

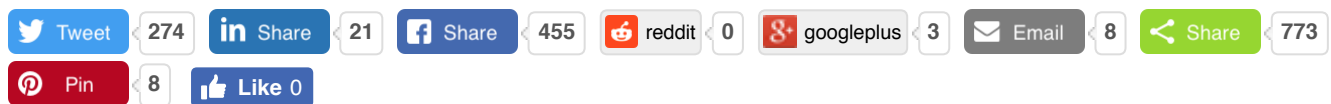

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4 Fundamental Tips to Help Maximize Your Social Media Marketing Process



June 26, 2017 [Isabella Andersen](#)

There's no ignoring social media in 2017 - it's how we find, research and interact with businesses.

And, social media isn't going anywhere. If anything, its [usage is only growing](#).

I'm sure you know you need a social media strategy, but where are you supposed to get started? Well, this blog post has you covered - here's a step-by-step breakdown for building a social media strategy.

1. Find the right social platform(s)

Finding the right social media platforms can be tricky - your industry, target market, budget (if you're working with an agency) and available time (if you're DIYing it) will determine which social media platforms will work best for your business.

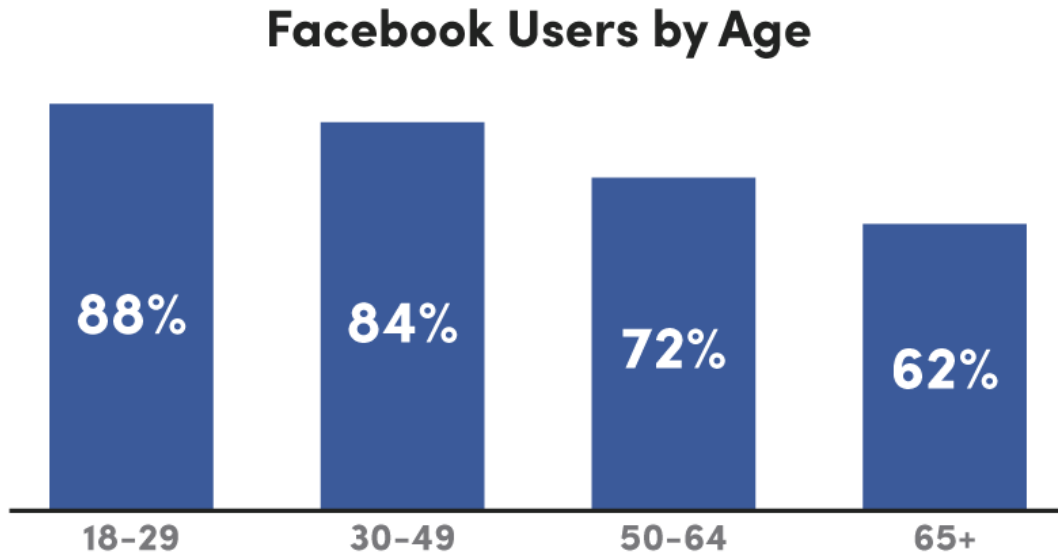
Wondering which social networking sites your business should use? Your first step should be determining where your target audience is spending their time.

Let's break this down by [social media demographics](#) as well as overall popularity.

Social Media Demographic Breakdown

Who Uses Facebook?

Pretty much everyone has a Facebook account - in fact, around 79% of all US Internet users are also active on Facebook.

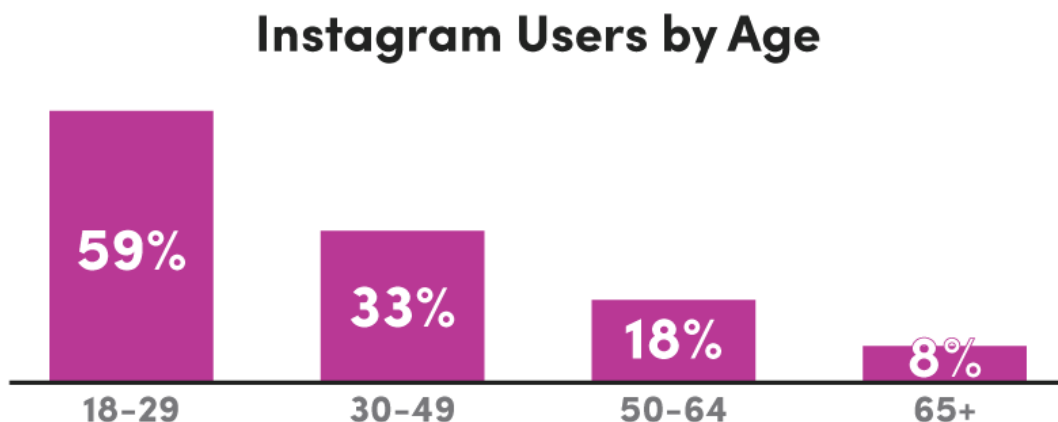


Facebook is most popular with people from 18-29 years old (88% of people in this age range have a Facebook account). Next up is the 30-49 age group (84%) followed by people 50-64 years of age (72%) and people who are 65 and above (62%).

Instagram Demographics

26% of men, and 38% of women, use Instagram.

Here's Instagram's age demographic breakdown:

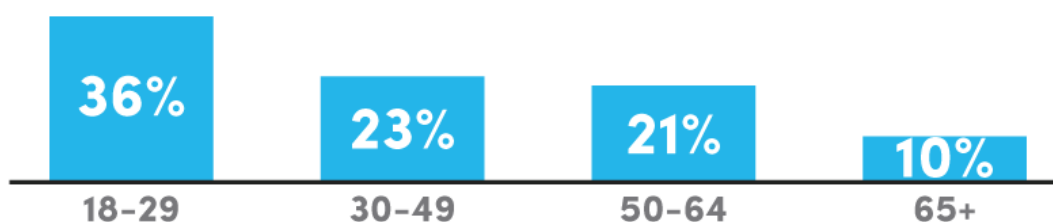


Instagram's hugely popular with people from the ages of 18-29, but you can also find users from 30-49 years old on the photo sharing platform. And, advertising on Instagram tends to be pretty successful - research has shown that [75%](#) of Instagram users will take some sort of action (such as visiting your website) after viewing an Instagram ad.

Who's on Twitter?

Lots of social experts keep saying Twitter is dead or dying, but still, 24% of men and 25% of women still use the platform.

Twitter Users by Age

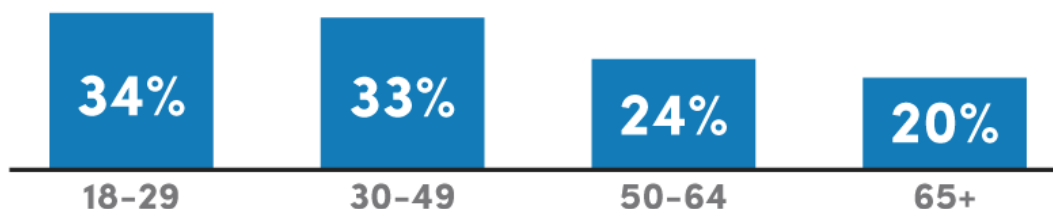


Most of Twitter's users are from 18-29 years old, so if you're targeting a younger crowd, Twitter is a key consideration.

LinkedIn Demographics

While LinkedIn might not seem like the most important social network out there, many people use LinkedIn to network, find new jobs and hire new employees. In fact, 31% of men, and 27% of women, use the professional networking site.

LinkedIn Users by Age

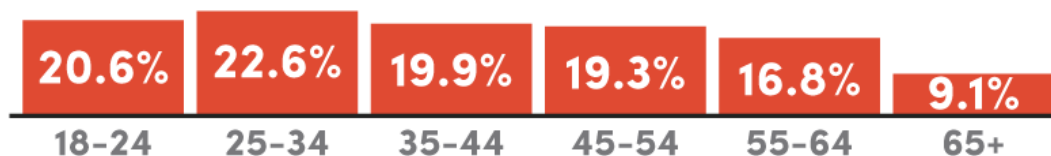


You'll primarily find people between the ages of 18-49 on LinkedIn. The networking site is a great place to share industry news, find employees and look for networking opportunities.

Is Anyone Still Using Google+?

Google+ statistics vary depending on the source, and it's hard to find a concrete number of Google+ users. Here's what we found about [age demographics for Google+](#):

Google+ Users by Age



Google+ is used by a small amount of people from every age group, but it's most popular with people from 25-34.

I know Google+ isn't the first social network you think of either, but it's important. Because it's a Google product, it's worth maintaining an active presence on Google+ to show the search engine that you are active and relevant. Besides, [Google+ can help improve your local search ranking](#).

Speaking of which social networks are popular, here's your breakdown of monthly users for each site.

Social Networks by Popularity

Facebook is the most popular social media website by far, with [1.94 billion monthly active users](#). Next is Instagram, with [700 million users](#), followed by Twitter with [328 million](#) monthly visitors.

Estimates vary for Google+, but according to research from June 2017, Google+ sees 111 million monthly visitors. LinkedIn comes in just below Google+, with 106 million.

How to Choose the Right Social Media Platform for Your Business

Once you have an idea of where your target audience is active (at least from a general demographic perspective), that gives you some direction as to the social networks you should use to reach them.

For example, let's say you run a retirement community targeting seniors in your area - Facebook reaches more seniors than any other platform and has more users than others. You should probably start by focusing on Facebook marketing.

One final note about choosing your social marketing sites - It's better to focus on doing well on just a few of these than to try to be everywhere and fail at all of them because you're trying to do too much.

Now that you know where to post, let's talk about how often you should be posting across social media.

2. Figure out how often to post on social media

We have an entire article about [how often you should post on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter](#), etc, but here are the highlights:

- Facebook – One post each day or five posts a week
- Instagram – Once daily
- Twitter – 3-5 times a day
- LinkedIn – Once a day
- Google+ – 1-2 times each day

Note these are generalized guidelines, designed only as a starting point. Some businesses post on Facebook [80 times per day](#), others post frequently on Twitter. These numbers are intended as a starting point - you can work out the cadence best for your, unique business once you have some response data to work with.

3. What should you be posting on social media?

Social media is a great place to keep your business fresh in the minds of your target consumers, and to showcase your best services, products and promotions. But keep in mind that you shouldn't be promotional all the time.

If you talk about yourself too much and constantly push for sales, you'll probably lose followers, as people will feel like you're spamming them.

The way to avoid this is to post a mixture of original and curated content.

What types of original content should local businesses post on social media?

Here are a few ideas for social posts that drive follower engagement and traffic to your website:

- Current promotions
- Behind-the-scenes photos and videos of your business/employees
- Holiday specials and special hours
- Employee shout-outs
- Blog posts if you have a blog
- Follower-exclusive discounts
- Photos of new products, displays, etc

According to our Digital Content Manager, Megan Hudson, you should keep plenty of photos around to share on Facebook.

“Take a lot of pictures and have them on hand to post. People love seeing what you're up to and putting a face to a brand.”

But remember, don't make it all about you. Sprinkle in some curated content to break up your promotional posts.

We use our [social posting and monitoring](#) tool, Radiate, to find curated content for clients, but if you don't have a tool to curate content for you, you can share industry blog posts you think your followers will find interesting or valuable.

4. How to optimize your social media profiles for local search

Make sure to optimize your social media profiles for local search.

While you'll face character limits on some profiles, platforms like Facebook allow you to add plenty of info. Make sure (if you can fit them in) to add NAPU (business name, address, phone number and website URL).

Don't forget to add keywords to your profiles whenever possible - don't stuff a bunch of keywords in until your profiles are impossible to read, but make sure you add your business's name and category (pizza place, retirement community, cat cafe) in there a couple of times.

Final Thoughts

[Social media](#) is a great way to target consumers on the platforms they are already using every day.

Social isn't just something you can set up and be done with, though - if you neglect your followers, they will either unfollow or forget about your business.

You'll need to maintain an active presence, so make sure you're posting and interacting with your followers on a regular basis.

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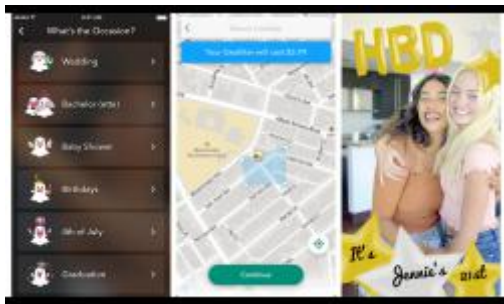
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Step 2: Choose a Contest Format

The simplest contests are basic: finishing promotions, such as coupon contests. These can be useful for short-term campaigns, but don't allow you to gather email addresses or social data from participants, and their reach may be somewhat limited.

To run a more robust promotion — such as a quiz, video or essay contest — or similar partnering with a third-party social platform, these providers offer multiple design options to increase visual appeal and help track your branding. They give you access to their types of contests as well as analytics. Third-party providers may also offer advanced features like social data collection, content entry, community voting, entry approvals, and forms and customer acceptance.

NOTE: Facebook mobile app users can't access Page tabs, including contests. Third-party social platforms can solve this problem by using a mobile-friendly webpage to house the same content.



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