

5 Keys to Planning and Organizing Your Brand's Social Media

With almost [45% of the population using social media](#), almost no one is debating how large its role is in shaping society, culture, and business.

But even for those who have started to build a presence on social media, the intentional planning and strategic approach that makes those efforts successful in the long run can be overwhelming.

That's why getting organized is the first step to having a social media plan that is more detailed and more effective.

Why get organized?

I used to despise cooking. But then I learned about a concept called “mise en place” or “everything in its place.” I adopted this French culinary phrase and started to organize my ingredients, utensils, and equipment before cooking. It made the task much faster and less stressful for me.

The same concept applies to organizing your social media—having each step of your plan and every tool you need to execute it “in its place” improves efficiency.

When you know where everything is (social copy, graphics, technology, ideas, etc.), you can move forward with your social media plan with confidence and be more consistent.

The organization of social media also helps with accountability. If you want to post on social media every day, it's not enough to just have that plan in your head.

But when you write it out, take steps toward it, and even schedule it, you hold yourself accountable. And including other team members in the process helps, too. There can be accountability at various stages, such as one team member responsible for editing and another responsible for graphics. With multiple people's tasks dependent on others, the social media plan is more likely to happen consistently.

Lastly, getting organized is quality control for social media. You can eliminate many errors—like broken links, spelling mistakes on graphics, wrong dates, unverified stats, etc.—by having everything in its place as far in advance as possible.

The steps below can help you plan and organize your social media to decrease your stress and improve your posts.

1. Strategy

A common burden for anyone building or reforming a social media plan is not knowing where to start.

First, pick your platforms. Decide which social media platforms to start with and start strategizing for those. You can always expand later.

If your company is great at visual content and has a solid customer base on Instagram, you'd want to start there. If your company has a lot of articles and other engaging text content to share, Twitter would be one to start with.

Nail down your purpose for being on social media and set goals. This will drive your social media plan and the nature of every piece of content your company creates and shares.

What do you hope to accomplish? For example:

- Are you on social media to build a following that will engage with your video content?
- Do you want to see a certain number of social media leads convert to sales each month?
- Is your social media platform an avenue to connect directly with customers through contests, interactive posts, and influencer marketing?

Plan what your brand's call-to-action will be. You can have multiple in your social media plan, but I wouldn't advise having more than one on a single post because it can cause confusion for your audience about what their next steps are.

In other words, what do you want people to do? For example:

- Do you primarily want to lead social media followers to visit your website?
- Will you frequently encourage people to follow or like your page so they don't miss any updates?
- Do you want to drive engagement by encouraging people to comment on and share posts?

Starting with a social media strategy will help make sure your plan is consistent because you know who you're writing for, what your goals are, and what success looks like.

2. Tools

Do you know what you're posting tomorrow? Supporting your social media strategy with a solid set of planning tools can make all the difference.

You can use a tool such as [Trello](#) to plan each step of your social media workflow, keeping ideas and tasks organized in one place.

When you're ready to plan what you'll post and when, set up a content calendar. It doesn't have to be technologically advanced or complicated. Google Calendar, Google Docs, or a spreadsheet in Google Sheets or Excel works just fine. [Coschedule](#), [ContentCal](#), and [Hubspot](#) offer great templates.

A few options to include for each post on your social media content calendar:

- The platform the post is for (commonly separated by pages in spreadsheets)
- The date and time the post should be sent
- Text for the post caption
- Image or graphic description or link

Many social media management tools provide the ability to plan your content calendar and schedule your posts in the same place. There are many options out there, but a few popular ones are [Buffer](#), [Hootsuite](#), [Sprout](#), [Loomly](#), and [MeetEdgar](#).

Not a professional graphic designer? [Canva](#), [Over](#), [Adobe Spark](#), and [Pablo by Buffer](#) are a few tools you can use to create simple graphics for social media.

3. Organize

Once you have a direction (strategy) and the tools you need, organizing your methods for social media is what will help you save time and have everything where you can find it.

- Utilize folders in Google Drive, Dropbox, or another site to keep social media files properly labeled and make them easy to share with team members. For example,

a “May Sales Campaign” folder with all of your text and images in it to help ensure that the correct materials are used.

- Pre-prepare actions and answers. Anticipate potential customer or client questions, prepare how to answer them accurately and in a timely manner, and save this guidance document in an easy-to-access place to reference regularly.
- Plan and schedule in bulk. Have a creation session for social media where you write all of your content for the week and schedule it at once. When you do this, you feel more prepared and organized because you won’t have to rush to figure out what to post on the day-of.

4. Plan

When you’ve organized your social media plan, start posting consistently to build momentum. You want to give potential new followers a reason to follow and not present them with an empty feed.

How often to post

Appropriate posting frequency varies by the social media platform. Twitter’s feed structure and algorithm show posts for the shortest amount of time, so you can post more often on Twitter for increased visibility. Start with one post per day on other platforms and adjust to up to 2-3 times per day on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.

What to post

Make a list of social media content ideas and store them in Evernote or Google Docs. Here are a few social media ideas for your brand to help you get started:

- Host a contest or giveaway
- Participate in holidays and hashtags (for example, if you’re a donut shop, make sure National Donut Day is on your calendar)
- Post from behind-the-scenes of your office space, employees, events, etc.
- Share relevant reviews or tutorials ([Seattle Coffee Gear’s YouTube channel content](#) is a great example)
- Share business or employee accomplishments such as awards or anniversaries
- Leverage popular hashtags such as #ThrowbackThursday (to post photos from a former time), #FollowFriday (to encourage people to follow other industry people you admire), or #TipsTuesday to share an industry tip
- Turn one thing into multiple pieces of content, such as highlighting different features of a product or service on different days
- Share content from other accounts (with proper credit, of course)

What not to post

A social media plan helps make sure posts are authentic.

Instead of posting all stock photos from other sources, have a professional do a photography session, and use those as your own stock collection.

According to [research by Sprout Social](#), 43% of consumers unfollow brands on social media for posting too many ads. Alongside promotional posts, include content that will inspire, inform, or entertain your audience (80% promotional and 20% fun is a good ratio to consider).

When to post

The best time of day to post on social media varies by industry and day of the week.

Test various types of content at different times and pay attention to social media analytics to see how your audience responds at different times.

[This guide from Hootsuite](#) provides different times to consider testing and illustrates how widely the “best times to post” tend to fluctuate. [Facebook Insights](#) also allows you to see when your audience is usually online.

5. Consult

Insight, feedback, and assistance from people outside of your organization can take your brand’s social media plan to the next level.

Plan a feedback session with someone who fits the profile of a target customer.

- What is their overall impression of your current social media plan and presence?
- What types of content would interest them?
- What causes them to follow or unfollow brands like yours?

Seek out a social media professional. They’re trained to improve your social media plan or create one for you. Professionals can also provide detailed reports on what’s working and what’s not.

The key to planning and organizing your social media is doing it with intention. It's not a haphazard process, but it eventually makes managing social media much more simple, consistent, and effective.