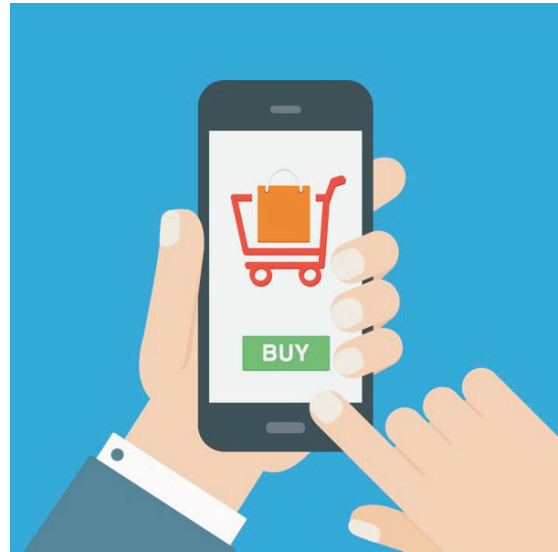


Social Media Presence

WHY ARE SOME COMPANIES more successful than others? Is it because they have a successful social media presence? According to eMarketer, 70% of brands will be using *INSTAGRAM* this year (See the eMarketer website at <https://www.emarketer.com/Article/Number-of-Companies-Using-Instagram-Nearly-Double-Next-Year/1013122>). If a company does not have a social media presence, they will be missing out on a significant marketing tool that their competitors are using. Customers want to interact with companies in a personal way on social media platforms. Companies who have an effective social media presence provide this opportunity for their customers.



Objective:



Describe how to develop a social media presence.

Key Terms:



avatar

content

engagement

hashtag

interaction

profile

social media

social media analytics

social media presence

social media tracker

target audience

user-generated content
(UGC)

Developing a Social Media Presence

Social media is the term used to describe websites and applications that are designed for users to create content, share information, share photographs and videos, send private messages, and interact with each other. Common social media apps are *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *SnapChat*, *Twitter*, *YouTube*, *LinkedIn*, and *Pinterest*. **Social media presence** is a reference to the frequency of social media posts, the content of the posts, and the level of engagement on a

social media account. A business needs a successful social media presence to build relationships with social media users. This is especially true for the fashion industry, with its fast pace and niche markets. The building blocks of social media presence are purpose, profile, content, target audience, engagement.

PURPOSE

A social media presence must have a purpose. The business must set a goal. Possible goals are brand recognition, growth of the customer base, and increased sales.

SMART Goals

Brands should set goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). The content, type of engagement, and target audience will be chosen based on the business goal.

Example

For example, if you want to increase the number of users viewing your new line of handbags, you may want to create a goal such as, “Add one new photo to existing content on *Pinterest* every day at seven P.M. for the next two weeks.” Because the goal is clearly defined, you can monitor the success, or lack of success, of your strategy. A clear vision of where your company would like to be in the future can help establish the current purpose for your social media presence.

PROFILE

A business must create a social media profile. A **profile** is the identity of the person or company represented on the social media site. A profile should be the result of a thoughtful, deliberate creative process. Users are influenced by the name of the profile and the avatar attached to it. An **avatar** is the image used to represent a social media profile. Social media users want to feel connected to the profile owner in a personal way. This personal type of connection can happen by creating a story around the product, brand, or company. According to *Entrepreneur* magazine, stories help the user build trust in the profile owner. The more personal



FIGURE 1. Determining which social media platform to use, and how to use that platform, is an important decision.



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: Fashion Industry Social Media Presence Ideas

Choosing social media platforms is an important decision. Selecting the ‘right’ platforms requires the company to consider their target audience and their goals for being present on those sites. Companies can duplicate successful social media presence elements of others including: unique hashtags, appealing to customers’ emotions, and having more than one social media account. Then, by tracking what works and what doesn’t, a company can tailor their social media presence.

For more information about which social media platforms companies are using and why, access the following articles. The State of Digital website article “11 Social Media Ideas from the Fashion Industry Everyone Should Try” at <https://www.stateofdigital.com/11-social-media-ideas-fashion-industry-everyone-try/>. Then, read the Meltwater website article “How 5 Fashion Brands Use Social Media” at <https://www.meltwater.com/blog/how-5-fashion-brands-use-social-media/>.



While reading, compare and contrast the choices made by each company.

the profile appears, the more a user will want to engage. (See the *Entrepreneur* website at <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/251620>.)

CONTENT

Content is information, images, resources, etc. that is shared by the individual or company on the social media site. Photos are the primary content on both *Instagram* and *Pinterest*. Videos are used for *YouTube*. A string of 140 or 280 text characters is used on *Twitter*. *Facebook* content includes text, photos, videos, or links. In the article “15 Tips to Building a Better Social Media Presence,” the creation of unique con-

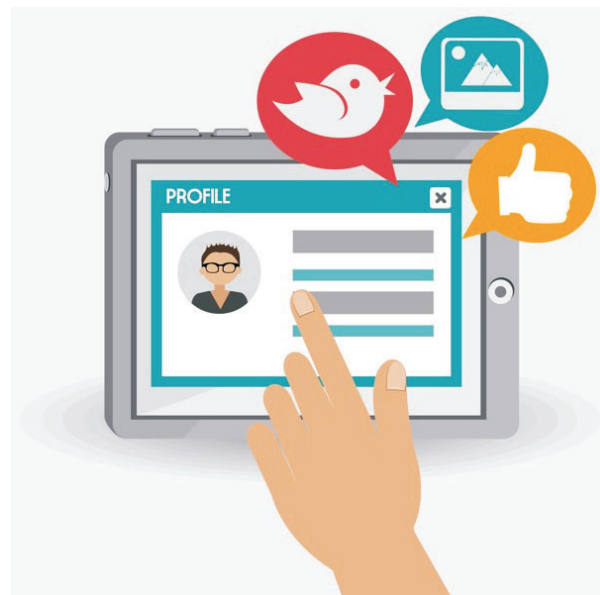


FIGURE 2. Creating a profile is just one aspect of developing a social media presence.

tent is viewed as necessary, because the market is saturated. Adding new content consistently and on a regular basis is important to attract and keep user interest. (See the SproutSocial website at <https://www.sproutsocial.com/insights/building-social-media-presence/>)

Personality

Content should not only represent the product, brand, or company, but also reflect the profile owner's personality. Users want to feel personally connected to the content. In the online article "6 Steps to an Effective Social Media Presence," creating content that builds relationships is more effective than trying to sell something. (See the INTHEBLACK website at <https://www.intheblack.com/articles/2018/05/14/effective-social-media-presence>)

Hashtags

Purposeful use of hashtags can also help people find the content that they seek. A **hashtag** is a keyword or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#), used to identify social media posts on a specific topic. A hash sign is also called a pound sign or a number symbol. Creating an original hashtag, which is used for every piece of content, helps build recognition and loyalty.

TARGET AUDIENCE

When posting content, the target audience should be the main focus. A **target audience** is the intended demographic for which a promotion is directed. If a company sells graphic T-shirts with trendy sayings embossed on the front, potential buyers need to see the content of the company's *Instagram* account. For targeting certain segments of the population, key information is knowing how and when those people engage with social media. There are more than sixty social media platforms. To create a successful social media presence, it is essential to know which platforms to use, and how to use them to engage with specific users.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement (Interaction) is the communication amongst a profile, content, and user/consumer. A profile owner or user/consumer adds content. **User-generated content (UGC)** is any content created and shared by a consumer. UGC includes any review published on a website by an unpaid consumer. The users are referred to as "friends" on *Facebook* and as "followers" on *Instagram*. After a company, brand, or business has created a profile and added content to their social media site, they need to attract users and keep them engaged with the content.

Means

Engagement can occur through various means, such as a daily updates, contest opportunities, question and answer discussions, or links to more content.

Analytics

If a company is serious about using social media to grow their business, then using a social media tracker is a must. **Social media analytics** is the process of gathering and analyzing data from social media websites, in order to make informed business decisions. Social media analytics is commonly used to determine customer sentiment, particularly in the business areas of marketing and customer service.

Social Media Tracker

A **social media tracker** is a company that utilizes social media analytics to make business recommendations to companies. SproutSocial and Tailwind are examples of social media tracker companies. These companies analyze which social media users are interacting with a company's content and how that interaction occurs. For example, a social media tracker could monitor social media platforms for mentions of the brand name, relevant hashtags, keywords, mention of competitors, and general trends in a specific business area. After analyzing the data, a social media tracker may also make recommendations based on the company's social media goals.



FIGURE 3. Social media analytics is commonly used to determine customer sentiment, particularly in the business areas of marketing and customer service.

Summary:



Companies who have a successful social media presence provided an opportunity for their customers to interact with them in a personal way. The companies decided upon a desired outcome from their social media presence and strategically targeted the intended audience. They chose an appropriate social media platform, such as *Instagram* or *Facebook*. They created a profile and added content to their social media platform. These companies, by engaging with their target audience, created a relationship between the business and the consumer.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. In your own words, define 'social media presence.'
2. Why is it important for a company to create unique content?

3. Describe methods that companies use to engage their customers.
4. Why is it important to know the characteristics of the target audience?
5. Why is it important that the social media purpose is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART)?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Sprout Social is an online company that organizes, manages, tracks, and analyzes social media data for other companies. They provide useful articles so you can learn more about what they do and how you can manage your own social media presence. In the article “Social Media Competitive Analysis,” Sprout Social walks you through the steps of identifying competitors and gathering, then analyzing, their data.

In this lesson you learned what it takes to develop a successful social media presence, now you can do an analysis of your own to see how the social media presence of the companies you follow compare to each other. Read Sprout Social’s “Social Media Competitive Analysis” article at <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-competitive-analysis/>, then, analyze the social media presence of two companies that you follow. Be prepared to share your analysis with the class.

Web Links:



3 Inspiring Social Media Case Studies for Fashion Companies

<https://socialnomics.net/2017/07/31/3-inspiring-social-media-case-studies-for-fashion-companies/>

15 Fashion Brands You Should Follow on *Instagram* for Marketing Inspiration

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/fashion-brands-on-instagram>

Benefits to the Fashion Industry

<https://www.martechadvisor.com/articles/social-media-marketing-2/benefits-of-social-media-marketing-to-the-fashion-industry/>

The Top 12 *Instagram* Tips Your Brand Needs to Act On

<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/instagram-tips/>