

Better social media in 10 minutes a day

A guide to managing your
company's social media



UNION
metrics

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It can be difficult to find time to effectively manage a company's social media accounts. Even if you have a whole team dedicated to digital marketing, social media can quickly become overwhelming and it's hard to know how to focus your time. It's especially hard when your marketing team is small - or just you! - and you're trying to run your social media accounts along with a hundred other marketing activities.

In this guide, we'll help you prioritize your social media management, no matter the size of your team or amount of time you have to spend on it. We've developed a simple checklist that will help you run your company's social media accounts in as little as just 10 minutes a day. And if you're lucky enough to have a little more time, we've got checklists for 30 and 60 minutes a day as well. We'll discuss what tasks are most important, how to focus on the activities that have the biggest impact, and how to take advantage of your extra time, even if it's just a few minutes.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

For many, it can be difficult to find time to manage your company's social media accounts. Even if you have a team dedicated to digital marketing, social media can quickly become overwhelming and it's hard to know what to spend your time on. It's especially hard when your marketing team is small - or just you! - and you're trying to run your social media accounts along with a hundred other marketing activities.

We're here to help. In this guide, we'll help you prioritize your social media management. Even if you're a social media pro, a checklist can help you ensure you don't miss anything important on days when your attention is split. It can also help when you're training new team members or preparing for a vacation.

We've developed a simple checklist that will help you run your company's social media accounts in as little as just 10 minutes a day. If you're lucky enough to have a little more time, we've got checklists for 30 and 60 minutes a day as well. We'll go through exactly what you should concentrate on when you're tight on time, as well as how you can expand your focus if you find yourself with a little extra time. We'll help you figure out where to spend your time, no matter how little of it you have.

You can also use these checklists to organize and divide up duties on larger social teams, or plan responsibilities for upcoming campaigns. Show them to higher-ups to help them see why you need to expand your social resources.

So, on to the checklists!

10 MINUTES A DAY

On your absolute busiest days, or if you're just getting started with social media, our 10-minute checklist will help you cover everything you *need* to do. It includes the very basics of what you should be paying attention to every day. Start at the top of the list and work your way down until you run out of time. The most important items come first. If you happen to find yourself with more time after going through this list, take a look at the 30-minute checklist and see what else could help your accounts.

The 10-minute checklist

- Check all of your social accounts for direct mentions, questions and messages.
- Respond to the most important messages first, then the rest.
- Confirm that you have all of your posts for the day planned and scheduled.
- Check and respond to non-direct mentions of your brand.
- Look for new or interesting content you can reshare later.

The details

Checking for mentions and questions should be your first priority every day, at least three times a day. Pro tip: Publicly post the hours you will or won't be available, so your customers will know when to expect a faster response and when they might need to wait or find another way to contact you instead.

Some people check in as soon as they wake up in the morning, but definitely make your public social accounts the first thing you check once you get into the office, in case customers on other time zones had any requests overnight. Be sure you check in at least once in the middle of the day, while many of your customers are awake and likely to have questions. And then be sure to check in at least once before you leave the office and consider letting any non-urgent requests know you can get back to them first thing in the morning. In many cases, your customers just want to be heard; knowing when you'll get back to them can keep them from getting annoying at blowing up at your account overnight.

Respond to time-sensitive or urgent mentions first, then go through the rest. This will likely take the majority of your time. With the time that's left, move on to the rest of this list.

Double-check that you have all of your posts for the day planned and scheduled; set alarms as necessary to remind you to post (on Instagram, for example, you can create drafts but not schedule them in advance).

Check and respond to non-direct mentions of your brand. You should have keyword monitoring set up (this can be as simple as a few columns on TweetDeck or a more sophisticated listening setup with a product like Union Metrics), so take a look at those mentions at least a few times a week.

If you find yourself with a few extra minutes, take a look around at your wider social feeds to find relevant content to reshare or interact with as appropriate. This can help you find new content to post later in the day or week, as well as generate engagement with your accounts.

30 MINUTES A DAY

While 10 minutes gives you time to take care of the bare necessities, 30 minutes gives you a little more time to nurture your social media connections, particularly once you get into an established routine.

The 30-minute checklist

- Check all of your social accounts for direct mentions, questions and messages.
- Respond to the most important messages first, then the rest.
- Confirm that you have all of your posts for the day planned and scheduled.
- Check and respond to non-direct mentions of your brand.
- Look for new or interesting content you can reshare later.
- Monitor mentions of your brand on external blogs.
- Create and/or curate images to go with your posts.
- Find new hashtags to experiment with.

The details

Focus on content curation. Spend time browsing relevant industry blogs and your Twitter timeline for relevant content to share with your audience. Look for new or interesting topics, things that present a unique point of view, or just a well-written piece your followers might find worthwhile.

Monitor mentions of your brand on external blogs, and be sure you know where people are writing about your company and your products. Comment where appropriate. If a comment section doesn't exist, try to find the author on Twitter to thank them for mentioning your company. This is also a good way to correct misinformation, or let readers know an issue has been updated or resolved.

Visuals help your social posts pop; there's a lot of evidence that including images and videos in your posts help them get more engagement. So set aside some time to create or curate images to go with your posts. Be sure you create appropriate versions for each platform your company is on; don't just repost the exact same thing in each place around the same time. It doesn't have to be complicated - even a quick crop can make a big difference when moving from Instagram to Twitter.

Spend any extra time you have looking for new hashtags to experiment with. See if you can find new keywords to monitor and communities to get to know.

You might not have time for all of this every day, but you can still use your 30 minutes each day to alternate through the tasks that are the most important to your brand specifically, keeping in mind who your audience is, where they spend their time, and what campaigns you currently have running.

60 MINUTES A DAY

An hour a day is the ideal minimum we'd recommend for most brands to get as much as you can out of your social media marketing. This takes you beyond the basics into really growing your social efforts, diving into what's working, learning what you need to change, and deciding what experiments you should be dabbling in, and planning for the future.

The 60-minute checklist

- Check all of your social accounts for direct mentions, questions and messages.
- Respond to the most important messages first, then the rest.
- Confirm that you have all of your posts for the day planned and scheduled.
- Check and respond to non-direct mentions of your brand.
- Look for new or interesting content you can reshare later.
- Monitor mentions of your brand on external blogs.
- Create and/or curate images to go with your posts.
- Look for new hashtags to experiment with.
- Check in on your top five KPIs.
- Investigate the competition.
- Comment on relevant industry blog posts.

The details

Regularly check in on your social metrics, starting with your top five KPIs. Not sure where to start with your social media metrics? We recommend the following.

Mentions: Go beyond direct account mentions to incorporate keyword and hashtag mentions, as well. How large is the conversation about your brand on social? Include the channels that are most important to your customers, and always include Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, plus any others you deem relevant.

Reach: You also need to measure the size of your audience. There are lots of audience metrics you could focus on, like fans and followers, people who have mentioned your brand, and so on. But our recommended audience metric is reach. Reach tells you the size of the unique potential audience for posts about your brand. You can look at only your owned and paid content (along with any retweets/shares of that content), or expand out to include earned mentions, or anything posted about your brand by you or someone else. Understanding the size of your audience helps you contextualize all your other metrics.

Amplification engagement: If you're a marketer (and if you're reading this, you probably are), then you definitely want to measure engagement. Depending on the campaign and the social media channel you're interested in, engagement can take many different forms. So we think it's a good idea to focus on broad engagement types instead of specific engagement behaviors. Why measure just retweets when you can measure all amplification across content types?

The kinds of engagement that result in amplification are especially important to marketing teams because they spread your message to new audiences. So keep track of the amount and impact of amplification across social media. That includes things like retweets, shares, reposts and reblogs. Think about contextualizing amplification on a per post basis- how many amplification engagements do your posts on average receive? Does this vary channel by channel?

Conversational engagement: The other important form of engagement is more conversational than amplifying. For example, comments and replies are both great ways for your followers to engage with you on social media, but they don't really amplify your message beyond your existing audience. You still want to keep track of these engagements, but they're fundamentally different than amplification types of engagement.

Share of voice: Finally, in order to make all these other numbers mean anything, you need to put them in larger context. Of course you can - and should - monitor your KPIs over time to see how you compare over time, but to really understand your impact, you need to see how you compare to others on social media. So be sure you're analyzing your competitors and tracking your share of voice on social. Depending on how old your accounts are and whether or not you've paid to increase your following, you may start out small, and that's okay.

The main thing to be concerned with is a decline. If your share of a conversation gets smaller over time relative to your competitors, then that's a red flag you should pay attention to. You want to maintain or grow your share.

Get more in-depth with keeping track of your competition. If you haven't already, set up monitoring for your main competitors. Check in on them periodically to see what you can learn. What content reunites with their audience? Are there hashtags you can also use? Add in any industry influencers you can learn from and connect

with where appropriate. You can learn a lot by seeing how influencers post and interact with communities you're interested in reaching.

Start commenting on blogs that don't directly mention, but are relevant to your customers. Here, you have time to be proactive and not just than reactive to brand mentions. This helps develop relationships that could turn into guest posts, influencer campaigns or even just strong reciprocal content promotion when both of you are creating strong, relevant content.

Regularly read outside of your industry for even more inspiration. Learning from other areas can help you get ideas for new content and present content in new ways. It can also help you see when your own content is getting stale. As long as your audience is happy and responsive, that's what is most important, but leave a little room for experimentation.

THIS GUIDE GROWS WITH YOU

You might need different checklists on different days; in a day of hectic back-to-back meetings you might only have 10 minutes to work with, but other days might give you a full hour (or more!) to dive into things a little deeper. If necessary, schedule regular time on your calendar to go through the items that are most important to your brand's social goals.

And don't worry about being perfect and checking everything off of these lists every single day, especially when you're first getting started. As you spend more time with your brand's social media accounts, you'll see where you need to spend more (or less) time. Consider these lists a rough guide to get you started that you can tailor to your specific needs as time goes on. Good luck!