Best Practices for Social Media

Content Provided by **Mashable**

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Define Your Goals

Your goals should say what you hope to accomplish. Example of goals include:

- ➢ Increase awareness with current customers
- ➢ Connect with new customers
- ➢ Strengthen relationship with current customers
- ➢ Receive feedback from customers
- ➢ Promote specific business strategies

Consider:

- ➢ Demographics
- ➢ Location
- ➢ Interests

Your business goals will help direct you in choosing the best social network.

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Logos and Slogans

If you have already established logos and slogans that you are proud of—use them!

Twitter: Slogan in your bio, and use your logo as an avatar.

Facebook: Your logo as your Facebook picture.

Pinterest: Pin your logo and location.

Foursquare: Logo in pictures and slogan in description.

Twitter

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What is Twitter?

➤ Twitter is a free microblogging service. It is made up of 140 character bursts of information, called Tweets.

➤ Before you start tweeting, listen to what others are saying.
  - ✓ See what customers are tweeting about.
  - ✓ See what competitors are tweeting about.
  - ✓ Follow brands that you admire and try to replicate their social media efforts.
  - ✓ See Twitter mistakes and know what not to try for your brand.

➤ If you already have a blog or website, syncing it with Twitter lets you seamlessly publish any major company news to all platforms simultaneously.

➤ It's an easy way to hear and respond to customer feedback.

➤ Sample Tweet from @XYZCafe: Not sure what to eat tonight? You can always check out our menu online - XYZCafe.com!

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Best Practices for Twitter

When to tweet?

➤ Tweet with announcements you want to make, such as a sale, special, new product, new location, etc.

When to retweet?

➤ Something you want your audience to know that came from another user.

When to respond to a tweet?

➤ Questions or compliments

Facebook

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What is Facebook?

➢ Facebook gives brands an opportunity to engage with the Facebook community by allowing companies to have their own Page. Here is the place where your friends, customers and potential customers can find you.

➢ With a Facebook Page, you can share text, photos, videos, and build a visual representation of who you are as a business.

➢ The more compelling and engaging your content is, the more it will be "liked" and commented on Facebook, increasing the chance of people seeing your messages—and ultimately, your small business.

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Best Practices for Facebook

➢ **Embrace images**: take pictures on your smartphone of everything that makes your brand unique. Post them on your page and encourage a conversation.

➢ **Make the most of your cover photo:** the cover photo can tell the story of you brand. It is the first thing people see when they come to your page so put thought into what this image could be, like the photo of a new location, photos of the owner and/or employees or images of a new product.

➢ **Profile Picture:** place to show consistency in your brand. This is the best place to put your logo. If you don't have one this is the best place to start.

➢ **Run Contests:** people love to win, there is an app on Facebook that allows you to do just this.

➢ **Milestones:** this is the place to tell your brand story. It is a digital scrapbook, it's the way to tell the story of the brand the way a Facebook profile can tell the story of one's life. Best things to put in are memorable moments for your company—always include a photo!

➢ **Embrace Fans:** Interact with them, like, comment, and post what they have to say. If they have pictures about your brand post them, make their content your own.

Tumblr

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What is Tumblr?

➢ Tumblr is user-friendly; all of its features are apparent on the dashboard.

➢ Tumblr is really great at showing off your business personality.

➢ Tumblr is a great hosting platform for your primary website (not only your blog), and is great for a business that can't hire a designer or developer.

➢ Use Tumblr's 'Ask' feature to take questions and quickly and efficiently provide answers. Anyone can ask a question, and answers can either be private or public.

➢ Use Tumblr's 'Submit' feature to take photo, video, audio and text submissions to publish on your blog.

➢ Think of Tumblr as a two-way conversation: Tumblr is peer-to-peer communication, not a broadcast channel. While you can use it to make announcements, you'll get a better response if you join and follow relevant conversations.

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Best Practices for Tumblr

Text: Explain rules for your upcoming content or make an announcement.

Photo: A product image, a picture of your team, a picture of a celebrity wearing or using your product, a dish at your restaurant, a profile of a new team member. You can upload multiple photos, which is great for an event recap or even product shots.

Quote: A one-liner that your fans just need to hear.

Link: Saw something on the web that you just have to share? Link out to it.

Chat: Did you have a funny exchange with a customer? Recount it here.

Audio: Post the jam that has everyone in the office grooving, or maybe a song that mentions your line of work.

Video: Did you shoot some video at a recent event? Post it on Tumblr!

Tag all of the content that you post, to increase searchability and shareability. Tumblr's tag system generally represents a community that been's filtered, so it should navigate you to the right audience.

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Google+

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What is Google +?

➢ Google+, is a social network operated by Google that integrates across a number of Google products, including Buzz and Profiles.

➢ You can target sharing with subsets of your social groups, called "Circles". Circles are simply small groups of people that you can share to, each with names like friends, family, co-workers, customers.

➢ Google has created a section for viewing, managing and editing multimedia. The photo tab takes a user to all of the photos he or she has shared, as well as the photos that the user is tagged in.

➢ Google "Hangouts," is a group video chat feature. People can then join the hangout as long as they have been placed in a circle that was invited by the person who created the hangout.

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Best Practices for Google+

➢ Google + integrates with all of Google's other extremely popular public-facing services: Google Search, Google Places, Google Maps, etc.

➢ Any business on Google+ will likely see a search engine optimization boost from maintaining an active Google+ page.

➢ *Tayta Restaurant & Catering* in Corona, Queens, shows up quicker on an organic search because it has a Google+ page.

➢ If you are running a brick-and-mortar store, having a Google+ page will help add valuable data to your Google Places page.

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Foursquare

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What is Foursquare?

➤ Foursquare is a location-based check-in application. The app has more than 20 million users who have checked in more than 2 billion times.

➤ On Foursquare, your customers can check into your small business with a GPS-enabled mobile app.

➤ The app has evolved to incorporating restaurants' menus, reviews, and promoted specials and deals.

➤ For brick and mortar locations, it enables customers to be able to physically check into your store, restaurant, beauty salon, etc.

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Best Practices for Foursquare

➢ Use specials to get your old customers in the door through. For example, the Mayor of Insomnia Cookie gets one free cookie a week.

➢ Use updates to alert your customers about deals.

➢ Keep it visual: Include photos and advertise your specials.

➢ Make your visuals topical. Include photos of specials or your location.

➢ Cross-pollinate: Include specials on your website, Twitter, and Facebook.

➢ Make your Foursquare specials timely: like "Coffee in the morning" and "Dinner specials at night."

Pinterest

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What is Pinterest?

Pinterest is an image-based social network – it's a virtual pinboard of web content.

➢ It allows users to create online bulletin boards, or "pinboards," for popular categories such as:
  - ➢ Home décor
  - ➢ Arts and crafts
  - ➢ Fitness
  - ➢ Food
  - ➢ Weddings
  - ➢ Style/fashion

➢ The boards can include photographs, products, creative ads, video tutorials and stories.

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Best Practices for Pinterest

➢ Create boards that help you tell your story to the audiences you want to tell it to.

➢ Invest in some good graphics that represent your product.

➢ Try to pair every product, page or important piece of content you want to draw attention to with a great image.

➢ Tell people you're on Pinterest by adding the icon to your site.

➢ Add a Pinterest share tab to your great images.

➢ Encourage engagement and pinning activity by allowing others to post their pins to your profile.

Instagram

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What is Instagram?

➢ Instagaram is a mobile-only, photo-sharing application.

➢ A photo sharing application that lets users take photos, apply filters to their images, and share the photos instantly on the Instagram network and other social networks.

➢ With Instagram you can simultaneously share photos across social networks:Twitter, Facebook, Foursquare, and Tumblr blogs.

➢ Behind the scene look at your small business.

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Best Practices with Instagram

➢ Instagram (different from Pinterest) is about displaying your own photos. It can show the actual goings on at your business.

➢ When presenting your brand on Instagram, your reputation and brand image is only as strong and complete as your most recent update. Keep your photos fresh!

➢ Keep your images compelling.

➢ Cross-pollinate!

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Additional Resources

➤ Attend the "Small Business Toolkit" class at a nearby NYC Business Solutions Center.

➤ Download the platform-specific How-To Guides for an in-depth overview of each of the social media platforms described here.

➤ Use a customizable website template, powered by Tumblr.

➤ Download the "Building a Website through Weebly" How-To Guide from the Business Library section of the NYC Business Solutions website, www.nyc.gov/nycbusiness.

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Additional Resources

General:

http://mashable.com/small-business/

http://mashable.com/2012/07/09/social-media-cheatsheets/

http://mashable.com/2012/03/18/typography-small-business/

http://mashable.com/2008/09/02/social-media-behavior-101-soon-a-required-course/

Facebook:

http://www.facebook.com/business

http://mashable.com/2012/05/16/facebook-for-beginners/

http://mashable.com/2011/12/07/facebook-timeline-guide/

http://mashable.com/2012/03/01/facebook-timeline-brands-guide/

http://mashable.com/2012/05/17/facebook-timeline-brand-tips/

http://mashable.com/2011/10/01/facebook-101-comic/

http://mashable.com/2011/05/25/facebook-marketing-guide/

http://mashable.com/2010/10/28/improve-facebook-ad-performance/

http://mashable.com/2009/07/20/facebook-local-ads/

http://mashable.com/2012/03/12/facebook-brand-building-tips/

http://mashable.com/2009/09/22/facebook-pages-guide/

http://mashable.com/2009/04/02/facebook-personal-brand/

YouTube:

http://mashable.com/2011/07/20/how-to-marketing-youtube/

http://mashable.com/2010/04/23/youtube-small-business/

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Additional Resources

Twitter:
https://business.twitter.com/

http://mashable.com/2011/07/06/cotweet-guide/
http://mashable.com/2011/06/22/twitter-marketing-guide/

Foursquare:
https://foursquare.com/business/

http://mashable.com/2011/04/27/how-to-foursquare/

Tumblr:
http://mashable.com/2011/08/17/tumblr-marketing-guide/

Instagram:
http://mashable.com/2012/08/08/40-of-top-brands-instagram/
http://mashable.com/2012/07/19/instagram-filters/
http://mashable.com/2012/07/16/photo-editing-apps/
http://mashable.com/2012/05/31/instagram-baseball-infographic/

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Welcome!

NYC Business Solutions is a set of services offered by the Department of Small Business Services to help businesses start, operate, and expand in New York City.

Our services are provided at no cost, regardless of the size or stage of the business. For more, go to: **www.nyc.gov/nycbusiness.**

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