

Private: How to create a social media plan

A Social Media Plan is a summary of everything you hope to achieve on social media.

You may be about to embark on the wondrous journey into the land of social media. Or you may already be using social media but aren't sure if it's working, or worth the effort. You need a Social Media Plan!

Social media includes platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. Some of the more popular platforms are listed below. These media can connect you with new clients and can keep existing clients engaged. They can be accessed by people whose mobility may be restricted by their disability.

A Social Media Plan is a summary of everything you hope to achieve on social media. It helps you to find out if you're succeeding or failing. Every 'post', 'reply', 'like', and 'comment' on social media should serve a purpose. The more specific your plan is to your clients and stakeholders, the more effective it will be.

Work out the best platforms to use

Decide on the most appropriate platform for your clients. What will they be most comfortable using? Ask them.

You don't have to use all platforms – start with one or two.

Use the table below to plan and decide which media is best for you. Make sure you have the time, financial and human resources to manage each platform.

Relevant Social Media Platforms (Australia)

Media	Market relevance	Access factors	Costs (for the organisation)
Facebook	#1 in Australia (general public)	Social Media Apps, Facebook support available, Facebook Tools and Tips help access problems, User groups available	Management costs for campaigns and maintenance

LinkedIn	#6 In Australia but the most used platform for professional connections, a source of content	Good updates relative to other platforms, Hardware choice, can make a difference	Low, Subscription levels, campaigns
Twitter	High engagement rates, #9 in Australia	Presents a range of barriers. Navigation tools may be required	Low but consumers may face App costs
YouTube	#2 in Australia (general public)	Needs tools and Apps to be more feasible, Captions may assist.	Ad management costs – cost per view, free to consumers but some may purchase a premium service to avoid Ads, App costs may be a factor for consumers
Visual Platforms	Instagram #3 in Australia Snapchat #7 in Australia	Neither is rated yet for access by Media Access Australia	Preferred by Medium sized organisations, Image ownership costs, mostly used by <30-year-olds Mostly under 30-year-old users
Blogging	Blog Spot and Word Press (#4 in Australia) are very popular examples	Basic access is reasonable, users may need tools to improve posting results	Word Press- Free for basic users (add-ons and store purchases can be made)

Ask yourself five key questions

One of the simplest ways to create your Social Media Plan is to ask yourself the following questions.

- Who is our target audience?
- What are we going to share?
- Where are we going to share?
- When are we going to share?
- How are we going to share?

If you're already on social media, review what you're doing

If you're already using social media, ask yourself the following questions:

- What's working and what's not?
- Who is connecting with us?
- How does our social media presence compare to that of our competitors?

Once you gather this information, you'll have a good starting point for planning how to enhance your presence.

The contents of a Social Media Plan should include:

- A clear list of your goals and objectives
- An audit of your existing social media presence
- Competitive analysis
- A basic social media content strategy outline
- A monthly social media calendar
- Methods for measurement and analysis.

Create a monthly content calendar

- Look at your favourite brands on social media. What do they do that compels people to engage and share their content?
- Have a think about any events or activities you have coming up that you want people to attend/get involved in (they could be online activities)
- Do you have any video you could share? Social media loves video!
- You can run mini polls or surveys – this could help with your market research
- Don't forget images – never post without one.

Create a posting schedule

Create a social media content calendar to schedule the dates and times when you will publish your content on each channel. It's the perfect place to plan all your social media activities—from images and link sharing to blog posts and videos.

Your calendar can include both day-to-day postings and planning for a social media campaign. This could be, for example, an ad campaign to highlight a service you provide or a campaign to promote an upcoming event. Your calendar ensures your posts are spaced out appropriately and published at the optimal times.

There is lots of valuable information on the internet regarding the best times to post on the different social media platforms. There's a link in the resource section below to get you started.

Plot your content mix

Make sure your calendar reflects your Mission Statement, so your posts work to support your organisational goals.

You might decide that:

- 50 percent of content will drive traffic back to your website
- 25 percent of content will support your organisational goals – e.g. promote events, share stories (but make sure you get permission!), post updates about your service delivery etc.
- 15 percent of content will come from other sources, e.g. sharing partner content or thought leaders in your industry
- 10 percent of content will be sharing NDIS updates and information.

Test, evaluate, and adjust your plan

Your Social Media Plan is an essential document for your organisation but don't assume you'll get it right first time. Once you start to implement your plan, it's essential to track your results. Some strategies may not work, and others may really surprise you.

Surveys can be a great way to find out how well your strategy is working. Ask your followers and clients whether you're meeting their needs and expectations, and what they'd like to see more of on your social media. Then make sure you deliver on what they tell you.

Building an effective Social Media Plan takes time, but it is time well spent!

Resources

Media Access Australia report and useful links (c. 2012 release)

Best times to post on Social Media: 2018 Industry Research

<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/best-times-to-post-on-social-media/>

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/faqs-for-individuals/social-media-ict-identity-security/social-media>

eSafety Commissioner

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

ThinkUKnow what young people see, say and do online?

<http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/>

Stay Smart online – Socialising online

<https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/protect-yourself/doing-things-safely/socialising-online>