



WHITEPAPER

Social media guide for **membership** **organisations**



Congratulations on downloading our social media guide for membership organisations, filled with insights and practical tips to boost the results from your social media activity.

The insights in this guide have come from our work supporting membership organisations to build and strengthen their digital footprint.

We know it can seem daunting to stay up to date with all the changes in social media, which is why we have created this guide to share practical support specifically for membership organisations.

As this is meant to be an actionable guide, you will see we have included a section on ways to measure the effectiveness of your social media activity. This will allow you to track and measure if your activity is working, and therefore make any necessary changes to your strategy.

We hope you find the guide useful.



Social media overview

Love it or hate it, social media is now very much a part of any membership organisation's marketing strategy.

However, the danger with this channel is you can get into a me-too mentality of using a certain platform because it is popular, or new, or the channel that everyone is talking about. That does not mean you should be on there.

You must first consider these key questions before venturing onto any new social media platform.

1. Is your target audience using the platform?
2. Do you have the resource to utilise the channel effectively?

There are a great number of social media platforms available. However, for this guide we have focussed on the main social media channels, and how you can use them effectively to support your organisation.

LinkedIn

This is a professional networking platform that is growing amongst the millennial category, with 58.3% of users now aged between 25 – 34, followed by 21% aged 35–54.

It certainly has power, with 50% of members reporting they are more likely to buy from a company they engage with on LinkedIn.

The platform is evolving, with recent new features such as a product tab on your company page linking physical products, and LinkedIn stories with the ability to add links in them.

Other great features include groups, which can be a powerful membership engagement tool, and multiple organic posting types including multiple images, video, documents, and polls.

LinkedIn tips



Use a mix of content types including video, images, graphics, polls, and documents to increase engagement.



Keep sales messages to a minimum and focus on providing value in your content. But do remember to add in call to actions that are relevant to direct users to other useful content.



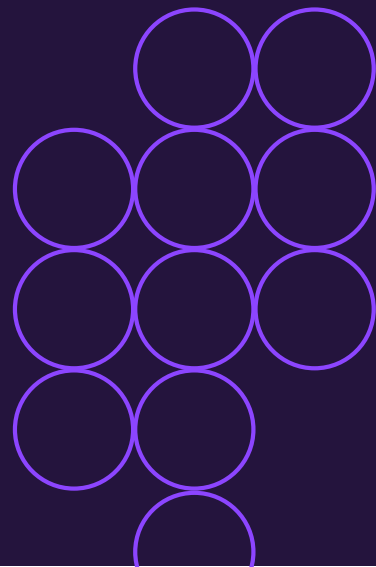
Optimise your company profile fully with a strong description, about us, location, link to your website, contact details, and eye catching header image that showcases your organisation.



Use hashtags in your posts to increase their reach to users following those hashtags. This is a great way of reaching new target users.



Utilise LinkedIn groups by participating in related ones or creating your own. This allows you to engage with your target audience and raise your profile within your sector.



Facebook

Facebook is one of the most well-known social media platforms and is continuing to hold its position, with the platform being used daily by 44% of the UK population.

The largest age group using Facebook in the UK is 25 – 34-year-olds, however, users aged 65+ have increased from 4% in 2019 to 9% in 2020. So, this is now becoming a more diverse platform.

It is seen as a more relaxed platform where users interact with friends and engage with brands of interest. Therefore, organisations using this platform need to understand that, and adjust messaging and content to appeal to what users are looking for when using the channel.

Facebook offers great functionality including groups, Facebook live, reviews, Facebook shop, events and offers to name a few.

Facebook tips

- ✓ Incorporate Facebook live within your content if possible. These are great for boosting engagement and are expected to be slightly less polished! So, do not be shy!
- ✓ Utilise the 'invite friends' option on your page to invite like-minded people to your page. This is a quick and easy way of increasing your reach.
- ✓ Test and learn what content works for you. There is no rule on the right type of content. Try different content and see what resonates with your audience.
- ✓ Pin important posts to the top of your page. These could be a post about an upcoming event, or a new piece of content you have just shared and is a great way of increasing visibility of specific posts.
- ✓ Use the pages to watch feature in your Facebook insights to monitor your competition and help you benchmark your performance. There are other useful features in Facebook insights such as post analysis and audience analysis that will allow you to see what posts have worked and when is best to share your content based on your audience.

Instagram

Instagram is a more visual platform and focuses on engagement through images and video. The platform is owned by Facebook, and therefore you can manage it from one tool – Facebook Business Suite.

The largest user age group is 25 – 34-year-olds followed by 18 – 24-year-olds. So, this platform is great if your target member is millennials.

Instagram are constantly upgrading the platform and adding new features to keep users engaged. Some of the best features for organisations to utilise include reels, which are a spinoff of Instagram stories and allow more functionality to edit the video, gift card buttons in your content, Instagram live feature, shop, and IGTV, which allows you to share longer videos.

Instagram tips

- ✔ Maximise the link in your bio as it is the only clickable link you can share. Change it depending on the focus of your content and landing page you want to highlight.
- ✔ Use hashtags wisely as they are a good way to increase your visibility. We recommend using 5 to 9 relevant hashtags that are specific to your niche.
- ✔ Establish an eye catching and recognisable brand on your Instagram account. This means using consistent images, having highlight covers branded, and using your branding as your profile photo.
- ✔ Engage with other relevant posts and reply to comments on your own posts. This will increase your engagement and reach of your account.
- ✔ Create visually compelling content such as behind the scenes posts, quotes, text-based images, reshare user generated content, and instructional videos.

Twitter

This platform is known for short and snappy informative content and is popular amongst professionals. There are many users on the platform who simply use it to view rather than interact, therefore it can be a great channel for raising your brand awareness.

The age of users is quite varied with no clear leading age bracket so it can provide a wide target user base. Top performing accounts tend to be celebrities, thought leaders or large brands, such as Barak Obama, Katy Perry, and YouTube.

Twitter can provide some great analytics on audience demographic and have a good feature to see trending topics. This is useful if you are trying to create content that is topical and relevant to a wide audience.



Twitter tips

- ✓ Use relevant hashtags but keep them to a minimum to avoid hashtag stuffing. This can diminish your content and make it less trustworthy.
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- ✓ Make tweets engaging by using images, videos and linking to relevant content such as blog posts and articles.
- ✓ Optimise your profile with an engaging and snappy account handle, engaging and keyword focused bio, striking profile photo and header image that is relevant to your organisation's brand.
- ✓ Test the best times to tweet to reach your audience. Recent stats show that peak time is Mon – Friday 8am – 10am and 1pm – 6pm. But this will depend on your target audience.
- ✓ Use Twitter advanced search to find accounts that might be interested in your organisations or to understand what discussions are happening in your space and get involved.

YouTube

This channel has soared in recent years, now with 2 billion active monthly users worldwide, and the second most popular social media platform. It is a video content sharing platform and can work well if you have an organisation with lots of engaging content such as in the health and fitness sector.

Video content is undoubtedly engaging, but the key to a great YouTube channel is timely and useful content created consistently. There is no point in creating a YouTube channel to have 1 video on there. If you are going to add this to your digital marketing toolkit, you need a plan for content creation and execution.

YouTube tips

- ✓ With more than 70% of YouTube watch time coming from a mobile device, ensure your content is mobile friendly.
- ✓ If you have an existing channel, use your analytics tab to understand your audience and learn what is working and what is not.
- ✓ Optimise your content with keywords in video titles and descriptions to increase ranking position for your videos.
- ✓ Create custom thumbnails to make videos stand out.
- ✓ Incorporate cards, end screens, bumper ads, and watermarks in your videos to increase engagement.



Social media summary

Managing and creating all the content needed for your social media channels can seem daunting. To reduce this, create a content schedule which you can populate with ideas and placeholders for content.

Using a social media management tool will allow for planning and scheduling content which will save you precious time. Most social media management tools will also allow you to do social listening, which will enable you to monitor your brand sentiment, but also spot opportunities for new content or to get involved in a conversation.

Social media can be a powerful tool if harnessed correctly, and the tips in this guide will help you boost your effectiveness and impact with social media.



Social media metrics

Engagement – This could incorporate likes, comments, shares, and clicks, which will allow you to see if your content is resonating with your target audience.

Impressions – This will let you monitor if you are reaching your target audience. If not, then you can look at adjusting when and the type of content you share.

Share of voice – This can be measured by volume of mentions social media channels and the sentiment of those mentions. Most social management tools will track this for you, or you can do it manually using the search functions in each platform.

Referrals to your website – This will allow you to see how much traffic is being generated from your social media channels. This should increase over time.

Conversions – This will allow you to see how many conversions (based on what a conversion is for you) come from your social media channels. By splitting it out by social channel, you can see which one is converting the most.

We hope you have found our social media guide for membership organisations useful. Our aim was to provide you with insights and support to maximise your digital marketing efforts, to help you acquire new and retain your existing members.

If you need any further support or advice on social media or your overall digital marketing, we are here to help.

With over 20 years of supporting clients with all aspects digital including website design and development, website hosting and support, CRM integration and a full digital marketing offering, we can guide you in squeezing the maximum results from your digital outreach.

We truly believe that anything is possible in digital, and we would love to help you harness the power of digital to achieve your goals.

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