

HOW TO WIN ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

The V2 Guide to Increasing Engagement



version 2.0
communications

February 2017



Introduction

- 1.** Ten Ways Twitter Changed PR
- 2.** How to Dominate Facebook
- 3.** Don't be Scared of the Ghost:
Four Reasons Businesses Should
Utilize Snapchat
- 4.** More than just a Valencia filter:
How Instagram can fuel your PR efforts
- 5.** Beyond the Job Search:
How to Use LinkedIn to Escalate
Your Image and Brand
- 6.** Five Ways to Step Up your Social Game
- 7.** Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:
Maximizing Content Across Social Channels
- 8.** Measurement:
Do more of whatever Works
- 9.** Wrap-up

INTRODUCTION: RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Since Mark Zuckerberg introduced the world to Facebook from his Harvard dorm room in 2004, social media has increasingly impacted the way we communicate with each other. Social media has actually existed since the late 90s, when a company named Six Degrees launched a networking site that allowed users to make a profile and friend other users. While the medium has come a long way since then and has taken many forms, one thing has remained true: it represents a fantastic opportunity to establish connections.

For brands, it represents an opportunity to build and maintain a direct channel to key audiences like customers, partners and employees. Social media operates 24/7– and allows your network to engage and interact with you virtually in a new and interesting way.

When your presence (and that of your brand) is effectively managed and leveraged, social media can be among the most high-impact marketing initiatives that you and your team undertake. It's a whole new world, and one that takes some thought and creativity to navigate. And, one that presents its own unique challenges and risks that must be aligned with a broader communications strategy.

If you're thinking about getting social, or looking to ramp up your efforts, where do you start? Which channels should you focus on? This eBook will provide counsel for finding and engaging your audience where they are in the social media landscape.

Major Channels Defined

For the purposes of this eBook, we'll focus on the following five channels:

Twitter: Twitter is an online news and social networking service where users post and read messages restricted to 140-characters, which are called “tweets.” Twitter is well suited for those looking to share regular updates and insights.

Facebook: Facebook is a social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. Posts can be longer and more in-depth than Twitter, and Facebook business pages allow organizations to have one-on-one dialogues with their stakeholders.

Snapchat: Snapchat is a mobile app that allows users to send and receive disappearing photos and videos. It also allows users to create a Snapchat “story,” made up of a series of Snapchats that last for 24 hours. The app provides the opportunities for brands to showcase their personalities to stakeholders in fun and interesting ways.

Instagram: Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, is an online mobile photo-sharing site that enables its users to take pictures and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Flickr.

LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a social networking site that's focused on business and employment opportunities. Because of its professional nature, LinkedIn provides the opportunity for businesses to communicate expertise and updates on products/services.

USAGE STATS



1.3 Billion
registered accounts,
120 Million
active monthly users
[source](#)



1.79 Billion
users
Larger than the
population of China
[source](#)



Between 100
and 200 Million
users
precise number unknown
source N/A



500 Million
active users
up from 400
in September 2015
[source](#)



467 Million
active users
from 200 countries
[source](#)

As you develop your strategy, it's important to think about the function of each channel, as well as which channels will be most effective to reach key audiences. In the context of your broader communications goals, there might be one or two best suited for your brand and you should focus your efforts as such.



TEN WAYS TWITTER CHANGED PR

Since its launch, Twitter has redefined how people consume content, and has had a major impact on public relations as well.

1 – Accountability. While we love to bash former IAC communications head Justine Sacco for her infamous “Going to Africa...” tweet, it’s true that Twitter has added a new layer of accountability to all communication. Posts that are sent out are public-facing, including those from “unauthorized” individual employees and as such need to be vetted as appropriate (especially if coming from a brand). Most organizations are recognizing the risks and putting internal policies in place to curb employee activity, as well as careful monitoring for accidental posts.

2 – Engagement. Traditionally, stories (in print or online) were one-way operations; reporters wrote a story and audiences read them. Twitter, and other social media channels, created opportunities for brands to engage directly with their followers. The best Twitter profiles are the ones that ask questions and listen to their followers – and manage the dialogue.

3 – Crisis communications. Twitter has dramatically evolved the way news breaks. Instead of waiting for the morning papers to arrive on your doorstep, articles are now shared in real-time and news often breaks on Twitter before it appears anywhere else. For companies dealing with crisis situations, it’s critical to have a plan in place for reacting to negative news on social media in real time. Brands can no longer afford to wait days, or even hours, before responding to a crisis.

4 – Information gathering. For brands or individuals looking to check the pulse of their audience, Twitter is a great tool. The new Twitter Polls feature makes it even easier to conduct surveys. Brands can then use that information to tailor products and services to meet the specific needs of their audience.

5 – Customer service. In addition to gathering information, brands can now connect directly with people that need assistance – and there is a risk if they don’t. Whether it’s tweeting about long lines at the airport or a cable bill that seems too high, Twitter has turned the

formerly one-to-one world of customer service—phone calls or in-person meetings—into a very public discourse.

6 – Media relations. While email pitches are still the norm, some journalists, like the Wall Street Journal’s Sara Castellanos, actually enjoy being pitched by PR pros directly on Twitter. It creates a direct (and public) dialogue between a PR representative and a reporter and can be very effective in getting responses.

7 – Supplement to traditional news. Twitter is a perfect complement to traditional news outlets like the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, TechCrunch (and many more), including distribution of news to more people than ever before.

8 – Reach. Through Twitter, brands can reach larger audiences than ever before. By using hashtags brands can connect with millions of people they wouldn’t have had the chance to connect with in the past.

9 – Measurement. Measurement is always key to effective PR, and Twitter extends the capabilities of measurement for communications campaigns. For example, at Version 2.0, we track tweets that include a link to press releases when we’re evaluating the success of an announcement, and also track mentions and follower growth as metrics in our monthly and quarterly reporting.

10 – Communicating is communicating. While Twitter (and technology in general) has dramatically impacted the way in which we communicate, it hasn’t changed the fact that clear and concise communication is still key – and it’s more important than ever. For brands to truly engage with their audiences, they need to put themselves out there and deliver the most impactful message in the words and on the platforms their audiences respond to.

Here are a couple of PR-focused Twitter handles we recommend following:

Joan Stewart ([@PublicityHound](#))
Karen Taylor-Bass ([@PREXPRT](#))
Mark Ragan ([@MarkRaganCEO](#))
Sarah Evans ([@prsarahevens](#))
Heather Whaling, ([@prtini](#))
Valerie Simon ([@ValerieSimon](#))

And our fearless leaders
Jean Serra ([@JeanSerraV2](#)) and
Maura FitzGerald ([@MauraFitzV2](#)).

You can also always follow Version 2.0 ([@V2Comms](#)) for up-to-date industry news and commentary.





HOW TO DOMINATE FACEBOOK

Facebook has certainly evolved in the 12 years since it was founded; what was once only a tool for instantaneously sharing thoughts, pictures and links with groups of friends and family is now considered a vital component of a brand's social strategy. With more than [1.79 billion monthly active users worldwide](#) and an average user age demographic of 25 to 34, Facebook provides the availability to reach a global target market and engage key stakeholders.

When it comes to Facebook, a few key brands and public figures have mastered the art of connecting with their audience. Tom Brady, The New England Patriots quarterback, is one athlete that has leveraged a successful social strategy to control the narrative of discussion around him, his team and his family. Ultimately, whether you worship the New England Patriots or resent them, you have to respect how well Brady uses Facebook.

So if you're looking for ways to elevate your brand through Facebook, look no further. Here are three ways that TB12 dominates the social site, and how you can do the same.

Interact directly with followers

Tom Brady knows how to work the crowd—especially on social media. He is constantly finding new ways to engage with his fans on Facebook, and they love him for it. Most recently, [Brady hid signed UGGs around Boston](#), sharing the contest on Facebook and encouraging followers to get outside and participate. Throughout the day, he shared clues of where the three pairs of slippers were hidden, creating massive engagement with his brand



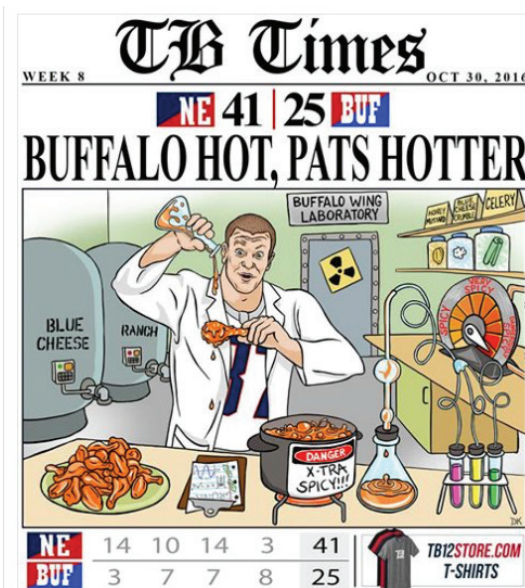
source: www.facebook.com/TomBrady/

(and a partner brand) both virtually and physically. One fan even responded to Brady's post with a selfie, reporting that—in his excitement to find the slippers—he tripped and fell, knocking out a tooth. Brady not only shared the fan's post, but wrote him back, offering to send him a personalized pair of signed UGGs from the following email: uggs4toothlessluke@gmail.com (seems legit). By consistently interacting with fans and followers, he knows what they enjoy and knows how to keep them coming back to his page.

While you might not have the means to create a city-wide contest around signed pairs of slippers, you can take a tip from Tom Brady on how best to engage and interact with followers. At the most basic level, simply responding to posts from followers goes a long way. It shows you not only care and value their opinions, but are also monitoring your page for feedback. By doing that, and by crafting creative and timely content campaigns, you'll be able to engage current fans and grow your brand's reach.

Display pride for your organization

TB12 might be Tom Brady's own, standalone brand that most people attribute with championship, athleticism and style, but the quarterback would be nowhere if it weren't for the Patriots – a fact he is not quick to forget. Brady uses Facebook to consistently promote the New England Patriots and display how proud he is to be a member of the organization. This NFL season, Brady has taken to Facebook after every win (and there have been quite a few), to post a unique, comic book-like image from his own "TB Times," [a fake newspaper he created](#) to celebrate the team's victories. The images usually include the date and final score of the game, with a headline that playfully pokes fun the opposing team, and a hilarious – often ridiculous – image of a Patriot player.



source: www.facebook.com/TomBrady/

For executives' personal Facebook profiles, it's important to be promotional of your own company as much as is appropriate. While most personal profiles tend to be private, you can still "Like" and share content from your company's page. This not only shows your involvement in the brand, but helps boost visibility and reach for corporate posts as well. You don't necessarily need to create your own newspaper to show how proud you are to be involved in an innovative and creative company; however, if you want followers (and employees!) to consider you a true leader, take an extra step to support your company on social.

Balance business with fun

For many corporate Facebook profiles, finding a healthy balance between being professional and being fun can be a challenge. As a professional athlete with multiple, high-profile partnerships (such as the aforementioned UGGs), Tom Brady has mastered this. Aside from promoting the New England Patriots and supporting his teammates, Brady also frequently posts about other athletes he admires, organizations he supports and brands he is involved with. His posts are never too self-promotional, yet consistently remind fans of everything Brady does – like winning Super Bowls, mocking deflate-gate believers in Foot Locker ads and creating a [docuseries on the intensity of sports](#). In addition to this professional content, Brady finds time to post often about his personal life, too. He shares pictures of his family, supports his wife (supermodel Gisele Bündchen) and her projects and lets fans know what he's up to on holidays. This level of fan-intimacy is often hard to achieve, and yet Brady does it with such ease, all while continuing to be considered one of the best quarterbacks of all time.



source: www.facebook.com/TomBrady/

There are so many social platforms that brands can be active on today. With that in mind, you should consider Facebook to be the perfect combination of LinkedIn, a site that primarily promotes professional updates, and Instagram, a platform meant for fun pictures. Take this lesson from Tom Brady and make your corporate Facebook page a destination for potential candidates, clients and influencers alike. You should not only be regularly promoting company news, but also your company culture – a fact many corporate pages miss. If you want to gain (and keep!) followers, strive to be a brand that is smart, professional and fun – it's this mix that will make you and your company stand out from the pack!



@V2Comms



DON'T BE SCARED OF THE GHOST: FOUR REASONS BUSINESSES SHOULD UTILIZE SNAPCHAT

Although it originated as a means of sending the perfect selfie, [Snapchat](#), if leveraged correctly, has the ability to positively impact businesses and build brand engagement. Regardless of industry, Snapchat's unique features, unlike other social media platforms, allow users to connect with businesses through real-time images - photos and videos. Below are four reasons why Snapchat should be utilized by all businesses:

Reach a target market:

Have you hit a brick wall with new target markets or failed to meet sales goals? The demographics of Snapchat's users provide a prime opportunity to reach a younger generation and influence potential new customers. According to [statistics](#) from a [BI Intelligence Report](#), 71 percent of Snapchat's U.S. users fall into the 18 to 34 age range. Often referred to as "millennials," this population appreciates convenience and connectedness, especially when it comes to social media. By adapting to the preferences of this group, businesses can realize a larger scope of influence and ultimately achieve higher profit margins.

Highlight company culture:

Using the Snapchat platform as a means of recruiting through short videos and photos can give companies an edge over other competitors. This mobile application provides the perfect platform to spotlight what makes your company so special and unique. You can easily share an office tour with the real-time video feature to showcase where your employees work each day and highlight fun, out-of-office activities, like heading to the local coffee shop or neighborhood watering hole. Take pictures and videos in-office to highlight trademarks of the company culture – like company pets, company teams at work or volunteering in the community, "cool" office space and the like.

It is easy to capture the personality of your office and brand while in the moment by simply pulling out your smart phone. Added bonus: You're reaching a market of users that are more likely to be exploring the job market and available employment opportunities.

[GrubHub](#) took a creative approach to finding a summer intern this summer by employing the features Snapchat has to offer and inviting candidates to apply for the position entirely through the mobile app. This provided a more interactive and fun experience for candidates and truly allowed the hiring team to see who was most interested in the position.

Share updates quickly:

Attending a conference or special event? Launching a new product? The "live" element of Snapchat allows users to let followers feel like they are in the moment while watching remotely. Followers get an "insider look" into the company which cannot be replicated by other social media channels. Cosmetic company [NARS](#) took advantage of these capabilities and chose Snapchat as the preferred platform to unveil a new makeup collection. Only followers who added the account had access, which made the reveal feel much more exclusive while generating significant buzz among the beauty community.

If used regularly, as evidenced through the NARS example, this application can increase consumer engagement and personal connection to a brand.

You won't break the bank:

Unless you leverage its costly ads, Snapchat is a *free* mobile application. This alone gives you opportunity to tap into the [millions of daily active users](#) without spending a single dollar on ad buys. And yes, all social media may be "free," but due to the live nature of the application, the amount of prep time required is often less robust than other channels. Unique to Snapchat, all content "disappears" after 24 hours so having a "perfect" post isn't completely necessary- users tend to prefer raw footage rather than something scripted and meticulously planned. By allowing employees to get involved with this initiative, engagement levels will increase and the quality of content will be positively impacted.

As evidenced, Snapchat is not merely a means of sending your best (and worst) photos to your best friends. When done correctly, this tool has the ability to increase brand awareness and engagement simply by posting videos and photos. Millennials need to be engaged in a way that's convenient for them, which Snapchat provides, and with a business account companies can leverage this platform quite effectively.



@V2Comms



MORE THAN JUST A VALENCIA FILTER: HOW INSTAGRAM CAN FUEL YOUR PR EFFORTS

With more than 400 million active users, there's no question that Instagram is a key platform for any business' social strategy. In fact, according to [this infographic](#), 50 percent of Instagram users follow a business, and 60 percent of users actually learn about new products or services through the social app. But enough with the numbers – let's dive into how the photo sharing platform can boost your public relations initiatives and allow your business to connect with key audiences.

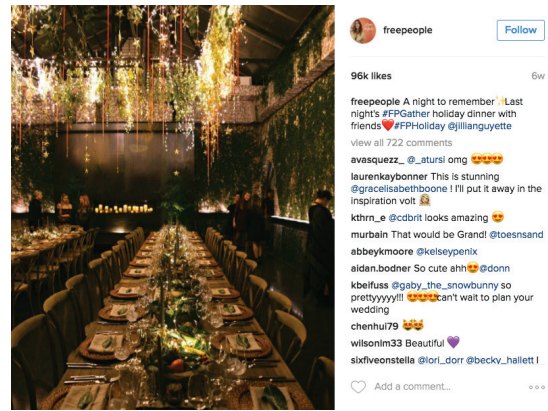
Promoting company news – The most obvious way companies can use Instagram is to share announcements. Did the company just launch a new product? Has the business won an industry award? Is the CEO speaking at a notable conference? These are just a few examples of news items that, when accompanied by a photo, creative caption and relevant hashtags, are great Instagram fodder to expand your PR strategy. Take a note from Ben & Jerry's - the company announces new ice cream flavors and [collaborations](#) on Instagram, enticing followers to tag their friends and try their products.



source: www.instagram.com/benandjerrys/

Displaying corporate culture – Instagram isn't just great when your company has news to share, it can also provide a unique look into how your company operates and the people behind the work. Adding a personal element through the social platform – whether it's sharing

pictures of company outings, holiday celebrations or the cupcakes an employee brought in – can elevate your social strategy and allow customers, journalists and influencers to further connect with your brand. And now with the platform's new story feature, showing behind-the-scenes happenings at the office is easier than ever. **Free People** often shares shots of company celebrations to highlight activity the brand does outside of selling clothes. For example, [this recent photo](#) of their holiday party generated great buzz and was complete with custom hashtags for guests to use to share their memories.



source: www.instagram.com/freepeople/

Interacting with users – Speaking of customers, journalists and influencers, because Instagram boasts so many users, odds are your key audiences are using it. Interacting with their photos by liking and commenting not only gets you on their radar, but can again provide a personal touch and cast your brand in a favorable light. When used strategically, something as simple as a ‘Great photo!’ comment can boost a key user’s attitude – because who doesn’t love knowing their photos are appreciated? Califia Farms is a great example of a brand that interacts with their customers, as seen in [this photo](#) pictured below:



source: www.instagram.com/califiafarms/

As with any other social platform, it will take some trial and error to figure out what works best for your business’ Instagram strategy – but in the long run, with the right content and timing, it can launch your public relations efforts to a whole new level.



@V2Comms

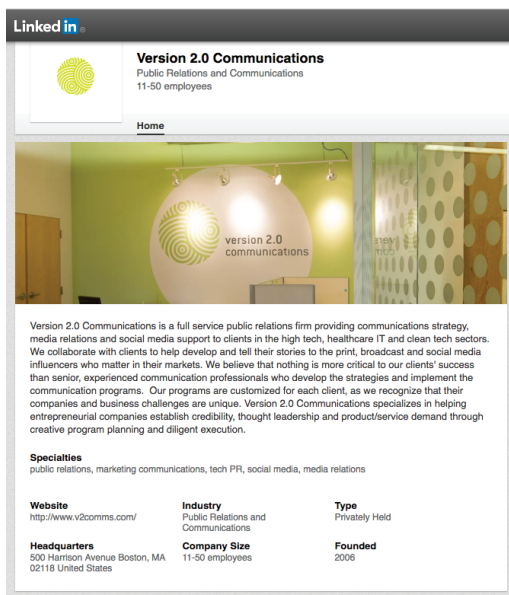


BEYOND THE JOB SEARCH: HOW TO USE LINKEDIN TO ESCALATE YOUR IMAGE AND BRAND

When LinkedIn launched in 2002, most users joined the platform to post their resumes, see who they might “be connected to” at certain companies, shoot out a few messages then crossed their fingers and hoped to land the next dream gig. While LinkedIn still serves that purpose (and has launched many new tools since 2002) - today, the social media platform is much more than a job search engine. If used correctly, brands can – and should – use LinkedIn as a powerful addition to their overall social media strategy. Here are a few tips to consider whether you’ve just set up your organization’s LinkedIn profile, or you’re looking to revamp your overall strategy.

Identify the top influencers in your industry and follow their conversations closely.

Even if your own organization/CEO is one of the most influential in the industry, it is extremely important to be aware of what other companies and leaders are talking about. The technology industry, in particular, is always evolving and there are many individuals who are experts in niche areas. Organizations and CEOs should use LinkedIn as an additional engine to gather information that goes beyond the typical product announcements and corporate news and tells a more in depth, impactful story of what’s happening in the marketplace. This will allow them to think more strategically about their own businesses and form relationships with other like-minded people who could be critical to their success down the line.



Don't be a silent bystander – engage with others and join important conversations when it's appropriate.

Once you've identified the key influencers and thought leaders in the industry and developed an understanding of what's important to them, begin to insert yourself into the conversations. One way to develop relationships with like-minded folks in the industry is to join industry-specific LinkedIn groups. When a group leader or member starts a conversation, your organization/CEO will have the opportunity to respond and add value to the discussion, which will ultimately position him or her as an expert in the field. This tactic is “free” publicity as it allows the CEO to broadcast his or her opinion to a targeted group of potential prospects, customers, partners or even employees.

Take thought leadership to the next level.

After establishing a presence on LinkedIn through engagement with other users, organizations should encourage their C-Level executives to become even more active on the platform. Determine a specific theme or trend that your executive is passionate about and is uniquely qualified to comment on and create an industry-specific group for them to own and lead. This will provide another avenue for them to not only share insights into relevant topics and themes, but also to start conversations for others to comment on and be a part of. LinkedIn also allows users to post blog content on individual accounts (vs. company pages), which is another way for C-Level executives to boost their social profiles and be viewed as true thought leaders.

The reality in 2017 is that a social media strategy isn't complete without a smart, strategic, well-planned LinkedIn component. When kicking off a social media program that involves LinkedIn, take the time to research the right conversations and groups that will make the most impact on your organization. Thinking through the game plan critically at the onset of the program will pay dividends down the line and position your organization and executives as key influencers, maximizing overall PR efforts.





FIVE WAYS TO STEP UP YOUR SOCIAL GAME

In the ever-changing media landscape, companies simply cannot afford to ignore social media. If you do, you may be missing opportunities to strengthen your messaging and thought leadership, and to build relationships with key influencers. Check out five important ways to step up your social media game, build presence and drive engagement.

#1 Bitly, bitly, bitly

We are huge advocates of [Bitly](#). Why? Links are at the center of the social media universe. The jumble of characters in long links can get distracting and take away from a post's content. Bitly not only shortens links, but provides tracking capabilities so you are able to see how many link clicks each link received. This feature is crucial for an informed understanding of the performance of content with your audiences from blog posts to bylined articles.

#2 Follow wisely


Following others blindly is never a good idea - and not the most effective way to build out a follower base. Instead, be strategic about who you choose to follow. First, take a look at your media list - this can provide a good starting point of identifying reporters you've pitched in addition to the publications they write for. Using influencer search tools, such as the **Vocus** Influencer Search or **Sysomos**, can break down Twitter influencers by topic, authority score, location and reach, allowing you to pinpoint the most relevant industry professionals and reporters. Additionally, following specific client partners and customers will allow you to keep up with their latest happenings and continue to strengthen those ties, while building your own network.

#3 Tag accounts

Tagging accounts is especially crucial on Twitter, where most reporters use their accounts to share their articles. If you're tweeting an article, make sure to attribute it at least to the publication, if not the reporter(s) who wrote the piece. This is especially important if you have held briefings with those reporters – it will continue to build the relationship, plus they'll see that you're contributing to their readership. Oftentimes they will even favorite or retweet your tweet. Again, the same rule applies to tagging relevant partners or customers when announcing news or even commenting on one of their posts.

#4 Have an opinion

It's not enough to just post the facts. Providing appropriate commentary can strengthen your brand and voice, and offer more of an interesting perspective rather than simply reiterating the news – just use caution and good judgment – and get some good advice from the communications professionals you work with. Users are looking to social for fresh perspectives, so offering a “voice” via comment or posing a question to your audience about a news story can drive engagement.



Whether you have 100 followers or 10,000, you should always be monitoring and reevaluating your social media strategy.

#5 Do your homework, and stay current

Did you know that Twitter recently [stopped counting photos and links](#) as part of the 140-character word count? Or that Instagram launched [Instagram for Business](#)? It's important to know what's happening in the social sphere and what changes are being made so that you can provide recommendations to clients or adjust your strategy as needed. This industry moves fast, and PR pros have to keep up – consult with them regularly.



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE: MAXIMIZING CONTENT ACROSS SOCIAL CHANNELS

Regardless of the objectives you want to achieve or the channels you use reach them, any successful social program must start with the same thing: content.

Content can mean a lot of different things, especially given the variety of social channels and their respective formats. It may be 140 character tweet, an image posted to Facebook or Snapchat, an instructographic on Pinterest or a 500-word opinion piece for Medium or LinkedIn.

For many, the prospect of having enough content to fuel social channels can be daunting. But it shouldn't be. In fact, we regularly conduct content audits for clients and the results of the in-depth analysis of their content assets may surprise you: most organizations have a surplus of content, not a shortfall. They have ample material to work with, but often fall into the routine of constantly creating new content instead of leveraging what's already available.

If you're still approaching social with the mindset of always needing to create new or more content, your strategy is dated. It's also not sustainable as the number of channels to populate is constantly evolving and, in many organizations, the manpower to support those channels is impossible to grow in tandem.

Instead, approach social content with an eye toward the catchy, alliterative phrase many of us mastered when learning about environmental health as kids: Reduce. Reuse. Recycle.

Reduce

More content does not necessarily equate to better content. And unless your organization is blessed with the tremendous resources of a full time writer (or several), it is very likely that high volume comes at the cost of quality.

Eliminate the urge to create content for content's sake. Every asset, from a simple graphic to an in-depth market study, should tie to a broader strategy and be aligned with a theme your brand intends to own. There will, of course, be posts that are more reactionary, such as replies to customer comments, but those should be the exception and not the rule.

If you're unsure of what to eliminate from your editorial calendar or production schedule, consider:

- What your audiences like (literally) – which posts are they liking, or sharing and commenting on? If certain content doesn't drive any engagement, eliminate it.
- What the data tells you – tools like Google Analytics or AirPR can go a level deeper than the above to uncover interesting data about the content that truly resonates—and, more importantly for this exercise, what doesn't.
- What is truly unique about what you have to say – if there are a handful of other vendors talking about the same topic with the same perspective, that could be a sign that efforts can be dialed back.

Reuse

At V2, we often say that good content is like a cat: it should have nine lives. In other words, every piece of content should not only be able to stand on its own, but it should also be reused multiple times over across other channels—either in the exact same format or slightly reworked to meet the needs of a particular channel and its audiences. This is especially applicable if you're creating high-quality content in favor of high volume.

Take, for example, an infographic. That asset could run in its entirety on a company's blog, but sections of it could be broken down into a series of sub-images that can become the basis for a Snapchat story put into a slideshow for Slideshare, posted as conversation starters in relevant LinkedIn groups and tweeted out over several weeks, with relevant industry hashtags.

At first, it may feel repetitive to reuse content in myriad ways. However, audiences often differ across channels and information is so quickly buried in busy feeds that a lot of posts go unviewed. Moreover, it can take a person multiple times seeing or hearing a message for it to actually resonate, so driving home a key message requires that content be shared several times over.

Recycle

Similar to reusing content, recycling content is another effective strategy for fueling social channels, and without having to do a lot of heavy lifting. This approach involves posting old content, provided it is still useful and relevant, or if it provides a point of comparison to the present, surprise or entertainment value.

There are a number of effective ways to make what is old new again. Though #tbt posts that “throwback” to a previous time each Thursday are particularly popular, more reserved brands can use the same tactic by, for example, posting old content with a “from the archives” header or ICYMI (“in case you missed it”). Both approaches do the same thing: re-introduce old content that is still compelling or interesting for some reason. Other effective ways to do this include then-and-now photo comparisons, reposting prediction-oriented content when it actually comes to fruition, or even leveraging Facebook's Timehop feature to instantly share past posts from the same day in history.

MEASURING SOCIAL

In any good PR program, measurement and evaluation is an important exercise. We believe regular measurement is critical to understanding the true impact and value from communications programs and identifying areas for optimization.

Social media presents new challenges and new opportunities for measurement. In a short while, we have come a long way from just compiling statistics about coverage, share of voice and impressions. Examining how frequently key messages are being picked up and amplified is still critical and there are a number of excellent tools that are designed to analyze social media results. We favor tools like [Sysomos](#) and [Cision](#) that allow us to dig into data on stats like follower growth, influencer engagement, sentiment and much more, which are important to measuring the success of a social media program. [Klout](#) is another good tool - it's free and uses simple metrics to help you gauge the quality and effectiveness of your social media campaigns. [Twitter Counter](#) is, as you probably guessed, a tool that measures growth and performance on Twitter.

It's also important to measure social results in the context of larger PR and communications strategies and plans. If your social content is booming but your traditional media campaigns are lacking, you might be able to re-adjust your activity accordingly.

By conducting regular measurement, you hold your team accountable to the results of your program and can recalibrate and optimize the programs and campaigns that are driving business goals. Everyone wins!



WRAP-UP

We've come a long way from Mark Zuckerberg's dorm room. Social media is more widespread than ever, and continuing to grow as channels like Snapchat and Instagram offer new, innovative features like live stream. For brands, it represents a great way to connect with customers, promote your brand and share company updates, like details on new products or services, but success is only achieved when channels are constantly updated and maintained.

Whether you're about to embark on developing a social media strategy or just thinking about how to optimize an ongoing initiative, know that it is an investment. There is no "one size fits all approach," and a following won't build overnight. But when it does, you'll be left with an engaging, thoughtful and fun community.

SOCIAL TIP SHEET

You know social media is an important element of a communications strategy - but where do you begin? And, what's right and appropriate for your company and your audiences?

It's important to start with a good understanding of each social media channel to understand which ones will be most effective to reach key audiences. In the context of your broader communications goals, there might be one or two best suited for your brand and you should focus your efforts as such.

If you're thinking about getting social, or looking to ramp up your efforts, where do you start? Which channels should you put the most muscle behind? Here's a quick and easy guide to help you get started.

TWITTER	<p>What it is: Twitter is an online news and social networking platform where users post and read messages restricted to 140-characters, which are called "tweets." Twitter is well suited for those looking to share regular updates and "simple" insights that can be conveyed with 140 text characters.</p> <p>How to use it: Twitter's open dialogue makes it easy for brands to speak directly with their key audiences. Brands should both ask and answer questions and share non-promotional news and links that will align with the brand message and be helpful to their followers. Any good strategy will begin with monitoring of key influencers, competitors and customers to see how they engage with twitter.</p>
FACEBOOK	<p>What it is: Facebook is a social networking website that enables registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues as Facebook "friends". Posts can be longer and more in-depth than Twitter, photos and video links can be incorporated and Facebook business pages allow organizations to have one-on-one dialogues with their stakeholders. Private member groups are also a feature of Facebook.</p> <p>How to use it: Facebook is the perfect channel to balance both business and fun. Post a combination of fun and engaging videos and photos paired with more serious company updates. Experiment with driving traffic to Facebook, generating posts, getting "liked" and hearing from your audience. Recently, Facebook has become an advertising channel via targeted ads that show up when people view certain content and pages on Facebook.</p>
SNAPCHAT	<p>What it is: Snapchat is a mobile app that allows users to send and receive disappearing photos and videos. It also allows users to create a Snapchat "story," made up of a series of Snapchats that last for 24 hours. The app provides the opportunities for brands to showcase their personalities to stakeholders in fun, interesting and temporary ways.</p> <p>How to use it: Snapchat's live element makes it ideal for sharing real-time updates on-site at conferences, for launching new products or providing a behind-the-scenes look for followers. It also gives brands a chance to showcase corporate and employee personalities.</p>
INSTAGRAM	<p>What it is: Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, is an online mobile photo-sharing site that enables its users to take pictures and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr.</p> <p>How to use it: Instagram's visual nature presents a great opportunity for brands to showcase their unique company culture or aesthetic and highlight employee successes and achievements both in and out of the office – think promotions, marathons, marriages, new babies, etc.!</p>
LINKEDIN	<p>What it is: LinkedIn is a social networking site that's focused on business and employment opportunities. Because of its professional nature, LinkedIn provides the opportunity for businesses to communicate expertise and updates on products/services.</p> <p>How to use it: In addition to sharing corporate news and company updates, it's imperative to follow industry conversations closely and weigh in (or ask your executive to weigh in) on trending topics that are relevant to your business.</p>



version 2.0
communications

500 HARRISON AVENUE, SUITE 401R
BOSTON, MA 02118

WWW.V2COMMS.COM
TEL: 617 426 2222