SOCIAL MEDIA 101 FOR MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Why use social media?

- Gives your organization a global voice, on a global stage

- Allows you to connect with influential people and other like-minded organizations

- Helps drive traffic to websites and other online content

- Spreads news lightening fast; ability to touch people instantaneously

- Balances personal and scholarly voices

- Allows "immediate" access to curators and staff

- Provides opportunities for behind-the-scenes at your organization

- Reaches new audiences, beyond those who visit your institution

- 5,700 tweets happen every second!

- YouTube reaches more U.S. adults, age 18-34, than any cable network

- Facebook has >2 billion users (2016) and teens are still among them

- 53% of Americans following brands on social media are more loyal to them

- Offers a free, dynamic platform to talk to followers and potential fans

- Potential to increase membership and attract new donors

- Changes perceptions about your museum

- Welcomes the local community

- Increases transparency

- Documents your events and happenings

Social media site usage by year

Social media sites, 2012-2014

% of online adults who use the following social media websites, by year
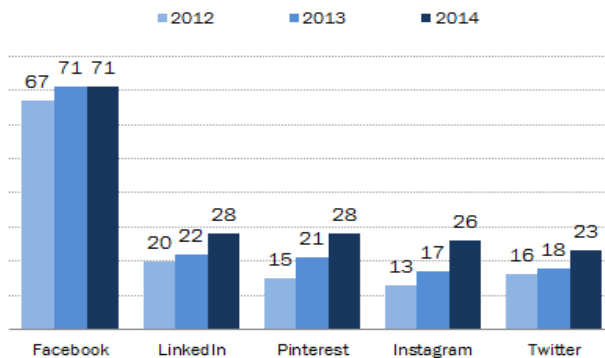
Pew Research Center's Internet Project Surveys, 2012-2014. 2014 data collected
September 11-14 & September 18-21, 2014. N=1,597 internet users ages 18+.

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Best Practices

- Seek out others. Follow, share, and listen before talking about yourself! It's not all about your organization. It's about creating community

- Social media is not just about marketing; it's about engagement and conversation. The rule to follow is 80-20. Only 20% of your content should be about sales or otherwise self-promotional

- Most cultural organizations feel it's more important to measure the value and depth of their

conversations rather than the number of followers

- Post at least weekly. Inactive social media channels are a turn off for potential fans

- Offer a tone of voice that's consistent with the audience you're trying to reach

- Allow behind-the-scenes access to your collections and processes

- Ask people to get involved--through calls to actions, contests, caption writing exercises, selfies, etc.

- Like, share, and comment on other social media owners' channels

- Use quality images/videos. Check out our resources on How to Create Digital Images (also in the Resources section of this website www.museumonmainstreet.org)

- Use the free metrics tools offered by Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms to look at and analyze what's working and what's not

- Update your cover or banner images to reflect your organization's latest events

- Think about what is sharable, fun, and engaging. Ask yourself, would you like this post if you saw it in your feed?

- Don't be afraid to reach out to big influencers and key experts

- Be responsive. Be sure to answer questions and respond to comments that come in from social media

- If you use multiple social media channels, don't auto-populate content to go from one channel to another. The message often becomes truncated

- Connect to current events, special anniversaries, and date

- Do research on hashtags, especially on Facebook and Instagram. Hashtags are your keys to

conversation. ([Mastering the Art of the Hashtag](#))

Before Getting Started

1. Choose the **TARGET** audience you want to reach.
   Not "We want to talk to the public." Instead think: "We want to talk to young people, aged 20-30 years old, interested in contemporary and visual arts, living in our town but still unaware of the museum."

2. Articulate the **GOALS** you want to achieve. For example . . .
   We want to drive more traffic to our website. We'd like to increase awareness about our museum in the community. We'd like to get more families to our museum.

3. Decide which **STRATEGIES AND TACTICS** will allow you to achieve those goals. These are some ideas: Always include links to your website in posts. Make a % of posts about upcoming programs. Discuss relevance of museum to community. Post content about family programs. Reference topics that are of interest to children

4. Choose ways to **MEASURE** your performance. Want do you want to measure? Do you want to count your followers, shares, likes? Will you be able to do it over time to determine trends?

5. Determine **WHO** will create your content.
   It doesn't have to be a full-time staff member. Local teens or members of your organization will often step up to the plate! Contact us if you need a written "job description" for this position.

6. Decide **WHERE** you want to be: To whom should we talk? Which channels does that audience use? How much time do we have?

Getting Your Colleagues and Friends Involved to Help Spread the Word
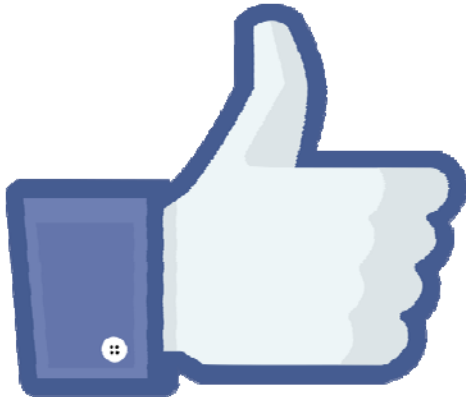
Reaching new followers depends on how many people you can get to spread the word. Rely on friends and colleagues to get your organization started.

1. Ask your colleagues to follow your organization on the platform you're launching. If on Facebook, tell staff to "Like" the organization's content everyday for a few weeks. This tells Facebook that the page matters to them, and it's the *only* way Facebook will add the organization's posts to their personal feeds

2. Tell your colleagues when you're likely to post, so that they can be on the lookout at 8:30 a.m., for example. On Facebook, posts receive most of their engagement within 30 minutes.

3. One of the best ways for fans and friends to show their support is to "share" your organization's content on their own social media channel. A share, retweet, or reblog allows friends to see how involved people are with your organization.

4. Invite friends and colleagues to "talk or chat" with your organization on social media. Reaching out with a question will initiate dialogue and might encourage others to join in.

5. Include your organization's social media icons [with live links] at the bottom of your emails or texts. (Do's and Don't of Asking Employees to Share on Social Media)

Helpful Links

- Hootsuite is a leader in social media management and their blog provides great articles about everything from tips to trends

- Youth audiences and social media usage from Pew Research 2015

- The Webby Awards: Award-winning uses of social media

- Best of the Web: Ideas for Social Media and Digital Engagement

- [How Social Media has Rewired Our Brains](#)

- [Creating Social Media Policies](#)