

Social Media Fundamentals

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CREATIVE VICTORIA



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About this guide

In the last 12 years, organisational use of social media has evolved to become an integrated part of the communications mix.

Some social channels have emerged and disappeared quickly, while others have managed to establish themselves into the lives of billions of people globally. While the levels of mistrust in social media by organisations has diminished over time, concerns over personal privacy and the social impact of social media has increased.

This guide is an introduction to the fundamentals of being an admin for these established social channels:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram

This guide is a working document and should be considered in context. Changes in the social landscape are frequent so make sure you keep across these changes.

Fast facts

Before you begin

1. Create a 1-2 page strategy with goals, target audience, cost and resourcing
2. Set performance goals
3. Create guidelines/house rules and post in your page information area
4. Prepare pre-approved responses to tricky posts
5. Ask someone with experience in running a group/company social channel to sense check your plan

Running an account

- Regularly post i.e. 3-4 times per week, and continuously monitor.
- Do not post more than twice per day – as your posts will begin to decrease in reach.
- A short post is a good post
- Use plain English
- Photos and videos are more compelling than text
- Short videos only (always with captions)
- Follow and share within your industry
- Cross promote on other digital platforms.
- Encourage friendly interactions through your own tone and posts

Tone

Try to keep your tone consistent – particularly if there is more than one person who is the admin.

How would you describe the ‘voice’ (sometimes called the ‘brand personality’ of your organisation)? For example, are you:

- Down to earth, factual and trustworthy
- Tongue in cheek and provocative
- Nurturing, supportive and part of a broader network
- Confident, sometimes witty, urbane

Response times

Note your hours of responding i.e. “We monitor this channel most days between the hours of 9-5pm” and try to respond in a timely way to direct questions/comments preferably within a 24-hour period.

Don't forget

- Change passwords regularly
- Keep up with changes to the platform which happen quite regularly
- Keep an eye on the platform insights – such as demographics, when people are looking at your posts and what sort of content is getting the most interaction.
- Be a good social media citizen by following the accounts of other like-minded organisations and liking their posts.



Facebook

Despite some drop off in numbers particularly by younger people, Facebook continues to be the primary social channel for most Australians.

Why use Facebook?

Facebook can help build your reputation and reach online. Your organisation can create and schedule posts and then target these posts to your audience. People can engage with you through likes, shares, comments and by following your page.

Use Facebook to post your events, updates, stories, videos and photos to your interested public.

Running a group

People who manage a page or group are called 'admins' (administrators).

You can have more than one admin with the same or different delegations. Don't forget to remove admins if they leave the organisation.

Facebook Business Manager

If there is more than one Admin, or you share the use of a credit card for paying for boosts, you should operate your group or page through Facebook Business Manager so you can keep track of activity and spend.

It also takes away the risk of accidentally posting as yourself.

Naming

Whether it's a group or page, try to create a name that relates to the key words people might search to find a group like yours. Try to be engaging so rather than 'Crafting in Victoria it could be 'Champion Crafters of Gippsland'.

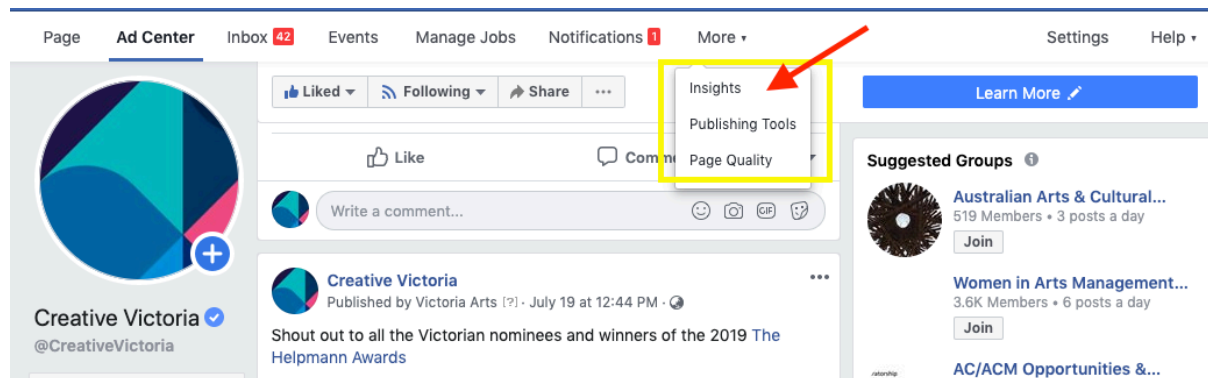
Reaching people

Organic reach is the amount of people who will see your post in their news feed.

You can 'boost' (advertise) your post to increase reach to a targeted audience for as little as \$5. To do this you'll need to enter a credit card in Facebook Business Manager and click on boost. Make sure you choose your demographics, timeframe and cost.

Making sense of the data

Facebook Insights in the top navigation is the analytical tool within Facebook. Use Facebook Insights to study behaviour and demographics of your account and make sure you're targeting the right people (by age, sex and geography).



Privacy

You can choose whether your account is public or private in your settings.

Content and features

Facebook favours content with images or videos. As a post picks up momentum ('organic reach') with likes, shares and comments it is 'served' by Facebook to more news feeds.

As with most social channels, try not to post for the sake of posting. Make sure your content is interesting and speaks effectively to your audience.

As an admin, you can also schedule posts in Facebook for a later time/ date.

Tagging

Simply add an @ before the name of a person or organisation to notify them of your post if relevant. They can then like or share, which increases the post's reach.

Hashtags

Hashtags (#) are not generally used on Facebook (although sometimes ironically). The function of a hashtag to help aggregate posts for the user.

Mysterious algorithms

Facebook changes its algorithm frequently, so posts which work well one month may not the next.

A few things to look for:

- Facebook will restrict the reach of your post if you post an image with too much text in the image
- Too many hashtags
- Posting too frequently

Certain words and phrases can be mistaken by Facebook for clickbait and then your reach will be restricted.

Avoid:

- "You won't believe"
- "You'll never guess"
- "The shocking twist"
- "Question marks"
- "Shocking"

- “Controversial” (with no other context)
- “Here's why”
- “Looks inside”
- “Going viral”
- “Never expected”
- “Incredible”
- “The reason why”
- “Watch this reaction...”

Should I set up a page or a group?

Facebook pages

Pages are ideal for organisations that want Page Likes (and by default ‘Followers’) who then receive posts into their news feed. (Note people can like your page, but unfollow you; and they can Follow you and unlike you! More [here](http://www.felicialin.com/blog/2018/4/1/whats-better-a-facebook-like-or-follow)):
<http://www.felicialin.com/blog/2018/4/1/whats-better-a-facebook-like-or-follow>)

Facebook groups

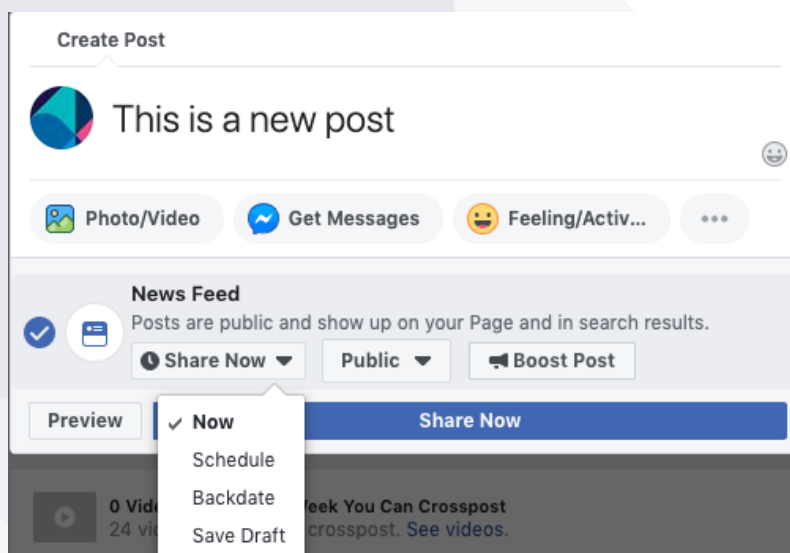
Groups are best for getting a smaller community of people to interact with each other about shared interests.

Groups can be public, private or secret. People either request to join or need to be invited by an admin. Members receive notifications when someone posts to the group. Anyone in the group can contribute posts.

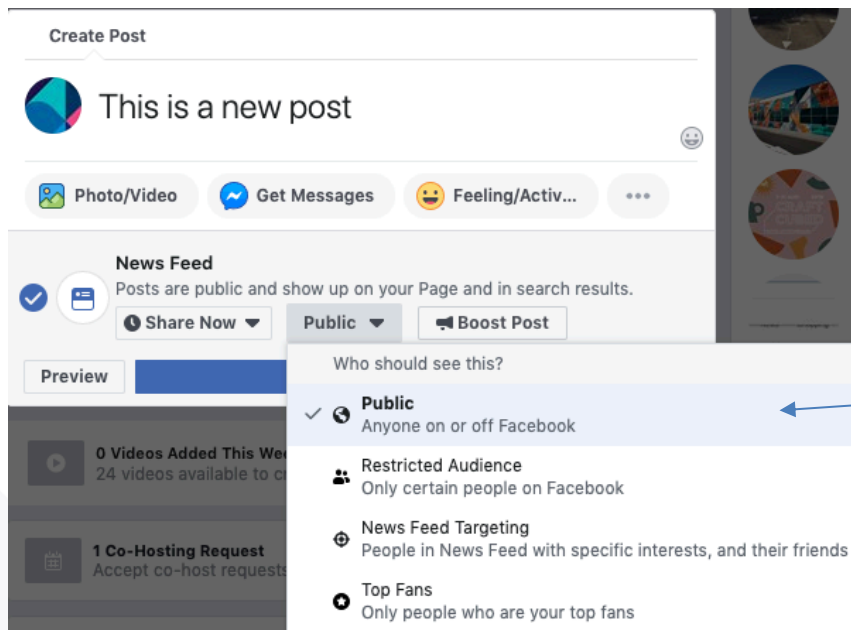
Posting and boosting as an admin

Example:

In a new post you can choose when to post it, to who (through targeting) and whether you want to boost with money to reach more people.

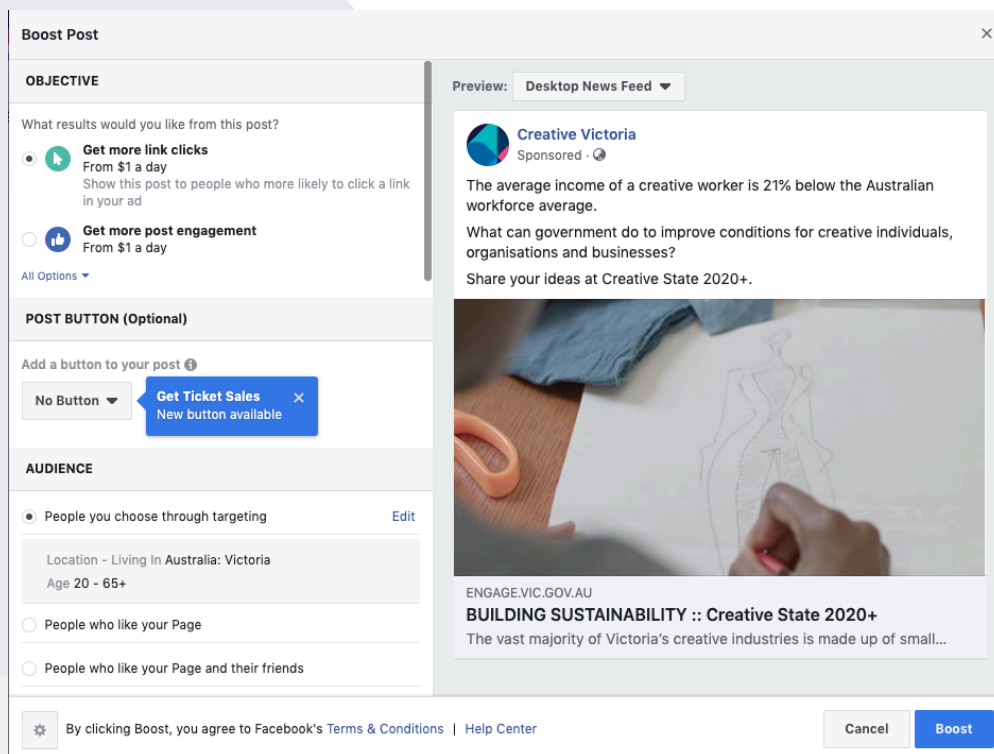


It is recommended that you always use the targeting function every time you post. As an admin you can target posts by geographic location, language, interests and age group. Not only does this help you reach the right people, but targeted posts generally have a higher organic reach than non-targeted posts.



Boosting

Boosting (paying money for a post to be delivered to more people) is useful if you have some budget. You don't need to spend much money (i.e. \$10 over 3 days) but the results are better than basic organic reach.





Twitter

A post on Twitter is called a 'tweet; and contains 280 characters including spaces.

Why use Twitter?

Twitter is great for announcements, topical issues and emergencies but is less useful for stakeholder engagement, and ad hoc corporate messages. It is a 'hot' channel and can provoke rapid unstructured and sometimes toxic exchanges. When conversations go bad, it is very public and hard to control.

You can not edit a tweet, so if you make a significant mistake then delete your post and redo. If it's a small typo, and the tweet has picked up traffic just leave it up rather than lose the reach.

Running an account

Naming your account

When you set up a Twitter account you'll need to create a unique identifier/handle i.e. @creative_vic. Short handles are best as they count towards the character limit when used within a tweet.

Being an admin

As an admin, you can link your personal Twitter account to your organisation's account so you don't need to log in and out all the time and makes it easier to use on a phone. Always remember though to check you're tweeting from the right account.

Analytics

Twitter analytics can be accessed through your account profile and tells you the number of impressions (how many times it appeared in people's feeds), engagement figures such as retweets, shares, or likes and other measurements.

Privacy

You can choose whether your account is public or private in your settings. You can also block people you do not want to interact with, though they can see you have blocked them in your account profile.

Content and features

Tweets

Tweets can not be any longer than 280 characters including spaces. Successful tweets often point to compelling web content or make interesting comments on a 'trending conversation'.

For long hyperlinks go to a free, URL shortening tool like bit.ly or ow.ly if you use Hootsuite (a free online monitoring/posting tool) and create a much shorter URL.

Retweeting

This is where you share someone else's tweet to your network. You can comment on the retweet or add a handle if you want to draw someone's attention to it.

Likes

When you like a tweet you are generally expressing a positive opinion.

Hashtags (#)

Hashtags are still used on Twitter, just make sure they are relevant and meaningful. You can set up lists for hashtags or handles that you want to follow so that your general news feed is more refined to your interests.

'Trending' topics

Topics which are picking up conversation are known as trending. A hashtag, handle or topic can trend and this is when hashtags are really valuable for people only wanting information on that trend.

Blue tick

A blue tick next to a Twitter handle lets people know that the account is authentic. You can ask the Twitter Help Centre for one, particularly if there is a similar account which is causing your audience confusion.



Instagram

Instagram is a social platform mainly for visually attractive images, gifs (short moving images) and videos.

Instagram is favoured by a younger audience but has also picked up many former Pinterest users (older women). Instagram is owned by Facebook, and has a bigger audience than Twitter.

Why use Instagram?

Instagram helps to build your organisation's reputation and brand. Because it often requires time and cost to produce great images, it might be worth finding an account you can team up with, rather than creating a new account.

Running an account

Naming

The name of your Instagram account will have an @ symbol and will help people find and follow you. You can use caps or underscores to help your handle make sense.

Being an admin

Instagram has a Business Profile function which allows you to access analytics, create promotions for your posts and it can be connected with your Facebook account.

Analytics

If you use the Business Profile to run your Instagram account you will have access to Instagram Insights to see how your posts are performing and click throughs to your website from your profile. Otherwise there are free, basic Instagram analytic tools including Iconosquare or Squarelovin.

Privacy

You can choose whether your account is public or private by changing these in your settings.

Content and features

Instagram is great for creating an overall picture of your world, e.g. inside the studio, or 'favourite street art of Brunswick', etc. Instagram content must be visually appealing, and the more imaginative, quirky or original, the better. To make your images look great you can use the in-platform editing tools.

Instagram stories

Instagram stories are 'a moment in time' content last for 24 hours. They can be viewed at the top of the feed (in the form of circular bubbles). Stories simply offer a more casual way to connect, share and interact with your followers.

Likes

It's easy to 'like' on Instagram (double tap) so engagement tends to be high. All posts can be commented on.

Hashtags (#)

Hashtags are important on Instagram. They are easily searchable and can make a big difference to your engagement.

Make sure your hashtags are not too broad and you don't go overboard. Up to 5 hashtags should be fine.

Tagging

Simply add the @handle to notify or recognise someone, where relevant.



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business networking tool. It's used for promoting organisation brands and personal brands/profiles. It can help you find and build the professional network of you as an individual or your organisation.

LinkedIn is also a powerful recruitment tool – for finding work and for placing people in jobs.

Running an account

Basic account

Organisation can manage their LinkedIn account on a free licence.

This allows you to have a profile, join in discussions and post to your feed. Every month you are allocated 15 free InMail messages which you can use to privately message people.

Premium account

A Premium licence can be expensive and is used primarily by recruiters and businesses who use LinkedIn as a professional tool (for recruiting, researching, approaching sales leads, etc.)

Organisation pages

Organisations can set up their pages with information on core business and contact details. Admins can use the tool to post to their follower's news feeds or comment on other organisation's threads.

Groups

LinkedIn groups are designed to be professional discussion areas. Groups are difficult to gain momentum on unless there is a clear agenda for the forum (such as a shared issue or a continuous learning opportunity) so seek advice before setting one up.

Privacy

As with other social channels you can adapt your privacy settings to block third party access to your information, hide details in your profile and other settings.

Your personal profile

Personal LinkedIn profiles appear very high up in search rankings, so make sure your profile is professional and accurate.

Make sure you have an up-to-date, work-appropriate photo of yourself as your profile picture. Fill in your skills and experience as appropriate (similar to a resume don't go too many decades back!).

You can also list your special projects, your education and training and you can ask people to write references for you or recommend you for a skill, and these can feature on your profile.

Social Media rules and regulations

Legal considerations

When using these social channels we want to be factual, sensitive to the issues and effective in getting your message across in a channel-appropriate way.

We also need to meet the terms and conditions for each platform and the policies and regulations which come into play within the ever-changing social media environment.

Each channel has their own terms of service but you can also post additional information on your 'About' section of your channel or on your website so that people understand your approach to social media, such as a group behaviour notice.

Example of group behaviour notice

When posting please respect the views of other users and be aware that our accounts are accessed by minors. Accordingly, posts and contributions should be suitable for individuals of all ages.

All material posted by users must comply with the relevant service's Terms of Use. In addition, users may not post any material that is:

- Abusive, threatening, defamatory or obscene
- Fraudulent, deceptive or misleading
- In violation of any intellectual property right of another
- In violation of any law or regulation
- Otherwise offensive or inappropriate

Do not post material which advertises or offers to sell any goods or services, or conduct or forward surveys, contests, chain letters, spam or any other unsolicited commercial message. Repeated posting of the same content will result in deletion of all but the original post or comment, whether or not this content is advertising material.

We reserve the right to remove, untag and/or report any posts including those that violate these Terms of Use at our discretion.

Repeat offenders may be blocked from contributing, and we accept no liability for any loss arising out of or in connection with any such removal.

Competitions

Competitions (mainly on Facebook) can help you build followers/ engagement.

Depending on the size of the prize and the structure of the competition (e.g. game of chance or skill) there will be some legal considerations. If you have a large prize you might need a lottery permit, and each State has different laws. You will need terms and conditions noted on your channel too (either a link in the post or in you Page Profile).

If in doubt, ask for legal advice.

Privacy

Privacy should be top of mind when managing a social account (even your own). Always protect your own personal information and don't share other people's private details.

Remember:

- Comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (only collect information you're legally entitled to collect)
- Don't use private information harvested from social media in our CRM or any other system
- Put a link to your group rules on your About page. Check your page/groups privacy settings

- Take care when naming people, colleagues, suppliers or sub-contractors in posts, and sharing their images – check you have prior approval.

Copyright

Copyright is a legal protection for people who express ideas and information in many forms e.g. words, images, music and moving images including GIFs.

In Australia, copyright has expired for photos taken before 1955. Photos taken after this date are protected for 70 years from the end of the year when first published.

If using a copyrighted image:

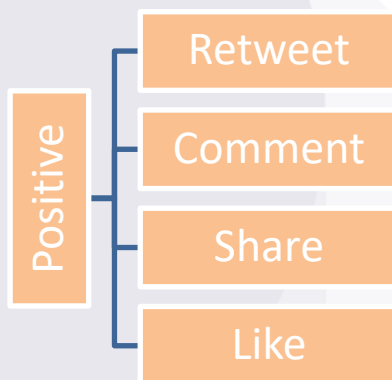
- Find the copyright owners and ask permission to use, or
- Remove and inform poster and channel.

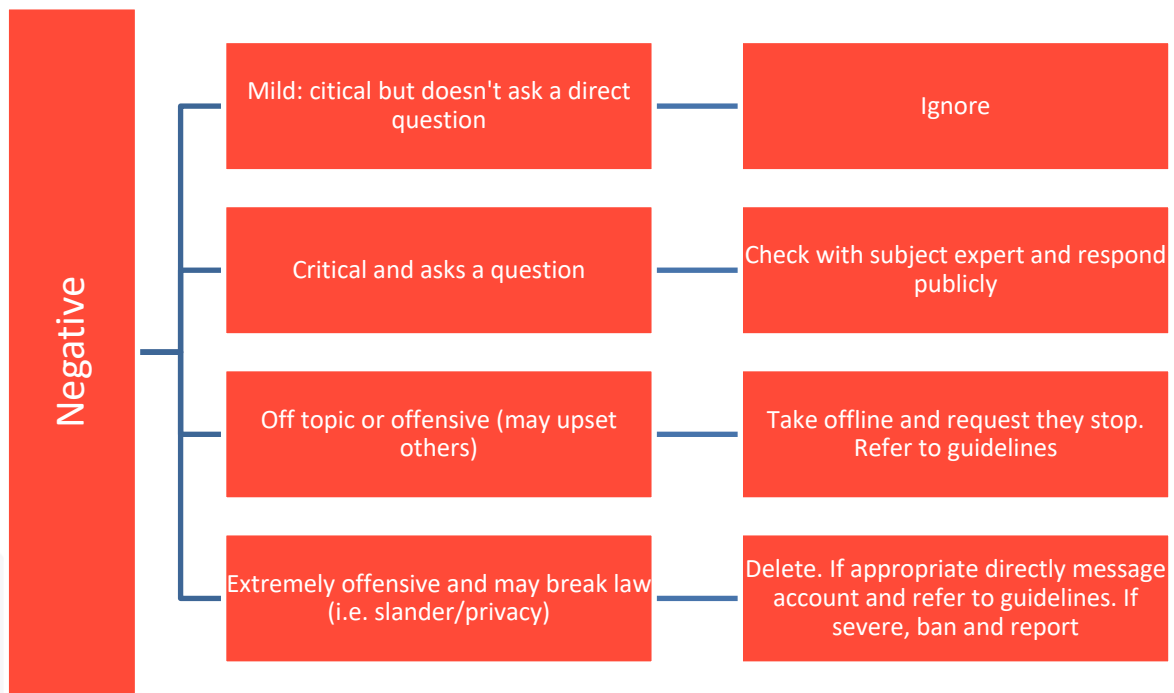
When a conversation goes off the rails...

At some point your account may attract negative attention and how you react is often more scrutinised than the original post. Before you act, remember that the act of shutting down speech in itself can be controversial, so think twice before deleting any post.

If the issue is gaining traction and is bordering on offensive you might choose to hide post or delete. If behaviour is extreme you can also block people from a group/page.

Plan ahead for how you'll response to negative comments and conversations:





Remember:

When you hide a post, it means that the person who made the comment and their friends can still see the post, it just doesn't appear on your page.

Be transparent and tell group that you are taking action if appropriate. Remind everyone of guidelines.

Breach of terms

Posts that directly breach the terms of use as set out by the terms and conditions of each channel.

- › Delete these posts and inform channel and poster.

Defamation

Posts which include any form of defamation of a person or persons. Defamation can arise directly, by implication or where the reader has knowledge about the subject which make the words defamatory. Pictures and video can also defame.

- › Delete these posts and inform channel and poster.

Other laws to consider:

- Anti-discrimination legislation
- Promotion, incitement or instructions of crime or violence
- Fraudulent material
- Obscene, indecent or explicit material.

Understanding performance

As noted in this guide, the analytics within each tool are usually sufficient to get an overview of how your account is performing.

With these tools you can find:

- › Organic reach: how many times your post is 'served' (appeared in someone's feed)
- › Paid reach: if you boost a post
- › Likes, comments and shares
- › Growth of the page likes and followers
- › Basic demographics such as gender split, age and geographic.

Depending on the amount of your activity, develop a regular way to report the most meaningful figures (likes, followers, demographics, peak visiting time, interests, etc.) so you can develop a picture of performance over time. Note best performing posts and what didn't work to help guide your content development.

Useful digital tools

Tool	Purpose
Tweetdeck	Monitoring and scheduling on Twitter.
Facebook Insights	Through Facebook click on Insights and toggle dates to find out your channels activity over certain periods. View likes, shares, and visitor information.
Google Alerts	Set up an alert to scour the internet for mentions of your brand or subject area.
Hootsuite	Social media monitoring, scheduling and posting Twitter, Instagram, FB, LinkedIn etc. + limited reporting on free version.
Sproutsocial or Agora Pulse	Schedule and post messages to multiple social networks reports. 30 day free trial, then a charge.
Survey Monkey	Free survey tool.
Vengage* or Canva*	Simple infographics and chart creation. Sign up through Facebook. Inspiration for infographics: siegemedia.com/creation/best-infographics .

Trello	Tool to help organise project activities, responsibilities and workflow.
Bit.ly or Owly (if you're using Hootsuite)	To shorten URLs into friendly links – great for Twitter.

Images

It is always best to create or source original images for your posts – users can easily spot stock photography.

These sites have free images, though you should cite the photographer where required.

<https://creativecommons.org>

<http://www.lifeofpix.com/>

<http://startupstockphotos.com/>

<http://stokpic.com/>

<http://imcreator.com/free>

<http://publicdomainarchive.com/>

Blogs

Handy blogs on the latest developments and news on social media

Quiip: <https://quiip.com.au/blog/>

SMK: <https://smk.co/>

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