

# Social Media for busy people

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**Social media has become one of the most influential communications platforms available to companies today. It is a brilliant tool that can be used to engage with a broad range of audiences, from members of the public, to existing customers, employees, partners, suppliers and those all important new prospects.**

In the past, the job of looking after posts and tweets may have fallen on the shoulders of more junior members of the team. But increasingly firms are now sitting up and paying attention to the power of social media. They're seeing its potential if used effectively and strategically, not just as something that needs to be kept ticking along. Plus the benefit that it

can bring for individual team members, for example by helping to build credibility and reputation.

The problem is that **companies, and senior team members in particular, are often time-short and pressure-heavy.** So what this guide aims to do is to offer a very simple solution to getting started on more strategic social media use, as well as some top tips for getting the most out of it.

**If you're new to social media, or just don't know where to begin when it comes to developing a strategy - then you're in the right place. With this guide we've done the hard part for you.**

The aim of this document is to help you learn more about the most important social media tools and how you can work with them in a B2B environment. Our challenge for you is to commit some time every day over the next three weeks to get started, to get used to the platforms and to increase your knowledge so you're better placed to then devise a strategy at the end of it.

After this initial period, your time commitment can be less, as it will be more about keeping the conversation going, once you have planned out a clear direction and your objectives.

**Richard Branson on Social Media**

*"I try to answer a few questions every day from followers. People often wonder how I find time to tweet and update my blog so regularly. How do they not find the time, I wonder? Social media is such a terrific way to connect with our customers that I would never miss out."*

# Choosing the right platform

**So where do you start? There are so many different social media platforms to choose from that it may seem overwhelming when deciding which ones to use.**

What you should aim to do is to choose the ones that will be the **best fit for your business and your target audience**. Just do those – one or two is fine - and really focus on doing them incredibly well. That will be far more effective than trying to do much across too many channels.

The two sites that are the **most well suited for B2B are LinkedIn and Twitter**. Facebook may seem tempting as it has the largest amount of users in the UK, and you may already use it yourself. But you're looking for the ones that will give you the **best return on investment** for what



you need to get out of it. Remember, at an entry level these sites **may be free to join but they all still come with a cost implication** - whether that's time you and the team are spending, money for more advanced functions or

boosting your posts to hit a specific audience, or even the cost of training for teams.

To get going and keep it simple, the main strategy we suggest you follow is: have a fully filled out LinkedIn page that will act as a well rounded, professional profile, then use Twitter for your quick updates.

**Your main goals are:**

- 1) Portray a professional and comprehensive profile in the public space**
- 2) Engage in thought leadership**
- 3) Engage with important stakeholders**
- 4) Find your own information sources to stay abreast of industry news**



# Can you delegate social media interaction?

Of course you can use the social media savvy people within your company, or an outside agency, to help you set up personal and company profile pages. **But it's not a great idea to outsource the management of your personal pages, or to use automated posts which are also a bit of a no-no.**

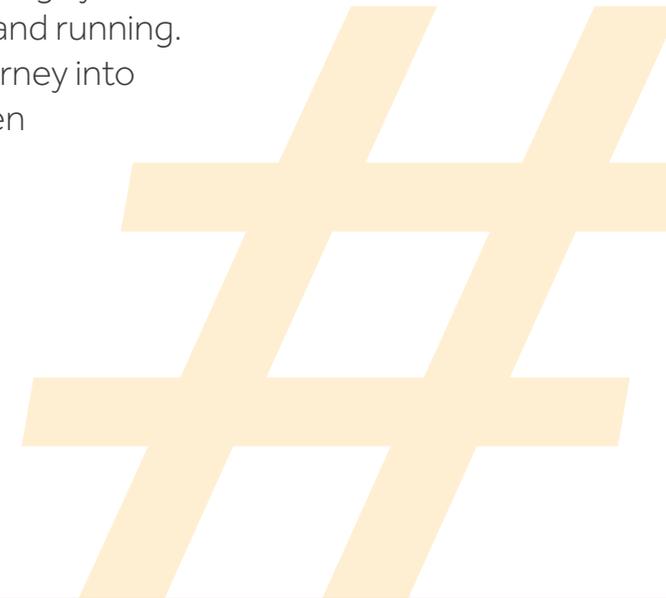
If you're worried what to write then just remember, always go for **quality over quantity**. Re-search shows it's not the frequency that matters (as long as you're not leaving it weeks between posts and always respond promptly to others), so **don't feel you have to post anything just so you've posted something.**



It's almost like going to a networking event – what might you say? What you had for lunch may not be of interest to many people, but **your attendance at an industry conference and snippets of advice you heard definitely would be.**

*Your social media presence is representing you to the public. Everything you do, or don't do, says something about you. Even the basics like spelling and grammar could potentially impact on your target audience's opinion of you.*

**This guide has two parts. Firstly, setting it all up.** We will then look at those things you need to think about once you're up and running. We hope you enjoy your journey into mastering social media when time is short.



# Part 1: Set up



## Step one - preparation

Before you start there's a bit of prep you can do which will make setting up your profiles far quicker and easier. Start a new document where you can jot down the answers and your thoughts to the following questions. You'll then have a prep sheet you can use to create your profiles, with all the info you need in one place.

### Who am I - your mini biography

If you were in an interview, how would you describe yourself? Write down a couple of sentences that best describe you. Concentrate on the most important things about your professional life but also include a few personal points. What are those things about you as a person that you are happy to share with the public? Find a good middle ground here - too little information won't help you engage with people and give an impression of you, while too much information that's all 'me, me, me' can stop people's interest very quickly.

Write everything down that you can think of, then edit it down to a nice one page summary.

Narrow it down even further and see if you can get it to a **paragraph of maybe two or three sentences**. Eventually reduce it to 160 characters, which you will be able use as your profile on various sites.

### What is my story? The back story to your biography

When we write a biography we can end up simply jotting down a list of the jobs we've had and a few milestones along the way. **However, there is a far richer story behind your professional life than just this.**

An example is Richard Branson – if we asked you what his story is. what would you come up with? Similarly think about what your story is and write it out for yourself. It's a good exercise and it is good to keep in mind when you post online because everything you say, share, like, link to, says something about you. Social media is the perfect tool to craft your own public image.

## Relevant keywords

The next item to jot down is **keywords that are relevant to you as a person, to your company and to the products and services you offer.**

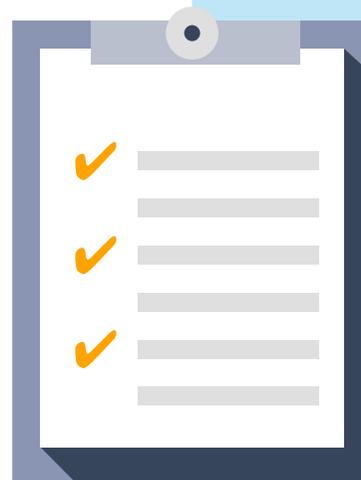
These will be the keywords and terms that would be helpful for you to monitor on social sites. For example, you may want to track what people are saying about HR if you're in recruitment. The **top keywords** will be your **name**, your **company's name** and your **brands' names**. Others may be terms related to your **business, industry** and even **location**. You may also want to monitor competitors' names.

You will use these later to set up monitoring and find relevant conversations online.

Sometimes some keywords don't produce good results and it takes a bit of trial and error to hit on the best words to use. You will need to **use your list as a starting point** then may need to refine them or find better ones once you see what works. It's worth the effort though as it is the best way to narrow your stream (i.e. all the posts and information you'll be hit with on the various sites).

## Information sources

Where do you personally go for information **currently** – for example, for news about your industry? Or business and management advice? Are there particular sources like **magazines, blogs** or **news sites** that you go to? In the same way, which companies and institutions do you respect and would like to hear more from? This could be **trade industry bodies, world-leading corporations** or even a **local company** that's going places. In all these cases you should be able find if these organisations are on social media with a quick Google search. Make a list of the names and Twitter tags of those you want to get updates from.



**Top Tip** - If you use integrated marketing automation software then you should also be able to link your current leads and clients and create a special monitoring list for them, so you can listen to what they're saying.

Most of the preparation is now done and it's time to set up your profile.

## Step two – setting up your profiles

Your profiles need to be accurate and interesting. You will need:

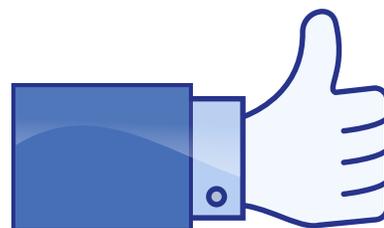
### A professional photo

An inviting, well lit portrait shot with a simple background is the best. You only need to show your head and shoulders. For someone in a position of management and leadership it is really important to use a **professional quality photo**. It all **adds to your credibility**.

### Interesting bio



You have already prepared your biography now you simply need to transfer it to the relevant online profiles. On **LinkedIn** you have a lot of space for your biography and can add quite a bit of information. **Start small and continue to flesh out your profile as you go along**. Stick to the most relevant professional milestones and include any publications or anything else that could be interesting about you as a professional person.



*A word about contact details. Once you put yourself out there on social media people will want to get in touch with you, so make sure you include some way to contact you.*



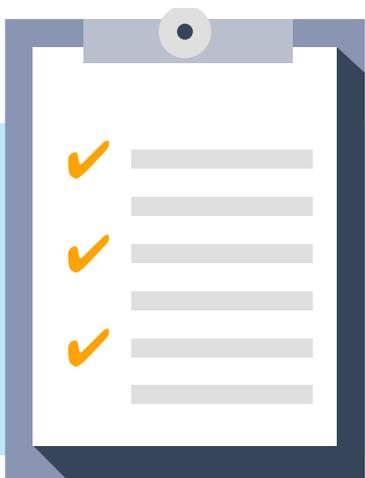
### Make Facebook private

**Facebook is best left private**. If you're on there, make sure your settings are on **private** so you do not show anything by accident that you don't want the public to see. Have an appealing profile photo and cover shot and **only connect with people who you really know**. Never connect as a friend on Facebook with people you do not know.

## Upload existing contacts and connect

The first step to building up your connections is to **connect with those you already know**. This is quite easy on LinkedIn where you can simply import the data. It doesn't mean that you have to connect with all of your contacts and in most cases you wouldn't want to – be selective and do not let LinkedIn do this for you. With this in mind, be careful **not to automate this matching process** as you also do not want LinkedIn to spam all your contacts.

You can do the same on Twitter but it's more about **choosing who you want to see updates from**. As a tool it is a great one for connecting with total strangers because the connection is not so deep, it's a simple follow. On LinkedIn if you connect with someone the connection is deeper and you can see a lot more information about that person and the people they are connected with.



**Top Tip - you do have the option to hide your connections on LinkedIn, it is an option within your privacy settings.** You may however think it helps you and your credibility to show them.

On Twitter you have to think **who you want to follow in order to keep your stream interesting**.

In the beginning, only follow people and businesses because **you want to hear what they are saying**. And don't get fixated on numbers. There is no need for you to worry about how many followers you have on Twitter. They will come naturally as you engage and get more active on the platform. Your goal isn't to have the highest number, but to be **interesting and engaging** to those people who choose to follow you.

Unfriending someone on Facebook has a lot more implications than unfollowing someone on Twitter, so don't worry if you follow and unfollow, it happens all the time.



### Step three – set up the tools



There are loads of **clever tools you can use to help save you time and energy** on social media. Without them it can become overwhelming, especially for busy people. So it is crucial to **use tools to help ensure you're spending your time on the stuff you really want to see.**

There are probably as many social media management tools out there as there are social media platforms,

so again, choosing the right tool for you will be a little bit tricky. **The key is to keep it simple.**

Speak to your marketing department, or whoever else manages your company social media, and see if they have some recommendations for you. HootSuite, Buffer, HubSpot, TweetDeck are all great tools, to name but a few. These tools can help save you time in many different ways, for example you can use them to **schedule posts in advance**, to **set up specific searches** for your keywords and to see all those searches in **one quick glance.**

### Step four – setup monitoring

To avoid social media overload **you need to be in control of what you see.** You achieve this by making **monitoring lists.** All the better tools will allow you to set up lists where you can either follow specific **topics**, or specific **keywords**, or specific **people**, etc.

Find out how to set lists up in your preferred tool (their help function should be able to help if you get stuck) and create monitoring lists based only on what interests you. Yes this will be a little bit time-consuming to do, but once it's done it's done.

#### Some ideas of what kind of lists you could set up:

- A list with all of your top clients in to make it easy to engage with them and see what they're saying.
- Or for your own company or brand names so you can see what other people are saying about you.
- A list could also be for a specific keyword for a market you want to break into.

The key is for you to be comfortable enough with your tools to set up those lists and then **experiment with them and update** as you go along.

## Part 2: Recurring steps

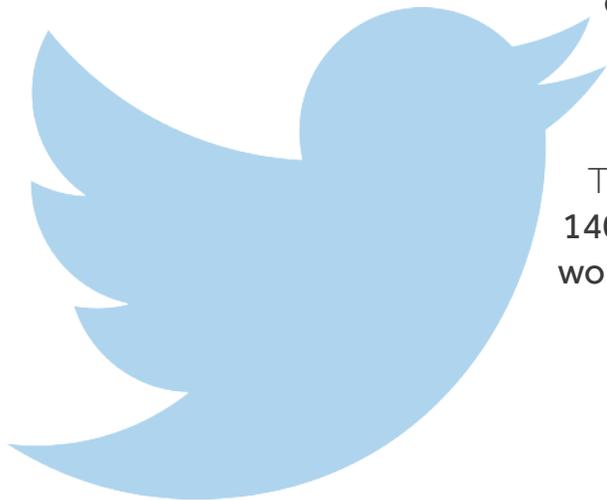
Social media can be used to **listen**, to **nurture** new and old contacts, as a **source of information**, and also for **advertising** (as long as that's not all you do as no one will keep following your updates if they're just constant ads).

**You do not have to invest hours** but take a little more time in the beginning to learn more about using the platforms, so you can work out what the **best strategy** for you will be.

This guide is simply meant to help get you set up and off the ground. **Social media is all about**

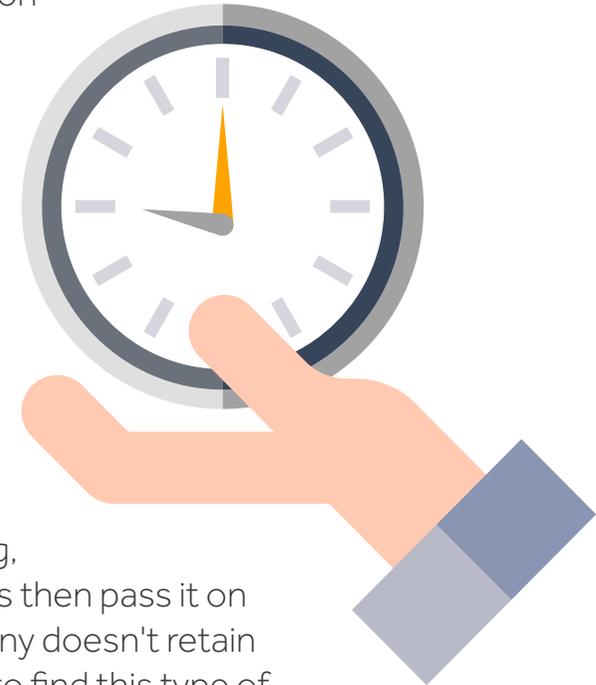
**content.** To stay interesting you will have to **publish content** of your own.

This can be a little **tweet of 140 characters**, or a **1000 words long blog article**.



As the leader of an organisation and as a thought leader you should **take the time to publish your thoughts regularly.** If you do not have a company blog, LinkedIn is a great platform to publish your articles. Do not just post your articles and never return though, **check back** for any comments and **join in the conversation.**

If you struggle with the writing, simply jot down your thoughts then pass it on to a copywriter. If your company doesn't retain someone, it will be very easy to find this type of support online.



## Weekly steps

The things you need to be doing on a weekly basis are **making new connections** and **nurturing your existing ones**.

All the social platforms will suggest people for you to connect with, look through those suggestions regularly and see if anyone's a good fit.

Every time someone mentions you on Twitter, or follows you, have a look and **see if they are worth following back**.

Mentions are a great way to find conversations, you can also look up other people's mentions and conversations. On Twitter everything is out in the public eye, on LinkedIn some of it is but not all, and on Facebook (private profile) most will be private.

On Twitter you can also see who someone else follows, this is another **good source of inspiration** for people to follow yourself. Don't overthink who to follow. If you follow someone and they just post nonsense into your stream, just unfollow them again. As mentioned earlier this is in no way a big deal.

## Engaging in groups

There are **millions of groups** on LinkedIn, which may seem overwhelming at first. The best ones to look at are the **very targeted**, private groups that only specific people can join. Those groups are usually well managed and provide a **great platform to engage in conversations** with other people.

**Do not confuse groups and interacting in groups as the place to get in your sales plugs.** That is usually not wanted in these types of groups, and you will find those that allow self promotion are not interesting groups at all. Spend some time finding those **gems that connect you to likeminded people** with whom it would be good for you to form a relationship with.

You can find groups by simply searching for **specific keywords** and then narrow your search result to show **groups only**. Another way is to look at the profiles of your connections and check which groups they belong to.

## Daily steps



Now it's time to look at daily steps. In the beginning those will take up more time than anticipated but very quickly you will find a routine that works for you and then the time spent for this activity will become much less.

### A suggestion of a daily to-do list on social media:

1. On Twitter check your mentions and private messages, respond if necessary
2. Check the lists you've set up for your keywords and look for interesting information to either add your own comment to, or share with your network
3. On LinkedIn check all your notifications and act appropriately. Be aware that a lot of people send spam messages, so just ignore these. You will quickly be able to figure those out and simply pass by.
4. Read the stream and pulse news to find interesting information to like, comment and/or share with your own network

All of these actions are reactive, meaning you react to the things happening on the network.

**Remember to be helpful in all your engagements** and very soon you will enjoy a positive reputation.

## Send your own updates

On Twitter it is quite common to **tweet several times throughout the day**. With 140 characters only it is important to come to the point quickly. It's the perfect vehicle to have a public conversation in your down time, when you have to wait in a queue somewhere, sit in a taxi, wait at the gate to your flight, etc. Find those moments, pull out your phone and check your Twitter.

Bear in mind that in the beginning, when your profile is still small and you aren't connected to many people yet, it often feels like talking to the wall. You will wonder "is there anyone listening at all?". **The answer is: yes!** Most people will only read your updates and never like or comment, much less share.

Don't throw in the towel, keep going and remember to make your status updates tick at least one of these boxes: **interesting, educational or entertaining.**

On LinkedIn people usually don't post updates as often. Many will share links that are of professional relevance. And of course it is a great platform to publish your longer articles and thoughts pieces.



# Why wait? Take the free demo and trial today...

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