



## **An Introduction to Social Media and Digital Marketing**

## Why do I need social media?

The world is becoming increasingly reliant on digital technology – (76%) of today's business owners rely on social media platforms or an online presence to drive and attract sales. At a time when businesses face rising costs, social media channels offer small businesses a competitive advantage: helping to reach, engage with and ultimately increase footfall to your clubs.

Facebook is still the most-used platform by marketers worldwide (89%). Instagram sits in second place (80%)- two FREE platforms to grow your club!

It might seem daunting at first, but setting up your social media profiles is relatively simple. This guide will give you hints and tips on how to set up your profiles, engage with your target audience, with links to loads of useful tutorials and best practices to keep you right.

Let's get started.

## Facebook

### Followers vs Engagement

It can be easy to become preoccupied with how many people follow your accounts. While it's nice to see those figures grow, in reality these are 'vanity statistics'. The real value is in engagement – the way people are interacting with your content. If your post reach is greater than the number of people following you, you're doing well!

Remember this is *social* media. The best businesses don't just broadcast information but engage in conversation with users. By replying to comments, reviews and other posts, you are opening a dialogue and showing potential visitors that you are a friendly, approachable business that values its customers.

### Where to start

Setting up your business on Facebook is relatively straight forward (we recommend doing this on a computer, rather than a phone or tablet.)

[Click here to watch a video tutorial.](#)

When setting up your page, here are a few key things to keep in mind:

- **Choose your profile picture wisely** – it needs to represent your business, e.g. your logo. Whatever you choose, it is recommended that you rarely (if ever) change your profile picture, to maintain images that are attractive and recognisable to social media users.

- **Express yourself with your cover photo** – the large image at the top of your profile is the perfect place to show off your products or services. This can be changed regularly to reflect seasonal offers or images. Canva is a great resource to create an eye-catching cover image!
- **Give as much information as possible** – your Facebook page will allow you to include contact details, location, and information about your business and services. Be sure to fill out as much as possible to give users the complete picture.

## What to post

### There are two types of posts on Facebook:

- **News feed posts** – these are evergreen, meaning they always stay on your profile. These are the posts you see from your friends and businesses you follow when you log into Facebook.
- **Stories** – these are photos or videos that appear for just 24 hours and are often used for sharing informal content.

Photos and videos have the highest engagement levels of all news feed posts so think about how you can incorporate them into your content. Once you build a bit of a following, you might even consider a Facebook Live stream to interact with your fans – all you need is a phone!

[Click here for a short video tutorial on Facebook Live.](#)

[Click here for a more in-depth tutorial on Facebook Live.](#)

[Click here to find out about Facebook Live on mobile.](#)

[Click here to find out more about how to use Facebook stories for your business.](#)

Facebook's algorithms are a closely guarded secret, but it's widely recognised that comments and shares are more effective for getting your content seen by other users than likes. Once you've received those comments, **remember to interact with them!**

Keep an eye out for great user generated content you can share – this could include photos, videos, comments and reviews posted by your customers. People who share content about your business are acting as brand ambassadors and sharing this content (across all social networks) both makes them feel valued and proves your credentials to potential visitors. Other users may tag your business in posts or photos, or they may post directly to your page so be sure to keep checking regularly.

**Keep on top of your reviews and remember to reply to them all – good or bad.**

Facebook doesn't make as much use of hashtags as other social platforms, but it's still worth including one or two key tags where appropriate.

## When to post

It is as important to consider when to post as it is what to post. It's not necessary to post every single day. Spending time creating a few quality posts a month will be far more valuable – and a better use of your time. It might help to create a plan of what you want to post and when, to keep you focused and stop you missing any big events or promotions.

Research shows that the most effective time to post on Facebook is 10am and 3pm on Wednesday, followed closely by midday at the weekend, and afternoons on Thursday and Fridays. However, these are generalisations and may not be applicable to your business.

Head to the **'posts' section of your page's** Insights and you'll find graphs telling you when your page's followers are online to give you a guide. **To access your page *Insights*, simply navigate to your page on Facebook and select 'Insights' from the menu on the left of the screen.**

If you discover that your users are most active in the evenings, early mornings or at the weekend, you might decide that you don't want to be on Facebook at that time. Using Facebook's page tools, you can schedule your posts to go live at specific times. You can also use this to plan content for a few weeks in advance.

[Click here to read a simple how-to guide on scheduling your posts.](#)

If there's a post that contains some important information – for example, updated session days and times, you might not want this to get lost in amongst your other content. You can pin a post to the top of your profile so that it's the first thing a user will see when they visit the page.

[Click here to find out how to pin a post.](#)

## Instagram

Owned by Facebook but its own separate beast, Instagram is an image sharing platform with over 1 billion users worldwide.

### Where to start

**First, you'll need to set up an [Instagram account](#) – then convert it to a business account.** Might sound complicated, but all it takes is a few clicks. Unlike setting up your Facebook page, you'll need to complete all this in the app on your phone for the best results.

[Click here for a video tutorial on setting up an account.](#)

[Click here to watch a video tutorial on converting your account to a business profile.](#)

- Pick the right username – this will be seen alongside all your posts and comments, so make sure it easily identifies your business.
- Choose your profile picture wisely – like on your Facebook page, make this an image that easily identifies your business.
- Give as much information as possible – regular Instagram profiles have limited information about the user, but business profiles allow you to add loads of extras. Be sure to make use of the customisable buttons that make it easier for people to contact you.

### **What to post**

Like Facebook, there are two types of posts on Instagram: feed posts and stories.

Both share one thing in common, though – the content must be visually appealing.

Instagram feed posts square photos you see when you arrive on an Instagram profile.

When writing the captions, make sure you get your message across. Remember you can't include clickable links – but you can include up to 30 hashtags to ensure your content is seen by as many people as possible.

Stories are photos or videos that appear for just 24 hours (although you can save the best ones in your highlights) and are often used for more informal content, like sharing other users' images relating to your business, conducting polls or asking questions.

[Click here to read more about the difference between feed posts and stories. Click here to find out how to save stories to your highlights.](#)

**It's possible to link your Facebook business page and your Instagram account together – however we recommend against posting exactly the same content on each. While you might use the same imagery, you'll need to tailor the captions for each platform to make sure you're tagging in the correct pages and using the right hashtags.**

### **When to post**

The right balance of feed posts and stories is different for every profile, so feel free to experiment to see which ones work best for you – and gain the biggest engagements.

Like Facebook, there's no scientific method to find out the best time to post. It often comes down to trial and error. There are things you can do to stack the odds in your favour, though. You can use Instagram analytics to find out when most of your audience is active to help plan when you're going to post.

[Click here to find out more about Instagram analytics.](#)

Instagram only will only allow you to schedule posts on business accounts (and is still temperamental).

**Follow these steps to get started:**

**Step 1:** Open your Instagram app and tap the + at the bottom of the screen or swipe the home feed to the right to create a new piece of content.

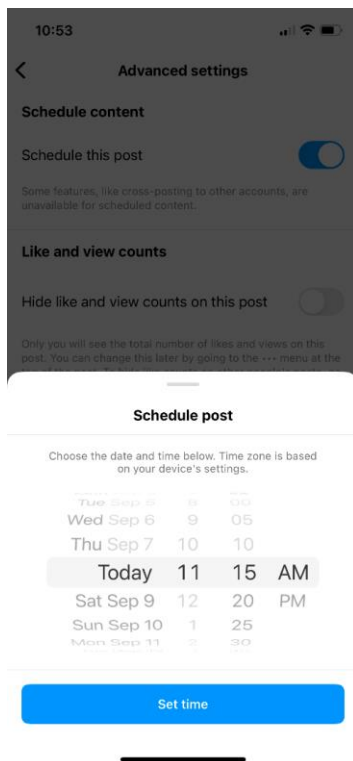
**Step 2:** Select Post or Reel, depending on the type of content you're creating.

**Step 3:** Either take a photo or record a video using the in-app camera or upload one from your camera roll.

**Step 4:** Add any stickers, effects, etc., then add your caption.

**Step 5:** Tap Advanced Settings at the bottom of the screen.

**Step 6:** Toggle the Schedule this post option on, then select your preferred date and time from the menu that appears.



**Step 7:** Go back to the previous screen and tap schedule.

There are also various third-party systems that allow you to do this. The most popular of these is Hootsuite but can be quite pricey. [Click here to read how to schedule Instagram posts using Hootsuite.](#)

## **Be your own Graphic Designer!**

### [Canva](#)

Do you look at some social media profiles and wonder how they manage to create such eye-catching graphics?

**Canva is an online tool that allows you to create professional-looking graphics. The best part is you can use it for free or upgrade to the pro version.**

**While there are some paid features, for most users the massive range of free templates, fonts and graphics will be more than enough.**

You can use Canva to create eye-catching images to go alongside your posts, or to craft the perfect profile and cover images. The possibilities are almost endless!

The best way to learn how to use Canva is to set up an account and have a play around, and they also offer some fantastic, easy-to-follow tutorials.

[Click here to access the tutorials.](#)

Here's a quick guide how to create an Instagram post using Canva – [How to Design Instagram Posts on Canva: A Beginner's Guide](#)

### **Mistakes to avoid**

**Copyright** – Copyright is king when it comes to images, because if you use a copyrighted image without permission, you are breaking the law. So, make sure you research into any images you want to use to ensure you can! You can create your own or buy a license from stock photo suppliers like Getty or Shutterstock. Don't take any chances and if unsure, find another image.

**There are plenty of free and legally approved sources on the web – so check out sites like Unsplash, Pixabay and Canva.** Crediting the photographer- on sites like Unsplash you can download images for free as long as you credit the photographer.

For example:



Attribute image:

[https://unsplash.com/photos/turned-on-gold-iphone-6-6lcT2kRPvnl?utm\\_content=creditShareLink&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/turned-on-gold-iphone-6-6lcT2kRPvnl?utm_content=creditShareLink&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=unsplash)

**Sizing** – Plan where you’d like your picture to pop up and make sure they are the right size. Because your visual will lose impact if a key detail is cropped from the frame.

Designing Instagram posts on Canva is a user-friendly and efficient way to create visually appealing and engaging content for your Instagram feed. With its wide range of templates, customisation options, and easy-to-use interface, Canva is a powerful tool for beginners and experienced designers alike.

## Google My Business

[Your business profile on Google is an important tool for getting the word out there about your offering.](#)

It’s that box on the right-hand side of a Google search that tells users a bit more about your business – your session days and times, directions, booking links, amongst many others. (You’ll also find interesting statistics, like how customers search for your business and which keywords they used to find you.)

[Click here to read a blog explaining how to set up Google My Business.](#)

Another benefit of registering your business with Google is that you will show up more prominently in Google Maps searches.

Don’t worry if, when you search for your business, there are already details on there (especially if they’re wrong). Once you’ve claimed your business profile, you’ll be able to edit them and ensure that all the information given to potential visitors is correct and up to date.

As with every social network, it’s important to include as much information as you can to ensure your profile is fully fleshed out. You can post photos, news updates and interact with

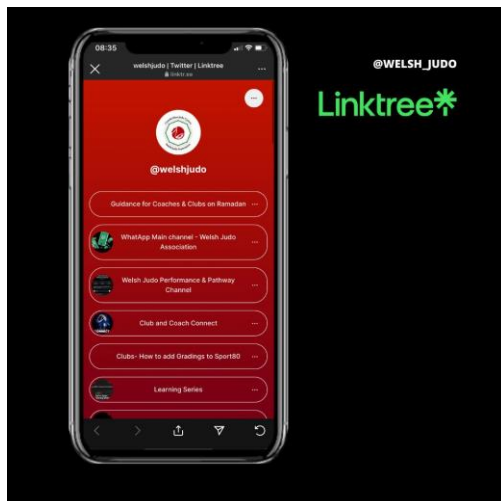


Google user reviews. **Just remember, like all social platforms, ensuring you keep it updated is key to your success.**

**Other useful Social Networks** - Once you've got Facebook and Instagram under control, you might want to branch out to other networks.

### **What is Linktree?**

Linktree is a platform that allows you to create a single link that directs people to all of your other social media platforms and websites. So instead of having to post separate links for each of your accounts, you can just share your Linktree link and people can easily find everything they need in one place.



### **Why do I need Linktree?**

There are a few reasons why Linktree can be beneficial for content creators:

**1 - It simplifies your social media strategy:** if you're trying to promote your content across multiple platforms, then Linktree can help simplify the process. Instead of having to post separate links for each account, you can just share your Linktree link and people can access everything they need in one place

**2 - It helps you save time:** posting links on all of your different social media accounts can be time-consuming. With Linktree, you can save time by creating one link that covers all of your bases.

**3 - It makes it easy for people to find everything they need:** when people click on your Linktree link, they'll be able to see all of the different places where they can find your content. This makes it easy for them to connect with you on their platform of choice.

### [Learn how to set up your own Linktree](#)

#### Twitter/ X

Twitter is a 'microblogging' platform that allows you to share posts limited to 280 characters (including spaces) alongside photos and videos. Sharing information on Twitter will force you to be economical with your words – but sometimes that's no bad thing, as it allows you to focus on your core message.

Schools often favour Twitter and Insta the most!

[Here's a guide to "how to tag on Twitter"](#)

[Click here to watch a video tutorial on how to set up a Twitter account for business.](#)

#### Tik Tok

TikTok is a platform for short-form mobile videos. Users can make videos that range between 5 seconds and 3 minutes long and use a massive music library and fun effects to quickly edit together bite-sized digital films.

It was once viewed as a fad, but as the seventh most-used social media platform in the world, with 689 million global active users, and it's been downloaded more than 2 billion times. **While it isn't a fad, you have decide how it will benefit your business and audience!**

**How to Use TikTok:** Beginners - [start here](#)

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#### Shortcuts

Rather type in a web address than click a link? We've got you covered!

Facebook: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

How to create a Facebook Business Page (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/3oXCxQT>

Hints and tips for Instagram for business (Buffer): <https://bit.ly/3kWl5K3>

Canva: [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)

What is Facebook Live? (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/3lfCP3i>

Canva design tutorials (Canva): <https://bit.ly/3kRACe2>

In-depth look at Facebook Live (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/3jWDANh>

Facebook Live on mobile (Facebook): <https://bit.ly/2UC2rM7>

Guide to Facebook stories (Influencer Marketing Hub): <https://bit.ly/36kYVeq>

How to schedule your posts (WikiHow): <https://bit.ly/2lifz62>

How to pin a post (Facebook): <https://bit.ly/3lkGggn>

Facebook Page tips and tricks (HubSpot): <https://bit.ly/3mQbVPH>

Instagram: [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)

How to set up an Instagram account (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/2I6pWtM>

How to convert an Instagram account to a business profile (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/3oSHZ7r>

Feed posts vs stories (Social Media Today): <https://bit.ly/2TRd25d>

Saving stories to highlights (Instagram): <https://bit.ly/361xFI0>

How to use Instagram Analytics (Hootsuite): <https://bit.ly/2HTp8bT>

Scheduling Instagram posts (Hootsuite): <https://bit.ly/3khUoOT>

Google My Business: [www.google.com/business](http://www.google.com/business)

How to set up Google My Business (Hootsuite):  
<https://bit.ly/36jR5Sk>

### **Other Social Networks**

Twitter: [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

How to set up a Twitter account for business (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/3eqNLbE>

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

How to set up a LinkedIn company page (YouTube): <https://bit.ly/2TVvvt6>

TikTok: [getting started](#)

Hashtag Resources

RiteTag: [www.ritetag.com](http://www.ritetag.com)