

A large, golden, 3D-style number '50' is centered on the page. The background is a vibrant blue with faint, white, abstract line art and social media icons (Facebook 'f', Twitter bird, and a person icon) scattered around it.

Social Media Best Practices

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Introduction

Traditional marketing gurus have decades worth of best practices to build, tweak and optimize. Social media marketing, however, has had a far more compressed window of time from which to glean insights. With a constantly evolving roster of social networks and capabilities, brands and agencies often have to adjust on a moment's notice in order to keep pace with the social landscape. This makes the process of creating best practices, which at heart are strategies that have been applied successfully over time, that much more of an opportunity.

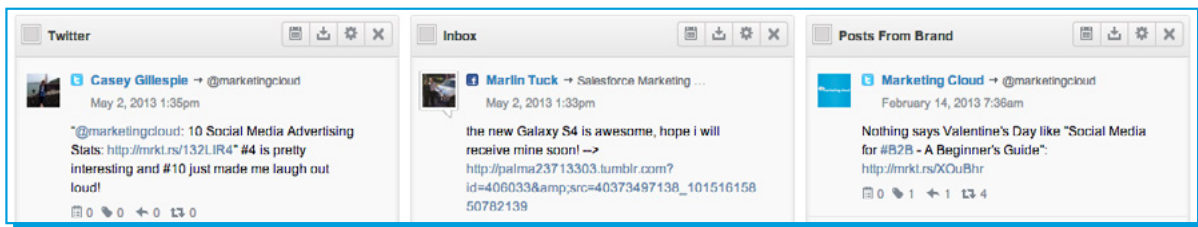
Based on the experiences of our customers, colleagues and our own marketing teams, we've culled 50 social media best practices to share in this ebook. You may find that some of your own best practices completely contradict items on this list. The beauty of social media marketing is that there are tons of ways to accomplish your goals. But if you're looking for ideas to get you started, or to further your existing efforts, we've got you covered.

Social Media Listening

It all starts with social media listening. While it doesn't need to be the first thing you do when you wake up and the last thing you do before you go to bed (though it certainly can be!), it should be the first thing you do when constructing a social media strategy. Here are 10 ideas to get started and enhance your social listening plan.

1. Research where people are talking about you

The first step in the process is tuning your social antennae, so to speak, to the right channels. You may have an obvious list of places on which people are discussing your business; if so, make sure you've devoted proper coverage to monitor them. Remember that social properties on the web have numerous places where people can talk about you. Facebook Pages, Twitter hashtags and LinkedIn groups, for example, are all potential places where you can learn about social sentiment toward you.



2. Go beyond Facebook and Twitter and monitor the entire social web

Of course, the major social networks are not the only places on the web where people are talking about you. Use a social listening tool to find where people are discussing your brand. Outside of the big boys, look at smaller sites that may not initially live under your radar. Blogs, message boards, and comment sections on industry and trade publication websites are another good place to look for mentions.

3. Create a keyword list that extends your listening reach beyond profile mentions

People won't always mention you by name when talking about you. They may spell your name wrong, use an abbreviation, or simply talk about your industry without specifically calling you out. You need to find this information to better inform your overall listening analysis. Put together a list of words that people may use to describe you, your industry, and your competitors, and track conversation around those keywords across the social web. There may be some noise that you need to filter out, but you'll most likely acquire information that you would not have gotten otherwise.

4. Make listening a company-wide endeavor

Whether you've got an engagement team of one or two dozen, everyone in the company should be on alert for mentions, both positive and negative. If someone within your company comes across someone saying something on the social web, there should be a plan in place so they know to whom they should report it. Create a community alias that allows people to easily send messages. This will not only give you more information, but could also provide additional places for you to track mentions.

5. Develop relationships with influencers in your industry

In every industry, there are those people who have established themselves as influential contributors. They often have large followings on Facebook and Twitter, publish regularly to blogs and speak at conferences. You want to establish relationships with these people for a number of reasons, including: crisis communications, announcement pre-briefing, sentiment persuasion and, of course, listening. Since they are regularly talking to your customers and potential customers, they are in a position to deliver authentic feedback on a regular basis.

6. Create categories to organize mentions

When people discuss your brand on the social web, they'll discuss any number of topics. This will most likely come into your stream in one large, unstructured mess. By assigning categories and manually (or automatically) labeling content into categories, you'll have a far better time reporting and understanding the types of things people are saying about you. Keep your categories flexible to account for any changes you may need to make to your organizational structure.

7. Draft reports to help shape future marketing endeavors

When you're listening to dozens of sources across the social web, you'll likely find yourself sitting on a mountain of data. Creating reports to make sense of it all is the only way that you'll glean insight from what it is really telling you. Put together:

- sentiment analysis
- total mentions
- most active networks
- pain points

and more on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis and present these insights to your larger marketing department to shape current and future campaigns. Others in your organization may be deaf to the way people perceive you in the marketplace, but you hold the key through social listening.

8. Create a crisis management plan before it's too late

You may understand the importance of a crisis management plan, but have you actually sat down to create one? Part of the difficulty in creating a plan is that it requires a lot of coordination and is not easy to create; planning involves many departments within your organization, including PR, legal, product and any number of executives. Getting everyone in one room to plan for a hypothetical situation can be challenging. But the alternative is a crisis that occurs and no plan to remedy the situation. So put something to paper and be prepared; you may pick up the beginning of a crisis while listening to social channels, and you should be ready to act.

9. Automate what you can, but don't remove the human element

Depending on the size of your company, the social listening process may be overwhelming. Social listening tools can help by automatically tagging certain keywords and assigning mentions to users based on subject matter. These automation steps can improve efficiency and allow you to spend more time engaging with people. But you can't leave it all to computers. Figure out what can and cannot be automated, and allocate human resources where it makes the most sense. You'll be more productive, and your employees will be happier doing work that can't be done by a robot.

10. Sentiment analysis is a mixed bag, so fine tune the results

Sentiment analysis continues to improve over time, but there are some posts that simply won't be properly tagged. Sarcasm, in particular, really trips up sentiment analysis programs, and understandably so. This means that you should always take a sample of your analyzed content whenever conducting sentiment analysis and make sure that it generally looks properly tagged. Depending on sample size, you may want to manually switch over mentions not properly tagged. Doing this for every post defeats the purpose of using a tool, but you want to make sure you feel comfortable releasing the results.



Sentiment Analysis performed by Salesforce Marketing Cloud



Social Media Engagement

Now that you've set up your social listening program to hear what's being said, it's time to join the conversation. Engaging with your community, prospects, customers and detractors is an integral part of a social media strategy. Here are ways to improve your engagement strategy.

11. Create awareness

If you don't have a highly-paid PR team or a big budget marketing plan you can still create strong brand awareness. Social media platforms offer the potential to increase your public profile. Even without purchasing ads, you can still create grassroots campaigns by engaging with influencers in your industry. By sharing content from these influencers, staying active in conversations, and keeping a profile full of worthwhile content, you'll be ready for the time when an influential person shares your content and a flood of new followers head your way.

12. Be mindful of oversharing

While it's important to stay in the loop and maintain social relationships, posting too often, whether it's photos, status updates or frequent Tweets, can turn off your audience. Our own [Melanie Thompson](#) gives some good examples of this in her [post about "over-sharenting."](#) These examples include:

- restraining from posting every time you think of something to say
- creating a calendar for when to post and sticking to it
- thinking about what will provide value down the road

13. Don't always feel compelled to jump in

Some things are better left unsaid. You don't always have to respond every time someone mentions your company. In fact, it's sometimes better to let individual employees, influencers or other members of the community interject before or instead of you. If you jump in at the wrong time, you might send the wrong message. So pick your spots and determine what type of posts you want to respond to and which ones you want to let lie.

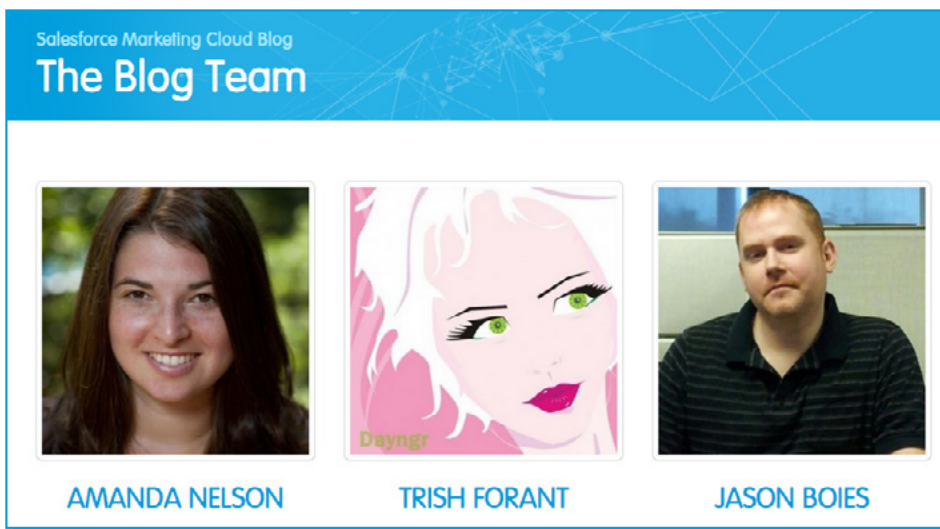
14. Be as transparent as your business allows

It may be tough to convince your execs to share your secret sauce or a beta product with customers. But openness can go a long way in social media. Your community will feel involved in your company and appreciate the trust you put in them. They may become interested in your story, want to get

involved in your product trials and stay in touch when it comes to updates. That hook may be what you need to generate new customers and keep them for the long term.

Here are some ways to be more transparent:

- Take your customers behind the scenes. Do a video walkthrough of the shop floor.
- Livestream your all-hands meeting.
- Introduce your team. Let your customers meet and chat with your employees online.



15. Determine your tone

Showing personality and moving away from corporate-speak is a great way to interact with people on social media. But more importantly than using emoticons and exclamation points is creating a consistent tone. Your followers should know what to expect from you when you speak, but in order to make that happen, you need to establish that internally first.

A great example of personality is the clever comedian and filmmaker, [Mark Malkoff](#), based out of New York City. Mark modestly describes himself as, “Just a wacky guy making videos about my crazy stunts.” However, his resume includes YouTube videos with thousands of views. Mark has tapped into the incredible resource of social media as a way to gain awareness and interest in his creative and bizarre ideas all while showing his true personality.

16. Help your customers become experts in your field

You work in your field and have accumulated a ton of knowledge about a particular subject, so share what you learn with your customers and community. Here are a few approaches:

- You don't have to sound like an expert. "We've started this blog to share what we're learning in our industry. We hope you'll share the journey with us; let us know what questions you're trying to answer, and what's working for you."
- You don't have to answer every question. You can share the questions you're asking and the goals you want to achieve. Then when you answer them, you'll have even more to share.
- Your customers already know you. They like you. They trust you. They're all wondering about your industry, and they would love for you to help them figure it out. And they will thank you for it.

17. Be proactive

Monitor general feeds in your industry; for instance, we at Salesforce Marketing Cloud monitor "social media marketing" to pick up a variety of posts that don't mention our brand but are still valuable. This will reveal new conversations and enable you to establish new relationships. If appropriate, insert yourself into the conversation to stave off any issues before they become too large.

18. Respond to negative AND positive feedback

Three good rules of thumb for responding to positive feedback include:

- *Thank them.* Thank your audience for positive remarks left on your blog post, Twitter feed or Facebook wall.
- *Return the favor.* Is someone sharing your original content on Twitter? Take note of their latest post and share it with your network.
- *Add them as a guest contributor.* Take note of those individuals who really have the voice and passion to contribute something of value that your community will relish.

Three good rules of thumb for responding to negative feedback include:

- *Respond quickly.* Social media users have come to expect a rapid response.
- *Don't delete.* As [Hive Strategies](#) notes on the subject, "Avoid the urge to purge." Your customers may take that as a sign that your brand is uncaring and in social media, disappearing feedback can still be posted elsewhere, which won't reflect well on your brand.
- *Don't feed the trolls.* Stay focused on the constructive criticism. As [John Hall, CEO of Digital Talent Agents](#) stated, "This is a great chance to support your position and gain respect by communicating it respectfully. You never want to leave negative feedback out there that makes a good point."

19. Keep it short

According to the Salesforce report, [Strategies for Effective Tweeting: a Statistical Review](#), “Tweets containing less than 100 characters receive 17% higher engagement than longer tweets.” While Twitter limits your messages with its 140 character limit, Facebook, Google+ and other networks don’t heed the 100 character limit.



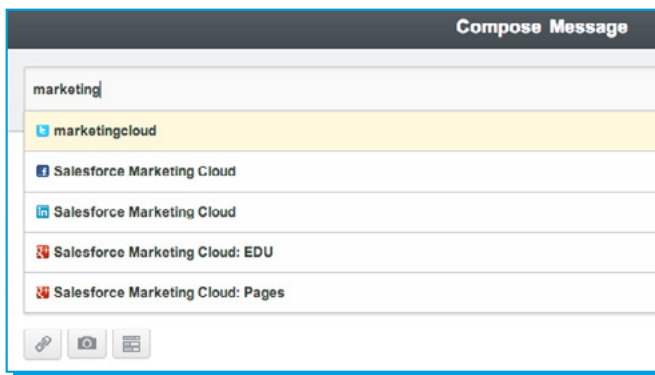
20. Follow your following

Following those that follow you on Twitter is a kind gesture from person-to-person and from person-to-brand. This strategy will help grow your overall following and create goodwill among your community. When you follow back, you might get some public thanks, which will give you added exposure. Think about it: if a large brand on Twitter starts following you, you’d probably get excited and want to know what they’re all about. Get that ball rolling and build an even stronger community.

Social Media Publishing

Though the beauty of social networks is its two-way conversation value between brands and consumers, there is plenty of room for one-way, push communication that comes directly from the brand. But there's a lot to consider before sending a Tweet or posting to Facebook. That's where our publishing best practices can help.

21. Treat each social network as its own entity



Try sharing different content on your social properties. Even if you want to share the same link, image or content, make sure you are using each social network the way it was meant to be used, and to the most of its abilities. Your content doesn't need to all be under 140 characters with a shortened link a la Twitter. Include calls to action; each social network has its own ways in which users can interact with your posts. Use a platform such as [Salesforce Buddy](#)

[Media](#) to schedule and organize your content publishing on multiple channels. Above, you can see how Salesforce Buddy Media allows you to choose from all of your social networks while publishing.

22. Always provide an option to share

One of the most beneficial aspects of social media publishing is the ability for content to spread virally. Viral reach can mean a lot of things; it doesn't have to lead to five million (or billion!) YouTube views. If 20 people with 1,000 followers each Retweet a link you post, you've increased your reach by 20,000. Posting to social networks automatically gives sharing functionality, but your web content might not. So make sure you always give people a way to share to their own networks easily.

23. Set up publishing and approval permissions and processes

From the start, determine who has the ability to publish to social networks, who can create content but not publish, who needs to review, and more. Some social networks like Facebook set up permissions natively for admins, while many require the use of a third-party tool. Regardless of how you do it, map out your approval hierarchy to make sure your organization has proper auditing and fail-safes that ensure the only people who can publish to your networks are those who should have access.

24. Build for mobile

We all know how important mobile is, and how it is increasingly the way in which people access content, for both social and traditional web properties. According to comScore, over [39% of mobile subscribers in the U.S. accessed social networks or blogs from their phones](#). With that knowledge comes the responsibility of building with mobile top-of-mind. Even if you are building a website, make sure the design translates easily to mobile. And any additional capabilities, such as social sharing, should be able to work across mobile, too. The less work people need to do on their phones to access your content, the more willing they'll be to stick with you.

25. Don't forget about nights and weekends

You might work Monday through Friday from 9-5, but your community is global, spanning time zones around the world and checking social networks outside of your normal work hours. Think about all of the times throughout the week when you check Twitter or watch a YouTube video. Including nights and weekends enables you to make your content stand out when many other brands aren't posting. Find a way to schedule content regularly throughout the night and weekend, even if it's a re-post of earlier content, to take advantage of times when people may have longer attention spans.

26. Use your social networks to promote existing content

Distribution is one of the biggest benefits of building a large social network following. You've got a ton of great content that you want to share, so use your social networks to do so. Experiment with different headlines and post types to find what is most effective to maximize traffic. Just be careful not to overdo it. If you are always posting your own content, people may grow tired of your act. [Think about the 10-4-1 rule](#), which is a suggested ratio for social linking of 10 third-party articles, four of your own blog posts and one landing page that requires a form complete to access content.

27. Use your data to determine what works

Everyone can tell you something different when it comes to the best times to publish, the best content, the best post types, and the best calls to action. But only you have the data to make the decision as to what's best for your brand. Do some A/B testing with your publishing strategies, and then assess what has worked best for you after you have collected a large enough sample size. Never stop experimenting, but also develop your own best practices.

28. Set a content calendar that syncs up with other marketing objectives

Your organization may have a few different marketing calendars. There may be an overarching marketing calendar that covers broad marketing campaigns. A content calendar may map out blog

posts and large-scale content objectives. And then you may have a content calendar for social publishing. Make sure these calendars do not exist in vacuums. Your social publishing calendar should reflect other marketing objectives. They don't have to match up exactly; there is always room to do interesting things on social, so just do them. But you don't want to stray too far from the rest of the organization, or you will have a hard time accomplishing your business goals.

29. Implement tracking codes on links

Social attribution is a great way to prove the return on investment for social publishing. We'll talk more about ROI in the measuring section, but in terms of publishing, it can be helpful to post links that have a tracking code built into them. This tracking code will then feed back into an overall database which helps you track what social networks are driving the most traffic. Use this data to guide your posting strategies for big content and marketing campaigns moving forward.

30. Don't be afraid to experiment with different platforms and content

Social media possibilities seem to change daily. Social networks are constantly tinkering with their platforms, and new networks seem to pop up each month. While you should avoid throwing a ton of resources at shiny new objects, don't be afraid to take a chance and find a way to make new platforms work for your business. By doing something creative, you may find yourself garnering media attention for the way you were able to turn a new social network or social network feature into a boost for your business.



Social Media Advertising

Organic and viral reach is great if you can get it, but in an increasingly competitive marketplace for consumers' attention, paid advertising on social media is a critical part of any social media strategy. Here are some tips on how to get started and to get the most for your advertising dollar.

31. Set your advertising goals first

Unlike other forms of social media marketing, paid advertising involves money. This seems obvious, but it means there is more at stake if you aren't getting results; namely, your advertising budget. So before you even get started, think about the reasons you want to advertise on social media, and what you want to get out of it. With clear goals, you'll be able to make better adjustments if things aren't working, and can also better understand success or failure.

32. Create both daily and lifetime budgets for your campaigns

Depending upon which social network you are advertising on, payment works differently. Facebook, for instance, uses a bidding system in which the most competitive bids will earn the right to display ads to users. Setting your budget for both the entire length of a campaign, as well as on a daily basis, will help you decide which ads to run when. It will also allow you to look and will also allow you to look both granularly at your day-to-day requirements, while simultaneously matching it up with your overall spending capabilities.

33. Research the social advertising platforms



Each social network has different advertising capabilities, based on the unique features available to users. Different social networks may be better suited for different social networks, and different advertising units may hold advantages as well. For instance, a video campaign may make sense on YouTube or with Facebook News Feed ads, whereas a link to a new white paper may be best as a link within a promoted Tweet. Regardless of the best type for your campaign, familiarize yourself with your options so that you can make the best decision.

34. Fit your social ad campaigns in the context of other advertising initiatives

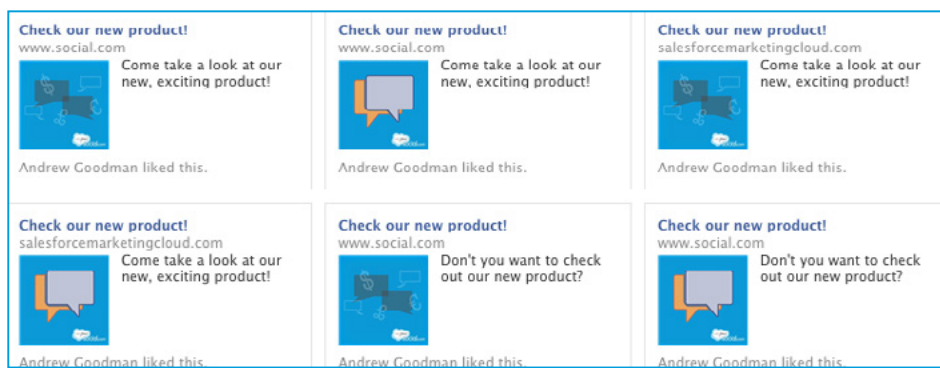
There may be times when you want to run social media ads separate from other marketing initiatives, and that's fine. But most likely, your social media ads will coincide with other paid media initiatives. In order to create cohesion, make sure your creative, messaging and targeting coincides with the rest of your traditional advertising. This may seem obvious, but different departments or different media-buying agencies may lead different advertising aspects, so it's important to get everyone in the same room to share plans and assets.

35. Match available targeting options with your advertising objectives

Part of the allure of social media advertising is the available options when it comes to targeting. Putting your content in front of the right people has never been easier (or more accurate) than it is on social networks. But before you get started, consider what you want to accomplish with your targeting options. Do you want to target people who already show an affinity toward you? Would you prefer to attract new customers? Are you looking for a certain demographic? Or maybe you are running a promotion in a certain city and want to look to people in that area. All of these options, and more, are possible with social media advertising.

36. Test, test, test

Companies that focus on advanced targeting of their social ads also use A/B testing as a means to improve their results. The best way to determine the success of something is to have two small test groups and show them different versions of the same promoted content. The one that performs better is the one that is used on the balance of the list. Make sure the variable is limited to one element, like the headline, image or call to action, but not all three. You can create your groups by targeting, but you need to make sure you have a big enough audience to make the time and effort worthwhile. It's possible to get too granular when it comes to targeting, at which point you are severely undercutting your ad's effectiveness by limiting the number of people who are seeing it.



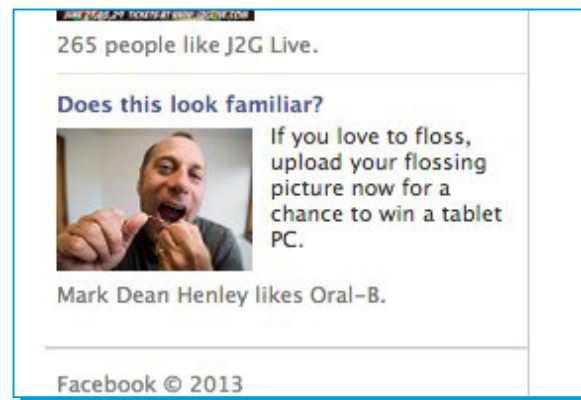
Test different creative possibilities to see what works best, including various titles, links, body text and images.

37. Automate wherever possible

Marketers have become comfortable with automated algorithms running many types of online ads, for example pay-per-click and Google banner ads. The next stage for companies using social ads is to use a platform that makes optimization decisions based on performance. If a sponsored story gets a lot of engagement and clicks, the budget can be increased automatically. An under-performing ad can be turned off the same way. No one has to worry about a campaign going out of control in the middle of the night. In addition to showing the right ads at the right time to the right people, automated social ads provide better data and analytics, so marketers can gain more actionable insights from their campaigns. And this ultimately improves performance of the social ads.

38. Don't forget about time of day and scheduling

Just as it's important not to forget about nights and weekends when publishing, timing can be everything when it comes to social ad effectiveness. This will most likely require some testing to figure out when your ads are most effective; however, there are some use cases that could be intuitive from the start. For instance, if you are a fast-food chain or a sandwich shop, you may want to run ads for an hour before lunch and dinner, when people are thinking of what to eat. Look at the times and days on which people are most engaged with your ad, and devote more of your budget to those times once you feel that your sample size is large enough to do so.



Oral-B posted an add flaunting a flossing contest at night when people are likely to floss.

39. Determine the metrics that will best represent your campaign status

Social media ads give you a wealth of information when it comes to result data. Because social networks can track so many different actions taken by users, they often spit out spreadsheets full of data that you'll need to sift through to determine the effectiveness of your advertising campaign. Create a list of metrics that are most important to you before you get started so that you can monitor them most closely; this will tie in to the advertising goal that you set before you get started. As your campaign progresses, either make changes to optimize the results of these metrics, or determine whether these metrics are actually the best indicators of your success.

40. Set regular meetings to analyze metrics

Advertising campaigns are living, breathing processes that require constant monitoring and fine-tuning. But the only way to know what needs to be changed, if anything, is to look at the results on a regular basis. Schedule a regular meeting with the necessary stakeholders to go over the performance of your campaign. Even if things are going according to plan (and let's face it, this rarely happens in marketing), it's good to have everyone on the same page. This will also make sharing successes internally a lot easier, since those involved will have regular updates on how well the campaign is performing.



Social Media Measurement

Put into place the right technology, people and processes to ensure that you always know how your endeavors are performing. Social media measurement allows you to make decisions regarding fixes or tweaks midway through a campaign.

41. Align your objectives with your metrics

For measurement to be effective, it has to align directly with the measurable objectives you've set. Those objectives should follow the SMART methodology, first introduced by [Peter Drucker](#) in his 1954 book, [The Practice of Management](#). The acronym stands for your goals being Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timed.

- **Specific:** Describe your objectives specific to the results you want. Go deeper than “increase brand awareness” to “increase brand awareness by 10% in the next six months via a targeted social media campaign.”
- **Measurable:** You want to use these metrics in the review process to see if you were effective. Having a specific objective will clearly show whether results were met.
- **Achievable:** Often “100% customer satisfaction” isn't realistic. Your goal of 90% customer satisfaction may be more plausible so consider what's feasible when setting your objectives.
- **Realistic:** Ensure you have the resources, tools and staffing to meet your objectives, or you'll just frustrate yourself.
- **Timed:** Get specific with your objectives and incorporate a time frame. This makes them real and tangible.

42. Pick a goal

As the great Zig Ziglar said, “If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time.”

Good social media goals are usually in line with the greater goals of your organization. Here are some popular ones:

- Increase awareness
- Generate leads
- Convert leads to sales

- Retain existing customers
- Reduce costs

Pick a goal. If you have the resources and the time, you may pick all of these goals. However, it's much better to execute well on one of these goals than to dilute your efforts.

43. Segment and trend

You'll know when you've segmented your KPIs enough when you say, "Ah ha! Now that's something actionable!"

Until then, keep slicing and dicing. For example, if you're trying to figure out if your new Facebook efforts are driving awareness you might look at:

- New visitors from Facebook
- New visitors from Facebook with more than three pageviews
- New visitors from Facebook that engaged with premium content

Lastly, you'll want to look at how these KPIs trend over time. For instance, did your recent Twitter ad buy increase your awareness metrics over the prior month?

44. Track and measure social media leads and purchases

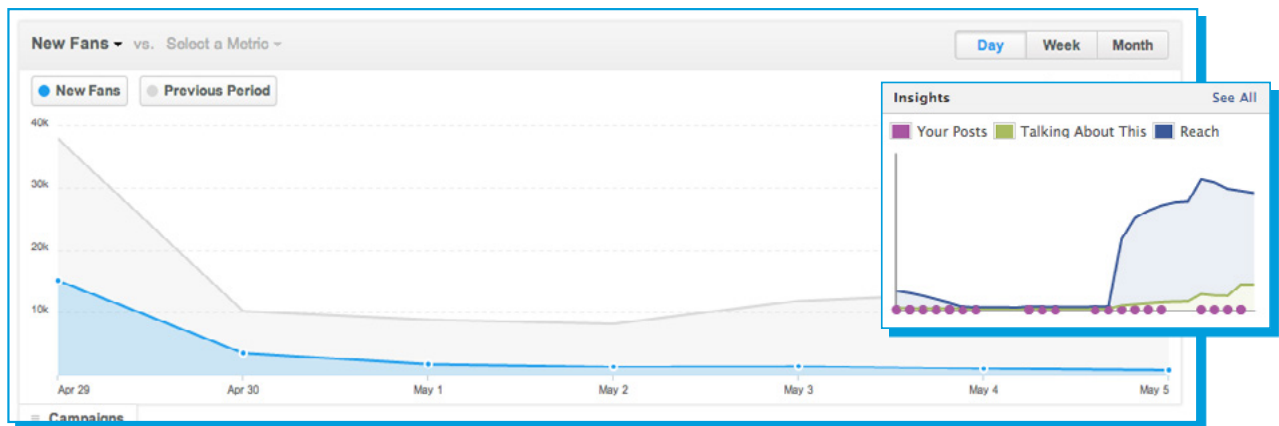
You can track revenue in different ways, depending on your business model. For B2B companies, you may label a lead as a person who has downloaded an ebook and completed a form in exchange for content. With a B2C company, you may track users who have perused or purchased on your ecommerce website, or someone who signed up for your company newsletter, and label them customers. Regardless of what you call it, make sure you can properly attribute leads and revenue that comes from social media. Tracking codes within links sent out through social media are a good way to capture this information. This data will help shape future social media initiatives.

45. Measure cost savings

Sometimes, the value in a business endeavor isn't about what goes up – like revenue – but what comes down, like costs. Social media can have some very clear efficiencies, most notably on the customer service side, but also in areas like training or communications. In particular, this is great for tracking savings that come from using social media for customer service. In cutting down on call center volume by answering customer inquiries on platforms like Twitter, not only are you making people happier, but you are also freeing up customer service reps to handle more complex issues over the phone.

46. Create a central dashboard to bring in disparate metrics

One of the big problems with measuring social media campaigns is that data is all over the place. You may have some data directly from social networks, some from third-party tools and other data from internal analytics teams. This can make assessing a campaign incredibly frustrating. Using whatever technology you deem most effective (Excel, for instance, can work), compile all of this data into one central dashboard for easy viewing. You can use numbers, charts, graphs, etc., but putting everything in one place can ensure you aren't missing anything while removing redundancies and superfluous information. It all makes presenting data at a meeting a whole lot easier.



Your metrics may come from a number of different sources. Facebook Insights may provide one set of metrics to you, while third-party tools such as Salesforce Buddy Media provide other metrics in a separate location.

47. Determine how you'll define ROI

ROI is and will, for quite some time, be the magic three letters in social media marketing. Everyone wants an answer to the question, "how do I track ROI on my social media efforts?" Many are understandably frustrated when there is no single answer to this question. But just like most traditional advertising strategies, measuring the impact from marketing campaigns is always tough. Social media gives more information than your other marketing efforts, but you have to know what to do with it. Even if you aren't driving directly to a commerce page, it's important to decide what series of actions a user could take that eventually would lead to a sale. Once you have that, you can figure out how to track that before your campaign gets underway. It's a lot easier to put your ROI-tracking in place first rather than later trying to figure out how to define it.

48. Be prepared to pivot on everything

With social media, the beauty is the flexibility; if you suddenly want to change the direction of a campaign, it requires very little time and effort. That's why regularly meeting with those who have a hand in your social media campaigns to go over metrics is critical for your success. These meetings may lead to a change in a direction, tone, or even the actual metrics you are using to define success.

Constantly assessing whether you are looking at the right data is as important to your success as looking at the success of your content.

49. Clichéd metrics are great, but they aren't for everyone

We've all heard the usual suspects when it comes to social media data:

- likes
- shares
- comments
- Retweets
- click-through rate
- conversions

These can be great and useful pieces of information based on your campaign goals. But don't feel compelled to look at these metrics just because "everyone else is doing it." In fact, it's possible that the best metrics for you are not ones that are presented in spreadsheets by the networks themselves or third-party tools. Do what you need to do to get the most out of the available data, and don't feel the need to limit yourself to the popular crowd of social media metrics.

50. Use every available measurement tool

Using all of your available resources to calculate and put data into context is the best way to track your successes. Whether that means using pre-populated spreadsheets from third party tools, looking at social network analytics sections, or even whipping out a calculator and crunching numbers the old-school way, don't skimp out on measuring your data. It's the only way to know whether you are on the right path with your social media efforts, and can greatly impact the way you operate moving forward.





Conclusion

This list of 50 social media best practices is here to help enhance your existing strategy. Try one or two of the suggestions from each section, run your tests to see whether they work, and then hold onto or move away from each best practice. We hope this list gets you thinking differently about the ways you approach your social media efforts.

And if you've got your own best practices that work for you, we'd love to hear about them. Get in touch with us through the channels below and share your list!



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