

Your Quick-Start Guide to Social Media

Build your best social media presence, style and strategy on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

By: Isabella Andersen

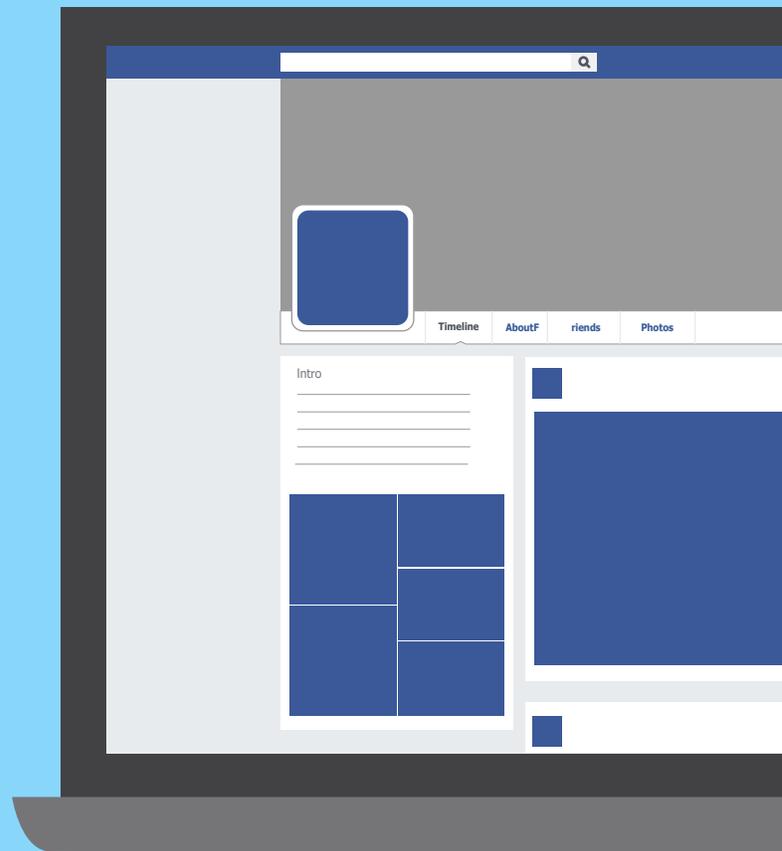


Table of Contents

Intro	3
Getting Started on Facebook	4
Getting Started on Instagram	9
Getting Started on Twitter	14
Your Ongoing Social Media Strategy	17
Sources	18



Did you know that consumers spend five years and four months of their lives on social media?

This gives your business plenty of opportunities to reach your local customer base across social platforms.

But, it can be hard to know which social platforms are actually worth investing time, effort and money into. And, it seems as if there's a new up-and-coming social platform every week.

This guide will break down your social media plan by platform, walking you through the best ways to use each platform—so you'll reach your target market with relevant, high quality content they actually want to see.

You'll learn:

- Who uses each social platform
- What to post
- How often to post
- Our top tips for maximizing your content and reach on each platform

And, we'll wrap up this guide by giving you easy tips for building an ongoing social media strategy that will keep your business relevant on social media month after month.



Getting Started With Facebook

Facebook has been controversial in the past, but the platform's usage is only growing. In fact, as of September 2018, Facebook has 1.47 billion users who are active every single day.

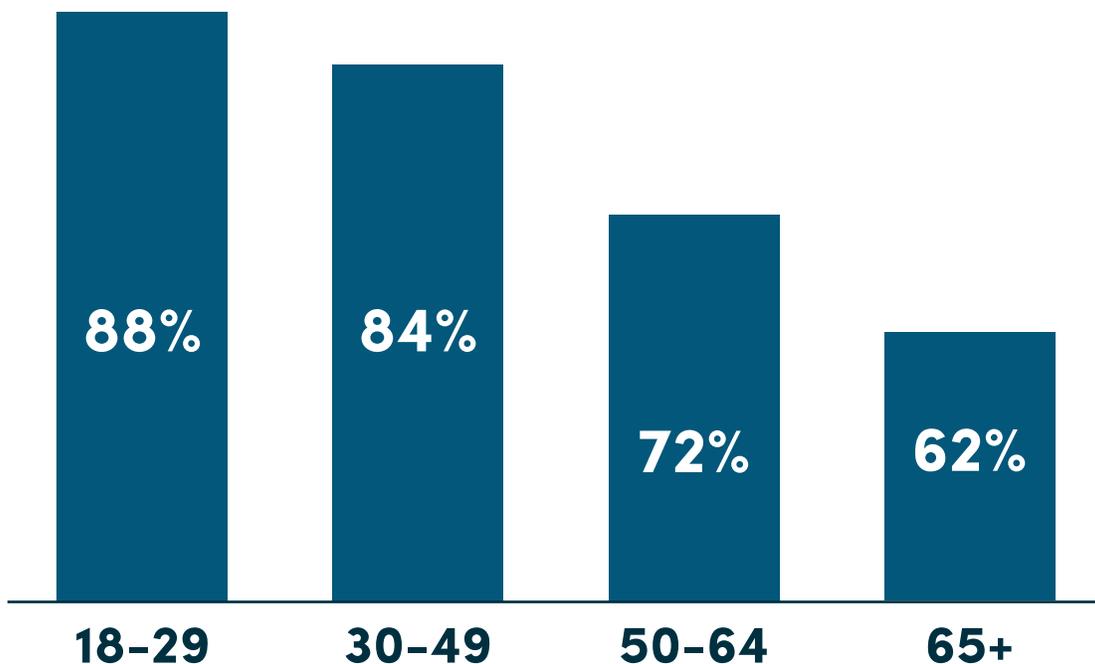
What are all those people using Facebook for? Well, the top reasons people visit the social app each day are to keep up with friends and family, share photos or videos and read news.

While that doesn't seem like it leaves any room for those users to see your business's updates, there are still plenty of ways to get your posts in front of your followers, build your fan base and improve follower engagement.

So, Who Uses Facebook?

Almost everyone has a Facebook account. In fact, 79 percent of all internet users are active on Facebook.¹

The social network is most popular with people from 18 to 29 years of age but is still extremely popular with people of all age groups!



So, no matter who your ideal customer is, that demographic probably uses Facebook, making this a great social media marketing channel for nearly all local businesses!

Maximize Your Facebook Marketing

Facebook is a great place to engage with your current followers and reach a whole new local target market, but it can be tricky to figure out how to correctly use the social platform.

For instance, if you post too often, you will come across as spammy, but if you don't post often enough, people may unfollow or even forget about your business.

And, it's difficult to know what to post on your business page. Too much promotional content will become annoying, but trying to be funny could come across as annoying or offensive.

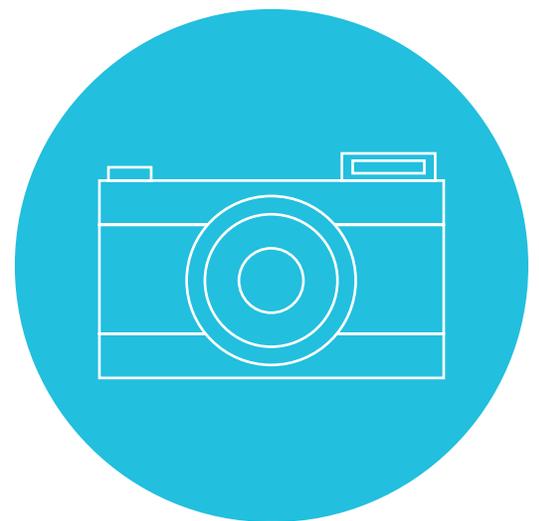
Do the following for a successful Facebook marketing strategy:

1. Optimize your Facebook Page.

Facebook is always adding new functionalities to Facebook business Pages, so make sure yours is up-to-date.

Start by adding a high-quality profile photo. We suggest using your business's logo. Make sure your Page name is your business's name and add your location if there are many pages with a similar name.

Add any high-quality photos of your business, products or services. Before and after photos are great as well!



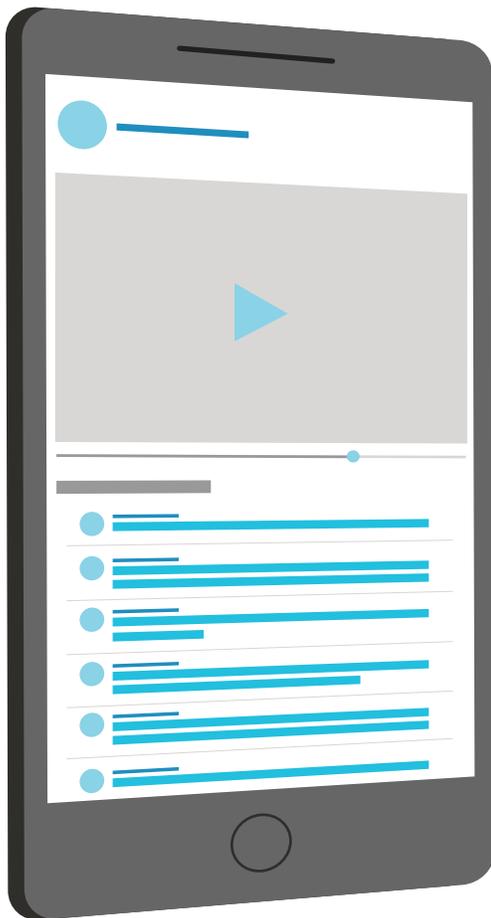
Fill out your “About” section completely. Add your business’s history, what you do, your address, etc. You can get really creative in this section and add awards, products, menus, links to other social profiles and more.

Whatever you do, though, make sure all the tabs people can see on your page are complete and correct.

2. Post a mix of promotional and non-promotional content.

What types of non-promotional content can you post without causing a Facebook comments section disaster? Well, educational content is a great place to start. Think about posting weekly tips or sharing relevant blog posts or videos that teach customers either how to maintain or how to use your products.

Here are a few examples of educational content for specific industries:



- Mechanics and auto dealerships can post tips for winterizing a vehicle or what to do before taking a summer road trip.
- Salons could share a recipe for a DIY hair or face mask.
- Restaurants could share recipe videos.
- Medical professionals can post wellness tips (think seasonal illness/allergy tips, reminders to get a flu shot, or even tips for how often to get a check-up).

And, these are non-promotional post ideas that should work across industries:

- Behind the scenes videos
- Customer or employee spotlights (as long as you have the person’s permission to post)
- Video tutorials (Facebook Live is a great way to get started with tutorials)



Of course, this doesn't mean you shouldn't post promotional content. Absolutely make your followers aware of new promotions, specials, products or services. Let them know if you have a sale coming up or even if you're having a slow day and you want to offer a discount for walk-in customers.

If you serve customers in a specific location, share a status that tells followers exactly where you offer services.

And, if there are questions customers ask all the time, share those questions and their answers on your Facebook Page to save your customers time.



We suggest posting
5-7 times
a week on Facebook.

3. Post regularly.

Some businesses want to post all day long, while others will neglect their Facebook Pages for months. (Who has time to post multiple times every day when you're running a business, anyway?)

But, it's better find a sweet spot somewhere in the middle. You don't have to post all day long to remain relevant to your followers, but you should post regularly.

4. Reply to comments, messages and reviews.

This one is pretty self-explanatory. People expect a reply within a week at the very latest, so reply to all your messages, comments (or at least like them) and reviews!



5. Get more followers.

Getting more followers will make you look more trustworthy, so take these steps to get more followers:

- Run Like Ads.
- Invite friends and family to like your page.
- If you've boosted any posts lately, invite anyone who's liked those posts to like your page too.

6. Try Facebook advertising and boosting.

Advertising on Facebook is a great way to reach more local consumers, get website traffic and find new fans. It can be tricky, though, as there are many types of Facebook ad campaigns your business could be running, and advertising on Facebook requires expertise as well as ongoing ad optimization.

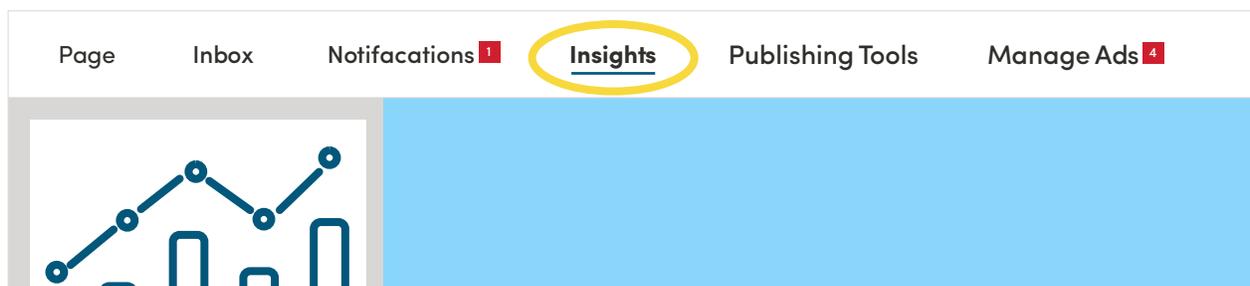
If you're ready to supercharge your Facebook strategy by running ads, you should talk to a Facebook advertising expert to make sure your ads get the most reach for your budget.

7. Monitor your Facebook Insights.

Don't just post and hope for the best. Monitor your Facebook Insights to see how your posts are doing.

In the Facebook Pages Manager app, the insights tab is the second tab from the left at the bottom.

On desktop, when viewing your Page, check the navigation bar across the top. You should see "Insights" there.



Getting Started With Instagram

Instagram usage has exploded. It's projected that the app will have 111 million active users in 2019!²

Instagram is hugely popular with people who are between 18 and 29 years old. But, you can also find users from 30-49 years of age on the photo sharing platform.

This is a great place to market your business if you have dramatic before and after images to share or if you have lots of visuals!

And, Instagram advertising can be extremely effective. In fact, 75 percent of Instagram users will interact with your business in some way after viewing an Instagram ad!

People visit Instagram to view photos of friends and family, find funny memes and videos and get a little #inspiration. But, how can you make your business stand out in a sea of gorgeous Instagram photos and funny videos?

Follow These Steps to Build Your Best Instagram Strategy

1. This goes without saying, but make sure you have high-quality photos.

If you're using your phone to take Instagram photos, make sure you have a decent camera and editing app. Not every picture has to be perfect, but photos should be attractive and crisp.



Here are a few tips for taking a good Insta photo:³

- Make sure your lens is clean.
- Use your camera's gridlines (if you have this feature) to line up the shot.
- Check your camera settings to see if you can shoot square photos since that's how they'll appear on Instagram.
- Zoom with your feet, not your camera – stand as close as you need to rather than losing quality by zooming in with the camera.
- Be careful with filters – they used to be cool, but people tend to find them cheesy these days.
- Take photos from varied angles to see which one works best.
- Make sure you're in a well-lit area, and avoid using flash.

2. Post daily.

Sometimes, it seems as if you'll have to post all day long to get noticed on Instagram, but strategic posting can actually do more for your business than just posting anything you can find and sharing multiple posts daily.

In fact, one study found that posting once a day on Instagram will get you the most engagement.⁴

3. Post on Monday or Thursday.

The best times to post are Monday and Thursday between 3 and 4 p.m. in your target audience's time zone.⁵

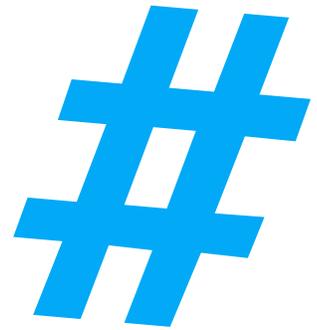
4. Try something new.

Instagram is great for photos, but the social platform is always adding new options.



Here are a few photo and video formats to try posting on Instagram:

- Boomerangs
- Layout photos (collages)
- Multiple photos in a single post
- Short videos
- Live videos
- Instagram Stories (photos, videos, polls and more!)



5. Use lots of hashtags.

Normally, we wouldn't advocate for the use of multiple hashtags, but posts on Instagram will actually get more engagement if you use hashtags!

Wondering how many you can add? Use up to 11 hashtags for the most engagement.

Tips for Instagram hashtag use:

- Use relevant, daily trending hashtags to expand your reach.
- Find local hashtags (search for your location and use the hashtags from that search).
- Add new hashtags a few days after publishing to boost the post's exposure.
- You can use hashtags in your Instagram Stories.

6. Connect your Instagram and Facebook accounts.

Connecting your accounts makes it easy to cross-post your Instagram photos to Facebook. [Here's a tutorial on how to connect Facebook to Instagram.](#)

7. Use 'link in bio' posts to boost traffic to specific pages.

If you use Instagram at all, you've seen someone promoting a product or service with the phrase "link in bio." This prompts followers to go to your Instagram bio and follow the link there.



These types of posts are great for driving traffic to your website or landing pages, but if you don't have a lot of time to manage your Instagram, you'll want to keep them to a minimum. Otherwise, you may forget to change the link every time, sending users to the wrong page.

8. Find posts from people who have checked in at your location.

You can use Instagram's search feature to find a location. Just tap the search icon, tap "Places" and search for your business. You'll find people who have added your location to their posts.

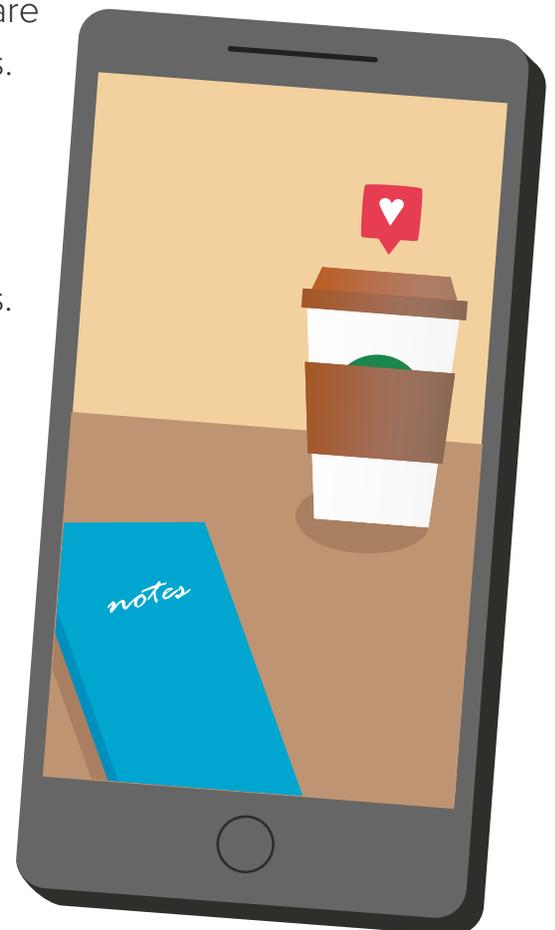
Interact with those users or, if they posted a nice image of your business, products or services, ask if you can repost and share this with your followers! This is an easy way to find more content to post.

9. Use Instagram Stories to give a sneak peek into your business, products and services or events.

We mentioned Instagram Stories earlier, but there are so many great features you can add to your Stories.

Here are a few ways to upgrade your Instagram Stories:

- You can draw or handwrite with the marker tools.
- Add colorful backgrounds.
- Add text – which can be turned into links that people can click.
- Use location stickers to add your business's location to your story.
- Create a poll.
- Use Instagram highlights to pin your Stories to your bio for 24 hours.

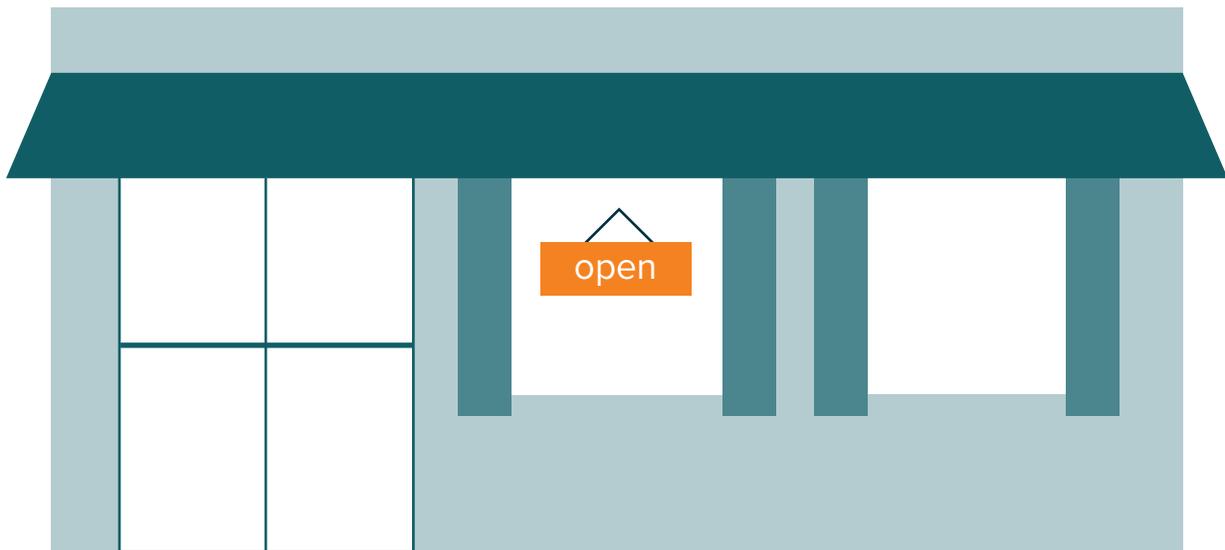


10. Have fun with it!

While you'll want to share promotional photos that make followers want to visit or purchase from your business, there's also room for a little fun on Instagram.

Here are ideas for both promotional and fun posts you can share on Instagram:

- Behind-the-scenes photos
- New products
- In-store displays
- Sale items
- Before and after photos
- Boomerangs of your employees performing a service
- Sneak peeks of upcoming promotions or product releases



Getting Started With Twitter

A lot of experts keep saying that Twitter is dying, but its usage remains mostly stable; in the second quarter of 2018, Twitter had 68 million monthly active users.⁶

And, Twitter often adds new features and functionality to keep users engaged and active; the platform also does what it can to keep users' content relevant to their interests.

Who's Using Twitter?

Well, 24 percent of men and 25 percent of women use Twitter. Most of its users are from 18-29 years old, so if you're targeting a younger crowd, Twitter is the place to go.

Build a Better Twitter Strategy

1. Forget 140 characters, but don't get too wordy.

Twitter recently doubled its former 140-character limit on tweets, but that doesn't mean you should write a novel in a single tweet. Still try to keep it concise and to the point!

2. Be strategic with hashtags.

Twitter hashtags can get you more exposure, but you shouldn't use too many. We try to stick with 1-3 hashtags per tweet.

Don't forget to do hashtag research using a service like Hashtagify or Ritetag. These websites will allow you to research trending hashtags, giving your business the best chance at reaching more people on Twitter.

And, check out the trending hashtags each day to see if any of those are relevant to your business. Be careful, though, sometimes the trending hashtags can be controversial. Try to keep it light and either related to your business or fun.



3. Tweet often.

While you don't have to create a ton of original content for Twitter, you should be tweeting at least once a day.

We recommend 3-5 tweets daily, but remember that these can include original content as well as retweets or replying to others' tweets.



4. Post videos on Twitter.

Since 82 percent of Twitter users watch videos on the app, this is a great place to share any videos you've made!

Note: Post the video natively through Twitter instead of just sharing a link to your website or YouTube channel. This can help improve your video's engagement.

5. Search for users in your area.

You can use Twitter's advanced search to find people in your location—and if you really have the time, you can search for specific keywords. For instance, you could search for “oil change” in your location to see anyone who's tweeted about having to get their oil changed.

Find and follow those users to keep your business fresh in their minds.

6. Follow other accounts to get more followers.

Be careful when following other accounts, because if you follow too many people too quickly, you could get flagged as spam.

Here are some ideas for Twitter accounts to follow:⁷

- Other local businesses
- Other businesses in your industry
- Local news organizations and bloggers



7. Tweet a mix of promotional and fun posts.

If you're sticking to 3-5 tweets a day, you're going to need lots of ideas for tweets.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Links to your website or promotions
- Quick tips for using your products
- Live tweet at events
- Inspirational quotes
- Images and videos of your business

8. Reply to comments and messages, but ignore the angry tweets.

It's no secret that social media conversations can get heated. It's best to stay away from political discussions or arguments. So, be sure to reply to comments and DMs, but try not to engage in any arguments.

9. Make your 160-word bio count.

You only have 160 words to tell Twitter users about your business. Be clear and concise when writing your bio, and make sure to include your location, business name and industry keywords.



Your Ongoing Social Media Strategy

Now that you have the basics down, it's time to build an ongoing strategy that builds engagement, drives website traffic and helps you reach more people online.

Here are the steps you'll need to take to build your ongoing strategy:

1. Create an editorial calendar (this can be a physical calendar, the one on your phone, or even a project management app like Trello).
2. Build a list of posts you can create every month (monthly specials, employee spotlights, happy Friday posts, etc.).
3. Plan to post regularly. Schedule in advance if it helps you stay on track.
4. Watch your insights to see if engagement and followers are improving.
5. Check in at least once daily to reply to comments.

Get your personal [social media calendar here!](#)



Sources

1.

<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics/>

2.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/>

3.

<https://digitalbrandinginstitute.com/take-awesome-pictures-phone/>

4.

<https://www.revlocal.com/blog/social-media-marketing/how-often-should-your-business-post-on-social-media>

5.

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/instagram-stats#sm.00001gh1dtvg64ejiu25spzw936rk>

6.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/274564/monthly-active-twitter-users-in-the-united-states/>

7.

<https://www.marketingforowners.com/use-twitter-small-business-marketing/>

