- **bit.ly** | a link-shortening tool that transforms long links into 20-character links. Also tracks click-through rates to measure impact and effectiveness
- **act.ly** | a shareable Twitter petition advocacy tool. Great for campaigns
- **Visual Tweets** | a free online tweet visualizer that can be used to vividly display live-tweets at events
- **Twubs** | an online tool that allows you to register hashtags and facilitate live Twitter Chats
- **TwtBlock** | find out how many of your followers are spammers so that you can trash them
- **Commun.it** | Twitter dashboard that allows you to manage multiple accounts, monitor engagement, focus on your top influencers, and create lists

Facebook Tools & Resources
- **How to Set Up a Facebook Page** | a guide by Facebook that outlines the major steps of creating a Facebook Page, and how they can best be utilized by nonprofit organizations
- **How to Like Other Facebook Pages** | Facebook tutorial that outlines the directions for liking other Pages
- **How to Post Media on Facebook** | Facebook tutorial that walks you through the steps to post media
- **How to Use Facebook Graph Search** | details five ways that Facebook Graph search will help nonprofits
- **How to Use Facebook Insights** | Facebook tutorial that walks you through using Insights for evaluation
- **All-Facebook** | "the unofficial Facebook resource" provides recent news and tips about the social site
- **Branding on Facebook** | a definitive guide for creating and crafting an online brand on Facebook
- **Upworthy** | website that gives best practices for creating content with a potential to be viral

Social Media Management Tools & Resources
- **Hootsuite** | account management tool that lets you schedule posts, obtain analytics, manage, and monitor multiple accounts (i.e. Facebook, Twitter) simultaneously
- **How to Use Hootsuite** | an easy-to-follow video tutorial that walks you through the basics of Hootsuite
- **Tweetdeck** | an account management tool similar to Hootsuite that makes social media monitoring easy
- **How to Use Twitter Lists** | detailed guide for utilizing Twitter lists to manage and organize accounts
- **Social Media Measurement Guide** | a guide by Fenton Communications on important social media metrics with a simple framework for measurement
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** | an easy-to-understand guide about KPIs, why you need them, and how to use them with goals/objectives
- **Klout** | measures a user's online influence (based on overall posts, activity, engagement, reposts, etc.)
- **PeerIndex** | a tool used to measure influence on Facebook and Twitter that gives you a list of influencers and people that your organization influences on social media

Social Media Listening Tools & Resources
- **How to Listen on Twitter** | detailed tips and best practices for utilizing various Twitter listening tools
- **How to Listen on Facebook** | detailed tips and best practices for crafting a social media listening strategy
- **Netvibes** | A free online social media management and dashboard service that allows users to monitor and analyze conversations to determine buzz worthy topics.
- **Social Mention** | a social media search engine that searches user-generated content such as blogs, comments, bookmarks, events, news, and videos
- **Reddit** | finds articles and blogs that can help you find influencers posting about your topic

Social Media Policy Tools & Resources
- **How to Create a Social Media Guidelines** | five easy guidelines that any organization can use
- **Social Media Policy Database** | online collection of social media policies from different organizations
- **Greenlining Social Media Policy** | example of a nonprofit social media handbook for employees

Social Media Websites & Blogs
- **Mashable** | a news website whose primary focus is social media news but also covers topics in mobile, technology, entertainment, and web development
- **Socially Stacked** | a social media blog that regularly provides content and infographics focused on social media tips and best practices
- **Social Media Examiner** | an online social media magazine designed to help users navigate the constantly changing "social media jungle"
- **Social Media Today** | an independent online community for professionals in PR, marketing, or any other discipline where a thorough understanding of social media is mission-critical
- **Social Fresh** | a social media education company whose goal is to inspire people to create better businesses through social media
- **Tech Crunch** | a leading technology media property dedicated to obsessively profiling startups, reviewing new online products, and report on breaking tech news
- **Nonprofit Tech for Good** | a leading social and mobile media resource for nonprofit professionals. Content includes valuable, easy-to-understand information, news, and resources related to nonprofit technology and online communications
- **Techsoup.org** | a nonprofit focused on connecting other nonprofits with technology products and solutions, plus the learning resources necessary to make informed decisions about technology
- **Beth's Blog: How Nonprofits Can Use Social Media** | popular blog by social media guru, Beth Kanter, that provides articles and resources on how to best leverage social media tools
- **Socialbrite** | Socialbrite helps nonprofits and organizations with all facets of social media: strategy, website design, community building, multimedia storytelling, etc.
- **DIOSA Communications** |organization that specializes in social media and mobile technology webinars and trainings for nonprofit organizations
- **Social Times** | a blog site that gives you the latest news, tips, and best practices for social media