

# Social Media Strategies

Tips and Tools for Your Online Connections

Nikki Jeske  
Creative Brand Strategist, [DesignCoyote.com](http://DesignCoyote.com)

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# An Introduction

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You might be wondering why I have decided to create an ebook on social media. The answer is fairly simple: to make brands aware of this powerful marketing tool and to show you exactly why (and how) you should be utilizing it. To not be connected within an online network is to lose out on the opportunity to grow your brand and get to know your audience. For many people, social media has become part of our daily lives. We tweet, we chat on facebook, we socialize through a virtual world, and none of this is restricted to just personal use. Businesses and organizations use social media to their advantage by engaging their employees and members and bringing them up-to-date with what's happening on the inside of the company. The majority of people that I have talked to do not realize the potential that social media holds for their business or organization.



We like to think of ourselves as progressive, and I don't just mean you and I. I mean humanity in general. We are a community of progressive people. WE love to learn and we love to communicate. Social media makes it easy for us to do both and that is why I am writing this ebook: to teach you how to utilize this progressive means of communication through online interaction.

The first step to social media is easy. Decide you want to do it and read this ebook to find out how. You'll be surprised by how easy it will be to integrate it into your organization. Some see social media as a means to keep in contact with friends and family, but it is also a phenomenal business tool if you know how to use it.

In this ebook, we focus on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. There are many forms of social media, but these three are the giants and have defined how social media works. Others just build off the technology that they are already implementing. Twitter set the pace of social media with its real time updates. Facebook did what Myspace couldn't – it created a world-wide community not defined by age or gender. LinkedIn saw the potential for corporations on the web and paved the way for big businesses to meet employees on a more personal level. Each platform has something different to offer your organization and the following chapters will help you define your goals and decide which is best for you.

I am passionate about social media. I see the potential it has to help people learn and grow with their audience. Through online community involvement, your organization can become a better resource for every person who joins.

*“A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men.”*

- Herman Melville

Nikki Jeske  
Creative Brand Strategist,  
*Design Coyote*

# Chapter One

## The Social Media Phenomenon

***If you are plugged in anywhere online, you've heard of social media.*** It is the buzz when it comes to just about any online trend. So just what is social media? It comes in many forms but the ultimate goal behind any platform is to network with others. To break it down, the social aspect is about interaction among connections, and the media part is about the platforms you interact through. You might recognize some of the more popular tools of the social media phenomenon: Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. There are many more out on the web but these three are the most popular ways to socially interact with the rest of the world.

In the following, we will take a look at these three social networking giants and help you understand the importance of social media and what it can do for your organization.

# Social Media and You

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Let's get right to it. The most important reason why social media should be included in any business website strategy is simple: marketing. Even if you don't have traditional products to market, you do! Your entire brand is your product! With tools like Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn, you can promote your organization, send out reminders about events, and interact with potential new customers. It's also a great way to get your current customers to connect with each other.

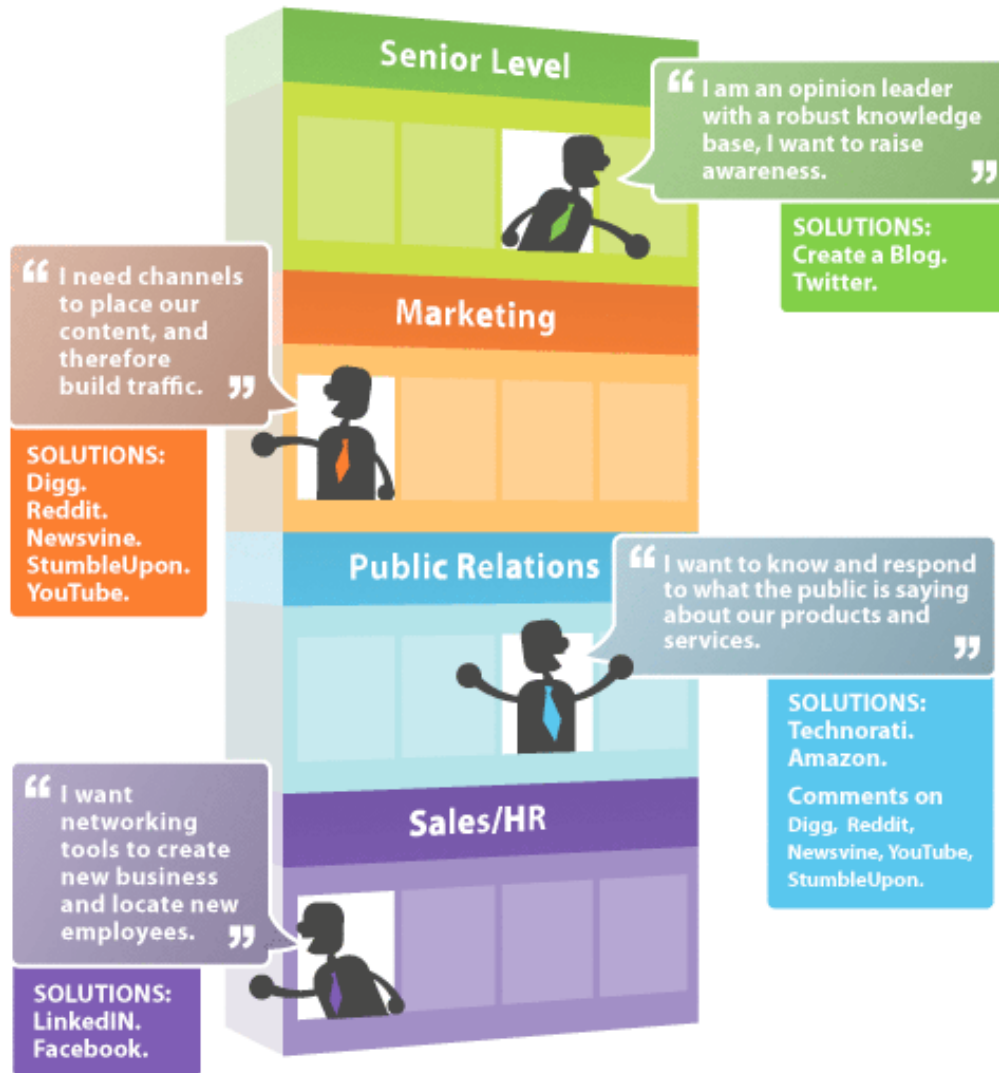
Social media is beneficial because it becomes a trusted resource for your audience. It is a virtual place to easily communicate with you, the organization. They can ask questions and find answers, and even create networking opportunities with other related organizations. You can use your new online power to hire employees, find volunteers, create a strong online presence, and create a database for public relations or customer services. Social media is an organizational tool for you to take advantage of – with it you can create polls, keep your customers updated with relevant news, and develop relationships that would have otherwise been missed.

Some say that social media is too hard to work with or that there is little reason behind its existence, but that is far from the truth. Social media is what you make it, and if you use it to your advantage, then it can prove continuously beneficial to your organization.

*“Social media isn't the end-all-be-all, but it offers marketers unparalleled opportunity to participate in relevant ways. It also provides a launchpad for other marketing tactics. Social media is not an island. It's a high-power engine on the larger marketing ship.”*

- Amber Naslund, Social Media Today

## Building a Company with Social Media



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# Chapter Two

## Tips for Creating a Successful Social Media Identity

*It is pretty easy to set up an account on your preferred social media platform, but if you don't know what you're doing after that, gaining an audience can prove difficult. To really succeed with your online presence, here are a few tips of the trade.*

*“Quit counting fans, followers and blog subscribers like bottle caps. Think instead about what you're hoping to achieve with and through the community that actually cares about what you are doing.”*

- Amber Naslund, Social Media Today



# Starting Out in the Social Media World

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First, know your focus. Who is your audience? Who are you trying to network with? Having a clear goal in mind is important from the start otherwise even loyal customers of your business could get confused. Will you be tweeting events for your organization? Or sharing information focused at potential customers? Having an action plan before you begin will prove helpful once you get started.

Don't feel pressured into creating an account on every single social media network. Spreading yourself out too thin will just make more work for yourself and it won't allow you to really focus on gaining a targeted audience. Use what you can and don't overwork your resources. One idea is to poll followers about where they are found online. Maybe the majority of them hang out on Facebook – your best bet is to go where they already are so you know in advance that you are going to have some followers from the beginning. But remember, nothing is set in stone. If you find that something isn't working for you, change it! Focus your time on another site. Maybe Twitter will work out better. Find what works and stick to it. Once you have a growing fan base of followers, you can start spreading yourself out to another social media site. With luck, you'll already have members waiting for you.

*“How can you squander even one more day not taking advantage of the greatest shifts of our generation? How dare you settle for less when the world has made it so easy for you to be remarkable?”*

- Seth Godin, Squidoo founder

## Being Social - What Do I Say?

**Be human!** Don't be afraid to talk to your followers as you. Don't feel like you have to pretend you are an inanimate personification of the organization. You are you and you are relatable. Make sure you have a profile picture that defines your brand. Using your logo is oftentimes a safe bet when it comes to social media. Decide what your focus is and even an image of yourself could work. This leads into branding. **Stay consistent!** Your website is already branded with colors and your logo – keep that in your social media profiles. Some networks allow you to custom design the background or create color palettes. Use this! If your branding is consistent, your audience will instantly recognize who you are. Consistency isn't just for branding, keep your personality concise as well. Know what you will talk about and what you won't talk about online.

**Don't forget to update!** Otherwise, what is the purpose of your social media identity? Leaving an account static makes followers forget it exists. To make updating easier, use a social media desktop client to keep everything organized. You can find reviews on different clients to download that will work with your computer or browser. Make sure that each update is valuable. **Share links!** Give tips that are relevant to your audience. **Promote your followers!** Talk to both organizations and individuals that are following you. Keep your followers in the loop about what's new for your business. Make updates about ideas employees or volunteers have. There is always something going on behind the scenes and this is a great way to give your audience a sneak peak at what is happening with their favorite organization.

Most networks have a limited amount of space for you to update in. When sharing links, it is best to use a URL shortening tool to keep the website address short. Most social media desktop clients have an automatic tool built in to do this, otherwise you can use sites like **Bit.ly** to manual shorten a longer link.

Here's an offline tip, especially for those businesses who will be actively including social media into their everyday calendar. Building your community online is important, but it's equally important to be aware of laws within your organization about what can be said online. The best way to keep to these laws is to include social media language into your personnel policies.

# Things Not To Do When Networking

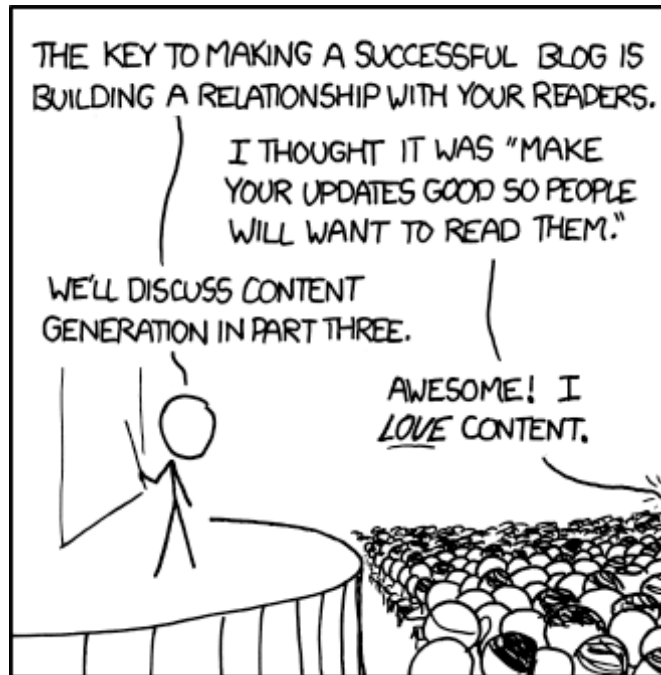
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It can be hard to find your niche in the greater social media crowd, and it can be too easy to become unsuccessful before you even begin. Here is a short list of things **not do when networking**.

- Don't update.
- Pretend you're a robot.
- Update with your lunch menu on a daily basis.
- Be repetitive.
- Spam the feeds with one update over and over and over...
- Keep your intentions vague.
- Don't have a goal.
- Update about the color of your shoes.
- Don't follow anyone.
- Follow everyone!
- Never answer replies or messages.
- Don't brand your account.
- Don't use social media for conversations.
- Have many accounts with multiple networks.
- Don't designate a social media person.
- Post office party snapshots.
- Keep your social media private.
- Only use it for sales and recruiting.
- Be cryptic.
- Don't be a trusted resource.

## So What Now?

So now you've got an idea of why social media will benefit you and how to begin. But *where* to begin? In the next few chapters we will identify some of the most popular networks and give you an overview of each. Remember to keep in mind what will make you successful in the online community and what won't. Onward!



# Chapter Three

## A Look at Popular Social Media Networks

*In this day and age, networking sites come and go like the tides. Communities attempting to utilize the popular fad of continuous updates and social status changes are being created left and right, but only a few have become true success stories. In this chapter, we are going to take a better look at the three giants in the social media world and help you decide which network is right for you and your organization.*

Choosing a social media network to join may seem like an easy task. In fact, most organizations will join as many as they can simply to get their name out into the world wide web. And while that isn't necessarily the worst approach, it isn't the best practice for when you want to network with new people. Spreading yourself out too thin can be an issue. Instead, find what works for you. Join a site and if it becomes easy to connect with followers and keep it updated, then you are on the right track. If it doesn't seem to be working, try something new. The key is to find your fit and focus on that. The more time you put into one network, the more communication happens between you and your followers. Once you have successfully created a dynamic flow of real interaction, you can spread yourself out a little and try a new network. The three most successful social media applications are **Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.**

# Tweeting Tweets with Twitter



Twitter, with its renown livestream of tweets and groundbreaking real-time search tools, has become one of the biggest names in the social media field. It is, in a sense, a micro-blog, with each update limited to 140 characters. This may seem like too small of a space for anything worth while, but Twitter was created with texting in mind, and sometimes, all you need is a few short words to make a real big impact. It forces you to choose your words carefully and keep every meaning in the back of your mind. Twitter describes itself as “a real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting” (Twitter.com). Think of each tweet as a newspaper headline. It’s an attention-grabber and one of the best ways to get potential new customers back to your organization’s website.

A new Twitter experience is coming! Learn more about it... #NewTwitter

Have an account? [Sign In](#)

**twitter**

The best way to discover what's new in your world.

[Google Instant](#) [Sparky](#) [A380](#) [Charlie Murphy](#) [Private Practice](#) **TRENDING TOPICS** [Keith Olbermann](#) [Fawkes](#)

**See who's here**

Friends and industry peers you know. Celebrities you watch. Businesses you frequent. Find them all on Twitter.

**Top Tweets** [View all >](#)

**BarackObama** We've got to keep fighting for every job, for every new business, for every opportunity to get this economy moving. <http://OFA.BO/A7hz2k>  
about 1 hour ago

**TheQuoteWhore** If you love two people at the same time, choose the second one. Because if you truly loved the first one, you wouldn't love another one.  
about 1 hour ago

**iheartquotes** "you're only as dumb as the situation you didnt learn from." ~Keith Lullen via @MEquoted  
about 1 hour ago

**New to Twitter?**  
Easy, free, and instant updates. Get access to the information that interests you most.

[Sign Up >](#)

**A #NewTwitter**  
Catch a glimpse of the new Twitter.com.

## Why Twitter Would Work For You

An organization is made up of people that may or may not be located in different parts of the state, country, or world, depending on the type of organization. Because of this, there is may be confusion or disconnect between the employees, volunteers, or even your customers. This is where Twitter comes in. Twitter is really a *network* made for *networking*. It is also a tool for quick updates in replace of a newsletter or mass email. Sometimes all you need is 140 characters to convey a message to your audience.

Twitter recognizes that it is a potential asset to businesses and organizations and recently created a guide specifically for helping larger organizations leverage the power of their network.

*“One of Twitter’s key benefits is that it gives you the chance to communicate casually with customers on their terms, creating friendly relationships along the way - tough for corporations to do in most other mediums.”*

- [business.twitter.com](http://business.twitter.com)

You can find more great quotes, tips and a dictionary full of tweet lingo through Twitter’s Business page. They even have case studies with specific businesses such as Best Buy, Dell, Pepsi, Levi’s and more. It works for them and it will work for you.

# A New Face With Facebook

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There is some interesting history behind the creation of Facebook, but initially it was created for a few Harvard College students to keep in touch with each other, discuss classes, and rate each other based on appearance. Thankfully it has changed drastically from that first version and now thrives as a virtual hub for friends and family to re-connect. It has also become a very useful tool for businesses to interact on a more personal level with their employees and customers.

With Facebook, you can create several types of accounts. You have your personal account, which is strictly for your life. Then there are business accounts, which are similar to personal accounts but with limitations. Both of these are good to have, but the best thing for a business or organization is what is known as a "Page." Creating a Page will "help the [business] communicate and engage with their audiences, and capture new audiences virally through friend recommendations, News Feed stories, Facebook events, and beyond." (Facebook.com). There are also Groups, but these are not seen to be as professional as "Pages" because anyone can create them about anything. A Page is specifically for a professional business.

*I think there is confusion around what the point of social networks is. A lot of different companies characterized as social networks have different goals - some serve the function of business networking, some are media portals. What we are trying to do is just make it really efficient for people to communicate, get information and share information.*

- Mark Zuckerberg, Founder of Facebook.com



## Why Facebook Would Work For You

Compared to Twitter, Facebook is a little more complex. Instead of having one continuous timeline of updates only from your organization, Facebook works like an online message board, where customers who have joined, or “Liked” your Page, can post comments to each other, share links, and create their own discussion topics. This particular feature has made it incredibly popular among businesses who want something a little more than one-sided status updates. Twitter is mainly for marketing and for you as the organization to get to know your members. Facebook is for your audience to interact with each other. Simple, yes?



Facebook has instructions on how to make every kind of account, and there are a lot of resources for making business “Pages.” Be sure to do a little research on how best to get your followers to interact on your page.

# Getting In With LinkedIn



When one thinks of businesses combining with social media, it is understandable that LinkedIn takes the professional cake. Built specifically for business professionals to communicate with each other, find potential careers, and get feedback on their own creative endeavors, LinkedIn is well known throughout the web as being the place for professionals. Need proof? "Executives from all Fortune 500 companies are LinkedIn members" (LinkedIn.com).

With a personal LinkedIn profile, you can set up something that resembles an online resume. You can even get colleagues to leave you testimonials and you can discover new connections through your friends and co-workers. This is a great resource for anyone out there looking for a job because it builds trust. On LinkedIn, everyone knows someone you want to know.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn website's 'About Us' page. The top navigation bar includes the LinkedIn logo and a 'Go to LinkedIn.com' link. The main content area is titled 'About Us' and features several sections:

- Company Overview:** A sidebar menu with links for 'About Us', 'Company History', 'Management', 'Investors', 'Partners', and 'Contact Us'.
- Press Center:** A sidebar menu with links for 'Press Releases', 'Analyst Quotes', and 'Press Coverage'.
- Resource Center:** A sidebar menu with links for 'FAQ's & Stats', 'Success Stories', 'Logo & Screenshots', and 'LinkedIn for Journalists'.
- Related Links:** A sidebar menu with links for 'LinkedIn Blog', 'Learning Center', 'Work for LinkedIn', and 'Customer Service'.
- Search:** A search box at the bottom left with the text 'Search this site:' and a 'Search' button.
- Main Content:**
  - About Us:** A header with navigation links: 'À propos de LinkedIn | Über LinkedIn | Acerca de LinkedIn | Sobre LinkedIn | Informazioni su LinkedIn'.
  - Latest LinkedIn Facts:** A section with three bullet points:
    - LinkedIn has over 85 million members in over 200 countries.
    - A new member joins LinkedIn approximately every second, and about half of our members are outside the U.S.
    - Executives from all Fortune 500 companies are LinkedIn members.
  - Relationships Matter:** A section with the text: 'Your professional network of trusted contacts gives you an advantage in your career, and is one of your most valuable assets. LinkedIn exists to help you make better use of your professional network and help the people you trust in return. Our mission is to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. We believe that in a global connected economy, your success as a professional and your competitiveness as a company depends upon faster access to insight and resources you can trust.'
  - What is LinkedIn?:** A section with a video player showing a video titled 'What is LinkedIn? by LinkedIn'. The video frame shows the text 'what is LinkedIn?' and the LinkedIn logo.

## Why LinkedIn Would Work For You

Do you want your professional network to grow? Do you want to reach out to other organizations, meet their audience, and find out how they grow their brand? LinkedIn brings together people within related fields. Companies use this social media platform to get more personal with their employees and to become a trusted resource for clients. An organization would benefit from LinkedIn because it allows your audience to get to know each other and it connects them all under one central hub: you. You become an industry network by simply being a business on the site. What LinkedIn has over both Facebook and Twitter is that it is the prime platform to find new employees and volunteers. In reality, you don't have to find them on LinkedIn (though don't let that stop you from doing it); they are already actively searching for you.

LinkedIn has a few other perks as well. You can raise interest in funding from larger businesses, you can ask questions of other organizations who are in the same field as you, and you can even promote events and meetings for your customers through discussion boards and daily digest emails. It is a great place to grow your relationships.



# Conclusion

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Social Media isn't something to be afraid of. It is a powerhouse. A marketing tool. A platform that will extend the reach of your voice and open your brand to the world. It introduces you to communities and helps you create flourishing relationships with the people who know and love your organization. It is a way of communicating who you are.

I hope that this ebook helps you as you take your first steps into the great big and wonderful world of Twitter and Facebook and LinkedIn. I hope it gives you some helpful hints as you begin your journey. Most of all, I hope this gives you the courage to take the plunge. You won't regret it.

If you find yourself with questions, please feel free to contact me and I will be more than happy to lend an ear and some confidence boosts to get you started.

Bon Voyage!

**Nikki Jeske**  
Creative Brand Strategist  
*Design Coyote*



**[designcoyote.com](http://designcoyote.com)**

Have anything you want to add? Advice, comments, questions? I would love to hear from you!

**[twitter.com/designcoyote](https://twitter.com/designcoyote)**  
**[facebook.com/DesignCoyote](https://facebook.com/DesignCoyote)**  
**[linkedin.com/in/nikkijeske](https://linkedin.com/in/nikkijeske)**

# Resources

## Social Media Networks

Twitter: <http://twitter.com>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com>

LinkedIn: <http://linkedin.com>

## Social Media Online Resources

<http://business.twitter.com>

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

<http://mashable.com/social-media>

<http://centerforsocialmedia.org>

<http://socialmedialeaps.com>

<http://socialsmallbiz.com>

<http://social-media.alltop.com>

<http://socialmediaexaminer.com>

<http://socialmediaexplorer.com>

<http://socialmediaguide.com>

<http://socialmediatoday.com>



