

SOCIAL MEDIA

BEST PRACTICES

FOR THE

BIG 3



LEIGHTON INTERACTIVE
DEMAND RESULTS.

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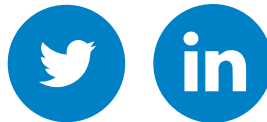
SUMMARY



ABOUT THE AUTHOR - [CANDICE RHODE](#)

With a passion for helping, both consumers and businesses, I enjoy using my knowledge and skills to create engaging social posts and interactions that start a prospect on their inbound journey. As the Inbound Social Lead, I utilize my social media and interpersonal skills to develop and nurture one-on-one relationships between a business and their customers. When I'm not at the office, I enjoy spending time outdoors (fishing and floating on a tube are my favorite) or crafting on my kitchen table.

[FOLLOW CANDICE RHODE](#)



BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA **FOR YOUR BUSINESS**

Anyone involved in business knows that, if they haven't already, they will need to make social media a priority. Long gone are the days when people wait for their mailed catalogs and believe everything the salesman tells them. Because of the Internet, consumers now have the power to do as much research as they want to before a purchase. Not only can they look up product/service information beforehand, but they can also make their opinions heard to thousands of others about their experience.

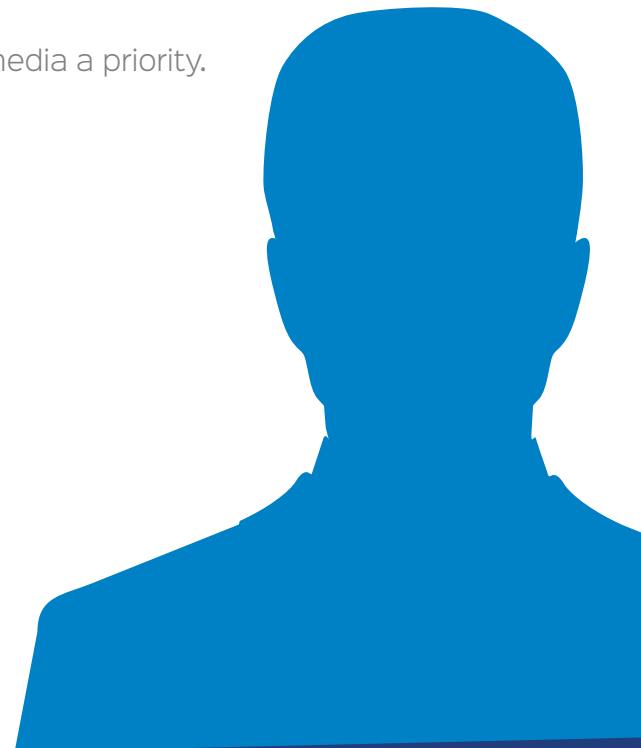
One of the best ways other than your website to get in front of those consumers and make a good impression is through social media. I know what you're thinking... "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know I need it. [But tell me why!](#)".

Well okay, I will!

YOU BECOME HUMAN

Before social media, your business was a place where your customers came to get something in return for their money. That was the extent of your relationship. But now you are able to interact with those customers. You can ask them questions and make them laugh. You can acknowledge your mistakes and say you're sorry. You can benefit them in their everyday life and build a warm relationship with them. You're no longer that brick and mortar location that I'm able to forget after I walk out the door. You become a person that I can interact with and who I invite into my home or office every day.

Use that to your advantage and make social media a priority.



COMPLAINTS CAN BE SOLVED

When most people have a bad experience with a business, they don't take the time to go find a manager and complain. What do they do then you ask? They vow to themselves to never do business with that company again and let all of their friends and family know about their bad experience. Where do these people go to spread the word? You guessed it. Social media.

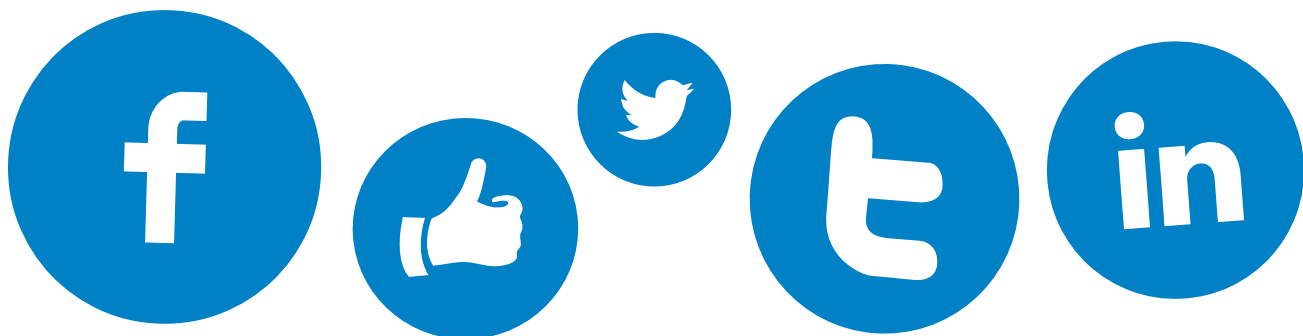
One of the huge benefits of social media is that you can see how people actually feel about you. It's so much easier for a person to complain and not feel bad about it when they have the safety of a computer screen sitting between you and them. When those people go on your social media pages, [you have the chance to apologize and admit your fault and try to make things better](#). Not only will this person likely feel better about your company, but others will also see you in a better light because you're willing to admit your faults.

None of this would happen without social media.



Another bonus of social media is that you are now able to receive a lot more feedback on what is happening in your place of business. If someone writes on your page how they had a very negative experience in your business or with one of your employees, you are able to directly tell them that you are sorry, do everything you can to make it better, and then seek out a solve to fix your problem so it never happens again.

You are able to save a customer and fix a problem all because of your social presence.



YOU BECOME A TRUSTED SOURCE

A large reason a person will follow your business is because they either want information about your company or your industry in general. One of the main rules of social media is the 80/20 Rule. 20 percent of the time you can talk about yourself and the deals that you have going on, and the other 80 percent of the time you can share links to articles from others. That extra content shows your followers that you care about them and want to help them. If you are the business that provides them with high quality, non-salesy information on a regular basis, [you will become the go-to source of information](#) for your followers.



Think about it, who are you going to trust more? The salesman who doesn't ask anything about you and constantly pressures you into buying his product, or the salesman who asks about your pain points and then goes out of his way to find the best fit for you even if that means not selling his product to you?

I think we'd all go with the second one.

YOU STAY TOP-OF-MIND

As mentioned previously, as long as you give your followers USEFUL information and don't shove your products down their throat, it is likely that those who follow your page will continue to do so, and others will eventually follow you too. Every day you have the power to flash before their eyes. Even if they don't stop to take the time to read what you posted, they'll see your name on their news feed. When the time rolls around again for them to make a purchase, guess who's on the top of their mind?

Pretty cool, huh?





HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH
CHANNELS ARE FOR YOU

HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH **CHANNELS ARE FOR YOU**

There are many different social channels out there. The reality is that it's virtually impossible to do them all - or at least do them all well. And frankly, you shouldn't try to. By making sure that you are on [the correct channels for your business](#), you are able to better focus your time on providing quality content that reaches the correct people. So how do you know if you're on the right channels? There's no specific science, but the following may help you.

WHO'S YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

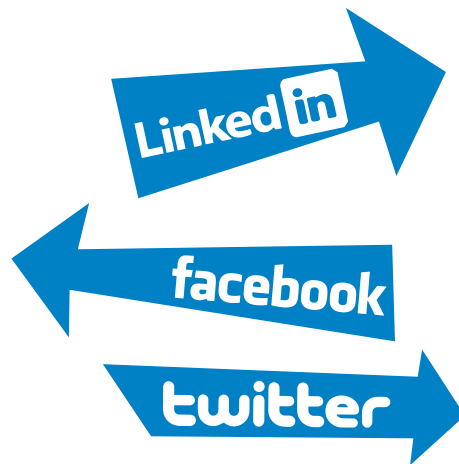
This point is arguably the most important part of determining what channels you should be on. Anyone involved in business should be aware of who their target audience is. If you don't know, then you should stop reading this right now and worry about that first. Then come back and finish this later. Knowing [who your target audience is](#) will give you a ballpark idea of what channels you should be on and what type of content interests them.

Your target audience is more than a demographic, such as “Females 18-30” or “Males 45-60”. Although it is very important to know their gender and age, you should also know what their pain points are and how they go about finding information to solve those problems. Having that target audience in mind makes deciding what channels to be on and also what type of information to post on those channels much easier. You will be glad you've put the time and effort into learning who your audience is because it will greatly pay off in the end.



DO RESEARCH – WHICH CHANNELS ARE THEY ON?

Quite frankly, the easiest way to figure out what channels your target audience is on is to ask them! If you have the chance to ask 50 of your ideal customers what social channels they are on and 35 of them are on Facebook, well then you better put some effort into that channel. The second best thing you can do is to take some time and research. The Internet is full of studies on where different age groups and genders spend their time. If you know your target audience then this research should be pretty straight forward. You could also use a combination of these two approaches if you only have the option to ask a few of your actual customers but want a little more data to back-up your decision.



**At the end of this eBook you will find a few resources to help you find where your demographic is.*

WHERE IS YOUR COMPETITION?

If you have [competitors in the same region](#) as you, do a little research and see what channels they are using. Chances are you have relatively the same target audience as them. If they have thousands of followers on one channel and only 50 on another, you can probably spare yourself some effort and focus on the more successful channel and forget the other. Be careful with this logic however. Take some time to actually look at their different pages to see the amount of effort they put into them. Some companies may put a lot of effort into their Facebook page, but have one of the employees managing their Twitter page on the side with no real strategy. If it seems that they are putting a good amount of effort into both channels however, then it should be easy to decide not to waste time with the one that receives little traction.

The information is right in front of you, so use it!



HOW MANY CHANNELS CAN YOU DO WELL ON A CONSISTENT BASIS?

If you only have one person dedicating five hours a week to social media, then being on four different channels probably isn't a good idea. [The best thing you can do](#) is to dedicate your time on providing remarkable content to your followers. If you're on so many channels that the quality of your posts drop and people start to unfollow your page, then you need to refocus your efforts and narrow in on the channel that has proven the most successful. Remember to keep referencing your target audience when making all of these decisions. Chances are that your ideal follower is not on five different channels themselves. Stick to a few relevant channels and dazzle all of your followers with your content!

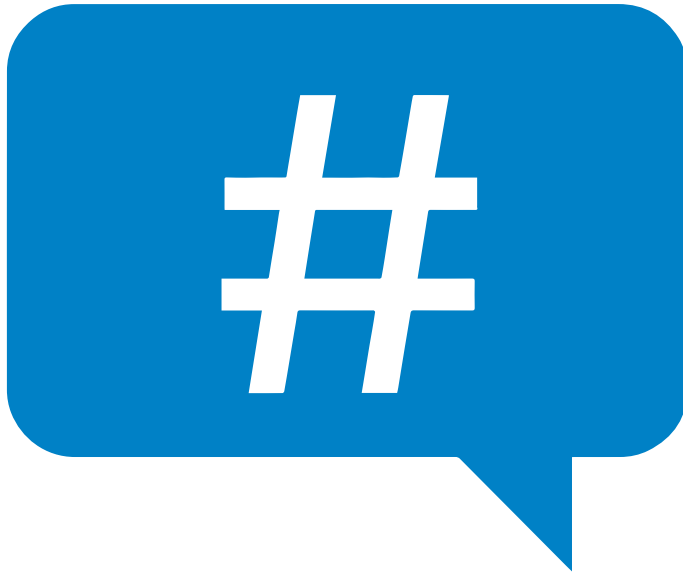
A photograph of a man in profile, looking at a computer monitor. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the screen. The man has short, dark hair and is wearing a dark shirt. The background is dark and out of focus, showing what appears to be an office environment. The text is overlaid on the image in white, with the second line being significantly larger and bolder than the first.

WHAT YOU NEED BEFORE
GETTING STARTED

STRATEGY

FOR EACH CHANNEL YOU NEED TO HAVE A SPECIFIC PLAN.

For every channel you're on you need to [have a specific plan](#) as to how you are going to go about using the page. Using the same plan for every channel is not going to give you optimal results. For instance, posting five times a day on Twitter may be perfectly fine, but five times on Facebook may decrease your audience reach and will become annoying to your followers in a very short time. Making sure you take the time to figure out how you're going to go about executing your plan on each page can make a huge difference in the success rates and your results. It also provides you with the guidelines you need to stay on track and keep your page focused on your goals. It is very easy to spot the difference between a page with a plan and one without one. Be the page with a plan.



WHO ARE YOU FOLLOWING? WHAT GROUPS ARE YOU JOINING? WHAT HASHTAGS ARE YOU USING?

Along with the plans you create for each channel, you should include a basic list of types of people who [you are going to follow](#), groups that you are going to join, and what hashtags you will use to brand your business. Having a structured list will help you keep your efforts focused and will give you a basic starting point each time you log in to that channel. Having a strategy as to who you follow and what groups you join will help you find great content to share with your followers. It also helps provide exposure for your business and creates the chance for other thought leaders in your industry to share your content and follow you back. It's all about building a strong brand and increasing brand awareness.

WHAT'S YOUR GOAL?

What is your [basic goal for your social page](#)? Do you want to become a thought leader in your industry by sharing relevant information and helpful tips? Do you want to build a basic friendship with your followers and make them smile? Do you want to become more humanlike to your followers and share information about your employees or insider information about your business? Whatever that goal is, stick to it. When you start mixing these goals together your page becomes very jumbled and sloppy. Everything you post should be based on your goal.

Another type of goal you may want to consider is how quickly you want to grow your page. By having a set number of followers in mind, it creates a target to strive for. Don't underestimate how many followers you can get. A goal that stretches your efforts is the type of goal you should create. If you do not reach your follower goal, don't sweat it. It may be a sign that you need to reevaluate your strategy or it may have just been you shooting for the stars. Whatever the reason, don't give up! Set a new goal for yourself and strive for it every day you log on.

TONE OF VOICE

How are you going to interact with your followers? Are you going to be that news source or be their friend? Are you going to use proper grammar or use a language that seems fun and spunky? This point goes along with the previous one: stick to the same plan otherwise your page becomes sloppy and confusing to your followers. Sticking with the same tone will help [make your brand that much stronger](#) as long as it matches your overall marketing efforts.



A side-note to sticking with the same tone is that you need to make sure it is appropriate for the social channels you are on. It may be perfectly fine for your business to be fun and spunky on Facebook or Twitter, but if you are on LinkedIn you need to make sure you maintain a professional appearance. The main theme to remember is to keep the same tone on each specific channel (remember to be professional on LinkedIn).

HOW OFTEN ARE YOU GOING TO POST?

This point is pretty self-explanatory. Have a [plan and stick to it](#). If you post five times one week and only once the next week your followers will forget about you in the off weeks. Inconsistent posting also seems to your audience that social media isn't a priority and is just a side project for whenever you have time. Show them that you are committed to them and want to provide them with consistent, good information. If you don't think you have time to log on every day, schedule your posts out. With the scheduling feature on Facebook and sites like [Tweetdeck](#) and [Hootsuite](#), scheduling out a week's worth of posts is possible.





CONTENT CALENDARS

Content calendars can be the rock that keeps you on track. By planning out your posts a month (or week) at a time, you can make sure you don't forget important events and can create a good flow to your posts. Another benefit of calendars is that you only need to put a lot of thought into your posts once a month and, if desired, you can go in and schedule out your posts. In the front end it takes a lot of time and effort, but in the big picture it will save you a significant amount of time and also prevents you from forgetting to post for a week.

The image features a dark blue background with a subtle, repeating floral pattern. A horizontal band of lighter blue is positioned in the center, containing a blurred screenshot of a Facebook page. Overlaid on this band is the word "facebook" in a bold, white, lowercase sans-serif font.

facebook

FACEBOOK

BEST PRACTICES

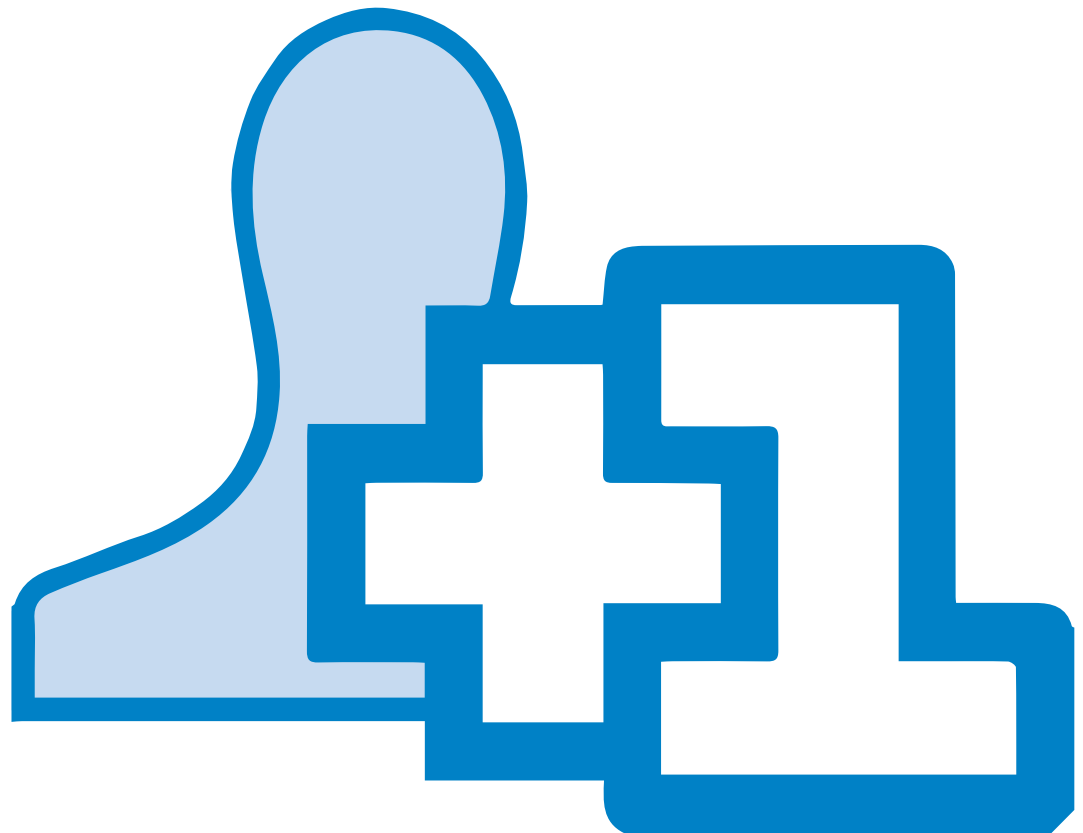
80/20 RULE – KEEP OUTRIGHT PROMOTIONAL POSTS TO A MINIMUM

Facebook was created for the everyday user, not businesses. People join Facebook to connect with their friends and perhaps get a good laugh. A low priority on most people's agendas when they log on is to look at marketing material. With that in mind, [share relevant but fun information](#) on your page 80 percent of the time, and keep the promotional "shop here!" posts down to about 20 percent of the time. Your followers will appreciate you more and will hopefully be less likely to click "Unfollow".

Even when you do the promotional posts, keep them informal and social. Make it something your fans can relate to.

BE OF VALUE TO YOUR FANS

Along with the previous point, people likely follow your page because they want to learn more about your industry and your company. Nobody would purposely go in and “Like” a page they have no interest in. All this would do is clutter their newsfeed with irrelevant information to them. With that in mind, don’t solely post about your company. By sharing other industry news not related to your company, you become a thought leader to your followers without becoming a sales machine. If they find your [posts of value](#), they will likely continue to follow you and perhaps comment on or share your posts!



POST REGULARLY – PLAN, EXPERIMENT, AND ANALYZE TO DETERMINE WHICH IS BEST FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Posting regularly is important when it comes to getting your company in front of your followers. Post frequency should be something planned out before you start working on your Facebook execution because it is integral to making your page successful. Posting 2-3 times a week will not create a lot of exposure for a business, but posting 30 times a week may become annoying. Usually one to three times a day is a good starting point. For bigger businesses, a higher post frequency may work, while a smaller business should look to stay on the lower end as to not annoy their followers. This is something that should be [experimented with and analyzed](#) until you are able to figure out the best frequency for your business.

Post

“LIKE” COMMENTS PEOPLE MAKE AND COMMENT BACK WHEN POSSIBLE

When people comment on your posts or on your page, you should feel the love! And if you receive the love you should also give some back. Show your followers that you truly appreciate them by ‘liking’ or commenting on things they say. By interacting in this way, you are showing them that they are worth your time and effort and that you are paying attention to what they have to say.



ASK PEOPLE QUESTIONS – PEOPLE LOVE TALKING ABOUT THEMSELVES

We all know that person who always has something personal to talk about. We also know how our eyes glaze over and our minds wander over to that amazing donut we ate for breakfast while waiting for that person to be done. Don't be that boring person. Ask questions! It's human nature to love to talk about yourself, so let your followers do just that! By asking them questions you can dramatically increase the amount of interaction on your posts.

Not only is asking questions a good way to boost interaction on your page, but it is also a great way to learn valuable information about your customers. Fun, silly questions can oftentimes give you the best insights into who your customers really are - so ask away!



SHARE BLOGS AND ARTICLES YOUR BUSINESS WRITES

As an inbound marketing agency, we know the power of good content. By creating good content ([blog posts](#), checklists, eBooks, etc.) and sharing them on your page, you are likely to get at least a few clicks back to your website. Posts that link to product information on your site may not get many clicks if people aren't actively searching for your product (for example, lawn mowers). However, if you write general blogs on 'How to Sharpen Your Lawn Mower Blade for a More Even Cut', you're likely to get more clicks since people may be interested in how to do so. This also helps show your followers that you're there to help them, not to just push your products on them.

CONSIDER GIVEAWAYS

If you are just starting to build your Facebook presence, giveaways and contests are a great way to build up your following. People love free things, so give them what they want! One thing to look out for though is to make sure your giveaway isn't providing you with the wrong audience for your page. You want your followers to be included in your target market, so [make sure your contest is tailored](#) to those who you think would actually benefit from your page.

Even if you have a decent sized following for your page, contests and giveaways are still a great thing to consider. Rewarding your followers every now and then for liking your page will keep them there and might even entice them to invite their friends and family. It's also a great way to liven up your page and bring some excitement to your followers. I said this once and I'll say it again, people love free things, so give them what they want!



twitter

TWITTER

BEST PRACTICES

TWEET 3-5 TIMES PER DAY (OR MORE IF POSSIBLE!)

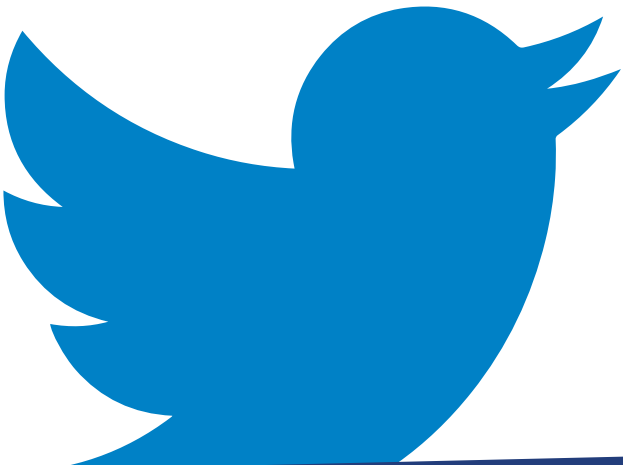
When it comes to [Twitter](#), more is better. Tweets quickly become buried, so in order to get in front of your audience you will need to post often. Due to Twitter's nature, many sources recommend tweeting about once per hour. This gives you the chance to get in front of different followers who may look at their social media at different times in the day. For smaller businesses we know that it is a huge time commitment to tweet that many times in one day, so if you're able to do five tweets per day, great! Larger companies can create teams of people who tweet at certain times of the day and could post up to 20 tweets per day. You don't need to try to compete with these companies. Don't over exert yourself, but when it comes to Twitter, more is better.

RECYCLE OLD POSTS

Going along with the previous point, posts get buried quickly. Because of this, you can recycle old posts and share the same content as long as you space it out a couple weeks. Most of your followers won't catch both posts, so it's a great way to get your content in front of more people. This practice also makes coming up with content to post and share much easier and makes the overall "business tweeting" a more enjoyable experience.

FOLLOW OTHER PEOPLE AND PAGES, INTERACT WITH THEM, MENTION THEM, OR COMMENT ON THEIR TWEETS.

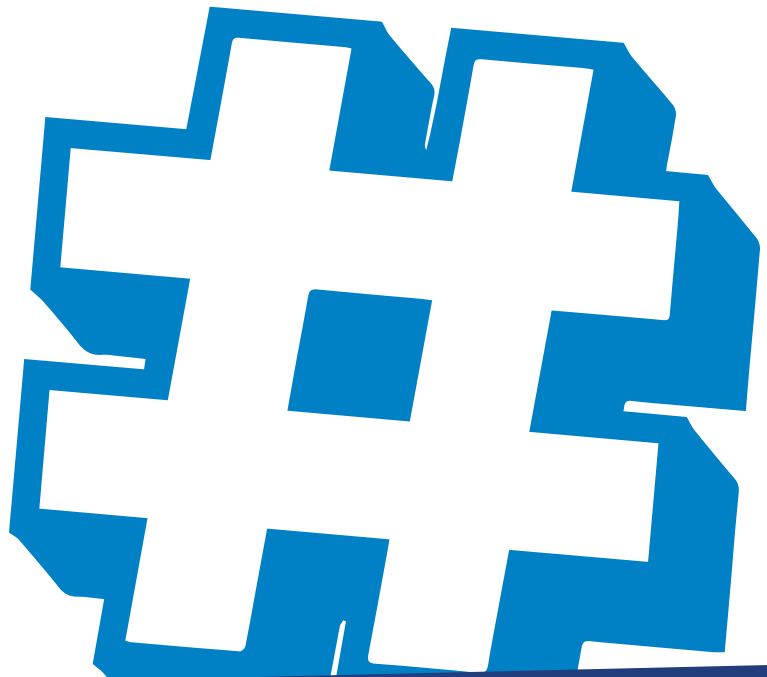
Social media is made for the purpose of being social, not to give one way speeches. Don't just share your posts and log off. Go in and actually seek out conversations to join and instances where you can share your expertise to help answer others' questions. Remember, show some love, receive some love.



USE RELEVANT HASHTAGS

Chances are that your business can include many different hashtags in your posts. The best thing you can do is to create a master list of hashtags to help brand your business. By requiring each tweet to contain at least one of those hashtags, you help strengthen your overall brand. Another huge benefit of using the same [hashtags](#) involves making a trail for your followers. Most of your followers will not see every single tweet that you send out. However, if one of your tweets catches their eye and they are interested in more information regarding that topic, they can click on that hashtag and be brought to a stream of yours (and likely others') posts related to that tweet. By using the same list of hashtags you greatly increase your followers' ability to search for what they are looking for. Lastly, if you are hosting a big event, create a hashtag for it! It will help create a trail for your followers to follow when looking for information related to that event.

Be cautious with hashtags though! Research shows that engagement on Tweets drops significantly if more than two hashtags are present. Use them sparingly and strategically!





TWEET OFFERS AND CONNECT TO BLOGS

Coming up with multiple things to say daily can be difficult for some businesses. A few easy things to post about include offers and blogs. Both of these items are free and should provide your followers with helpful information that they likely would like to know. Tweeting those two items are one of the easiest ways to get people to click back to your website and to show your thought leadership.

SEARCH FOR SUBJECTS RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS AND INTERACT WITH THOSE PEOPLE

IT'S A GREAT WAY TO GET NEW FOLLOWERS THAT ARE ACTUALLY INTERESTED IN WHAT YOUR BUSINESS DOES.

The main reason for hashtags on Twitter is to make posts more easily searchable. Use them. Use hashtags related to your business to find posts related to what your business does. You can then use these posts for shareable material, a place to connect with people interested in products/services related to your business, and a way to help potential customers with questions they may have. This is a very important action to do and should be included in your overall Twitter strategy. In order to increase your following and get your name out there, you need to go out there and spread it yourself.

Linked in

LINKEDIN

BEST PRACTICES

EVERYTHING ON LINKEDIN SHOULD BE
WORK/INDUSTRY RELATED

LinkedIn is the place where professionals go to connect with other professionals to create business relationships or to share or learn industry related information. Be the business that posts sharable industry related content. The better the content you post, the more shares or interaction you will receive. The more shares and interactions you receive, the more exposure for your business. It's really that simple.

KEEP THINGS PROFESSIONAL, NOT CASUAL AS ON OTHER SITES

Facebook and Twitter are the sites where you can be funny and lighthearted. You can share that funny joke one of the employees told the other day or pictures of the weird mustaches in your office. Unless you're positive your target audience is seeking that type of content, then stay away from it on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is the place where business professionals go to connect with other professionals and to share/learn industry related news. Everything you post should somehow be educational to someone and should be in the professional realm. Act on LinkedIn as you would if you met Bill Gates. Be that professional source that people will think highly of and feel comfortable recommending their friends and family to.



SHARE ARTICLES AND CONNECT WITH THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE. DO NOT CONNECT WITH COMPETITORS.

When it comes to a company page, you are limited at what you can do. Besides posting on your company's page and interacting with those who interact on your posts, you can't do much else with LinkedIn. Oftentimes companies rely on their employees to provide that positive image for their business on LinkedIn. Encourage your employees to connect with the right people and to NOT connect with competitors. If they do so, your competitors are then able to see who your company is connected to and could potentially try to steal clients from you.



USE KEYWORDS IN YOUR SUMMARY AND IN ARTICLES

By using keywords in your summary and articles, those searching on Google may find your post on LinkedIn. They could potentially connect with you and follow your business since they realize you are involved with what they are interested in. Everything you do online should be focused on keywords in order to increase the potential of someone discovering your company or your content. Keywords also help the basic search functions within LinkedIn if someone is looking for information related to that keyword. Make it your goal to be the first one that pops up in their search.

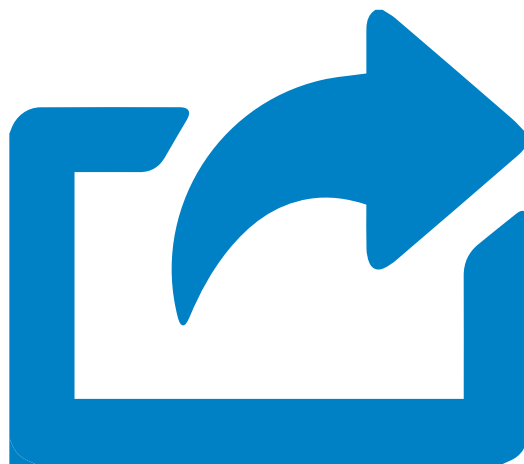
JOIN GROUPS AND INTERACT WITH OTHER MEMBERS

A great thing for your employees to do is to [join industry related groups](#) and interact with other members. By actively participating in these groups, your employees' connections will see that they truly are invested in what they do. It also makes your company visible to the other members of the groups they are in and could potentially lead to more followers of your company page. The more people following your company page, the more likely you are to have your content shared with other people's connections. The more your content is shared, the better your chances of gaining future customers.



GREAT PLACE TO SHARE BLOGS THAT LINK BACK TO YOUR WEBSITE

LinkedIn is practically the perfect place to share blogs that link back to your website. As long as your blogs are industry related and are not specifically about your company, you will likely have people read and share those articles. Most people on LinkedIn do not have content of their own to share, so many of them will share articles they've enjoyed with their connections. Hopefully your blogs are the articles that those people share. Those blogs can create a lot of traffic to your site as people are looking to actually read the blog and continue to search for other related material. Professionals are on LinkedIn to connect with others and to read business related articles. By providing those professionals with the right articles to read, you continually improve your image to those that matter.



SUMMARY

Contacts 42 Time

Total	Leads	Marketing Qualified Contacts	Customers
2,254	438	0	4

Segment your contacts for better targeting - Add Persons

Last 90 Days compared to Previous

Views 19,071 compared to 1,870

Ahead 888.0% (17.2x)

309



Here's what you've been working on:

- Scheduled Feb. 2015 Newsletter
- Published Emerging Markets: Probiotics
- Published LP - Fountain Specialist
- Published LP - Fuel Beverage Specialist
- Published LP - Fountain Specialist

Resources:

- Academy Home
- Training
- Certifications
- Marketing Library
- Forums
- Webinars
- Webinar Playlist Overview

Contact:

- File Manager
- Design Manager
- Learning Paths
- Blog



SUMMARY

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ABOUT BEING SOCIAL

Remember, the main purpose for social media is to have a one-on-one relationship with your current and/or potential customers. It's about being social. It's how you show them that you're human too and you care about them. Don't just post as if it's your duty and never look back at it. Make sure you are interacting with every single person you can in order to create that positive image of your company. Ask them questions and provide answers when asked yourself. Tell them jokes and thank them for the follow. Let them know you appreciate that they're there.

80/20 RULE

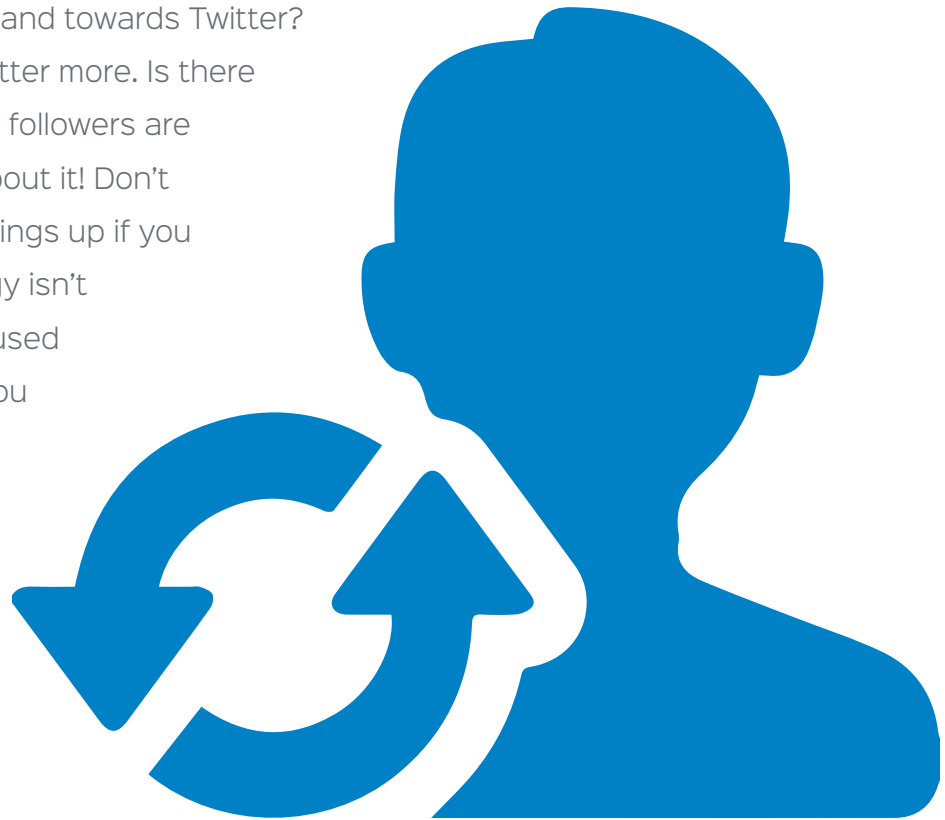
Another important thing to remember is that you need to post items other than promotional material. Your followers will become sick of you quickly if you have constant marketing messages being posted to their newsfeed every day. Share that funny picture that will make them laugh. Ask them what they're doing for the holidays. Show them that you see them as friends and not just customers.

ANALYZE

As with any marketing effort, you need to constantly [analyze your results](#). See which of your posts are receiving the most interaction and do more of them. Those that have little interaction you'll know to either cut back on or to switch up the message. Do videos receive more interaction on your page than just photos? Do more videos! Are you losing followers on the days you post multiple times instead of the usual once? From now on make sure to hold back on posting too often. Does NOTHING seem to be catching on and you're having a hard time getting followers? Either create a new strategy or research to see if you need to switch channels to find the prospects you want to target. The data is there for you. Use it.

CONTINUE TO EVOLVE

Remember. The world is constantly changing; you'll need to as well. Is your target audience moving away from Facebook and towards Twitter? Start focusing on Twitter more. Is there a new topic that your followers are interested in? Talk about it! Don't be afraid to switch things up if you find that your strategy isn't working as well as it used to. The worst thing you can do is lose a few followers; and a few lost followers are worth the gain of many if your change in strategy proves to be the right thing to do.



RESOURCES:

Where is your target audience online?

- http://blog.funmobility.com/2014/09/18/social_media_demo_graphics_2014/
- <http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>
- <https://zephoria.com/social-media/top-15-valuable-facebook-statistics/>
- <http://www.go2vista.com/2014/05/27/social-media-demo-graphic-shifts-and-fatigues/>
- <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/social-networking-fact-sheet/>



SOCIAL MEDIA

BEST PRACTICES

FOR THE

BIG 3



LEIGHTON INTERACTIVE
DEMAND RESULTS.

