5 Steps

TO **jumpstart** YOUR

Social Media Presence

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Contents.

Welcome!

Thanks so much for picking up this free guide to jumpstarting your social media presence! I'm thrilled you're here and have decided to take this important step in growing your online brand.

Social media is a great tool for driving traffic to your website, building an engaged online community, converting lurkers into consumers, humanizing your brand, and proving yourself as a relevant thought leader within your industry. But before you can do any of those things, you need to set yourself up with strong profiles and a reliable voice all your own.

In this PDF, we'll go through things like picking the outlets that meet your brand's needs, finding content and conversations that bring you fans, and building a strategy that fits your busy life. **So let's do this thing!**

Step 1: Pick Your Platforms

Finding the social platforms that are right for you is very much like having a cosmopolitan girl's dream shoe collection. She may not have all the shoes in the world, but she has searched and scoured until she found the perfect work shoes, the perfect party shoes, the perfect dancing shoes, etc.

Each pair has been carefully selected for a specific situation and must meet certain criteria. She probably tried on hundreds of pairs (and maybe even bought and returned a few) before finding the ones that fit just right, looked the best, and were perfectly appropriate for the occassion at hand.

Similarly, **you've got to "try on" a variety of social platforms** before discovering which ones engage your fans, make your efforts shine, and meet the varying needs of your brand.

With infinite social platforms out there, my recommendation is to only **pick 3 or 4** out of the masses and really invest the time and effort to do them right. You **do not** need to buy every pair of discount shoes on the rack.

Ideally, you want 1 PRIMARY platform and 1-3 SECONDARY platforms.

Most people tend to pick **Facebook** or **Twitter** as their primary, but **Google+** is also a great option, especially if your main goal is to boost your SEO results. Some options for secondary platforms include: **Instagram**, **Pinterest**, **Vine**, **Flickr**, **FourSquare**, **YouTube**, **GetGlue**, **Spotify**, **SoundCloud**, **Tumblr**, and many more.

One of the great things about most secondary platforms is that they can be easily integrated with your primary for dual posting. A prime example of this is Instagram, which allows you to effortlessly connect to your Twitter and your Facebook and post to all three at once like the efficient, multitasking boss you know you want to be.

As you're making choices for primary and secondary outlets, remember that it takes a little bit of trial and error to figure out where your fans hang out. Just like you might

quickly learn that showing off your new Louboutins at your nephew's soccer game might not have been the best idea, the more you experiment the more you'll find that **certain types of content shine best on certain outlets**.

For example: if you are a DJ, you definitely want to be on SoundCloud so that music lovers can find and share your tracks. If you're all about green smoothie recipes, you probably want to post photos of your latest blender masterpiece on Instagram or Pinterest.

Think about where your content will be best received, but also where you feel most comfortable posting. **We want fashion AND function, people, because ain't nobody got time for shoes that pinch your feet.** If you absolutely hate the user experience on Google+, then you aren't going to use it. If your thoughts cannot be contained in 140 characters with links and hashtags and mentions and relevant content – Twitter will be a nightmare for you. **And if it's a nightmare for you, how can you expect your fans to feel engaged?**

Lastly, consider how much time you have to invest in social media before making a commitment to your platforms. The less time you have, the more important these choices are going to be. It's much better to be posting consistent, high-value content on **one** platform than sporadic, spammy content on **all** the platforms.

You want to be delivering enough content to stay relevant as an industry leader and keep them coming back for more, but not so much that your fans feel like they are being bombarded or so little that your fans feel forgotten. It's definitely a balancing act, but experiment with different outlets and intensities to see what **feels right for you and your fans**.

Step 2: Brand Yourself

One of the keys to building a strong online presence is maintaining consistency across your various platforms. Whether a fan is on your website, your Facebook page, your Twitter profile, your YouTube page, or whatever…. they should be able to tell without a doubt that these are ALL subsets of YOUR brand. **Think of it as your digital uniform.** By definition, you want every representative of your brand to be wearing the same uniform.

There are 2 critical parts to building your digital uniform: picking a username and designing your profiles.

+ Picking a username

As a general rule, you want to steer away from numbers, underscores, cheeky spelling alternatives, unfamiliar acronyms, and other easy to manipulate/forget/confuse variables.

Here are a few really BAD examples:
- sxyroger4589
- NYCAPON
- Big_TV_4_U

The first one is just inappropriate and random. It doesn't tell me anything about the brand except that maybe there's a fit guy named Roger involved. The second one…. well, what does it stand for? New York City Association of Pissed Off Nuns? Not Your Cat's Aching Paws Or Nose? Who knows? Not me. And the third one looks spammy, but also has too many opportunities for human error. Someone might think it's actually BigTVForYou or BigTV_4_You or any of the hundreds of other possible combinations. Avoid, avoid, avoid.

Select a username that is professional, relevant, and easy to remember. Then **reserve it on every platform you are even mildly considering to adopt**. If you're unsure as to whether or not Pinterest will be a good fit for your brand, reserve it anyways. Always better to be safe than sorry!

Use the same username on ALL your chosen platforms so that it's easy for your friends, fans, and followers to find you EVERYWHERE. (Meaning your Twitter handle, your Instagram username, and Pinterest username are all the same – no variations.) If you can't get the same username on all your chosen platforms because someone else has already claimed it, I highly recommend picking a different one. Consistency across the board is so essential and such an easy step to take when it comes to your digital uniform!

+ Designing your profiles

One of my greatest and easiest tips when it comes to designing your digital spaces is to use the same photos and basic design elements across all your platforms. Whether it's your logo, a headshot, patterns/colors that correspond with your site's design/color scheme – **keep it uniform so that those images and colors become synonymous with your brand**.

Pick photos that are relevant, appropriately sized, and inviting. Your profile photo should be professional, but doesn't need to be a stoic photo of your company CEO in a suit. **This is the face for your social media profile, not your driver's license!** Social interactions are meant to start conversations with people like you – so let people actually see the real you. Use a selfie. Wear lots of accessories. Throw on some purple lipstick. Find the perfect lighting. Smile! Just…. keep your pants on.

Here's a quick rundown of the types of photos/images/logos I recommend keeping handy in a folder on your computer or hard drive:
  • Headshots/portrait shots (2-3 options)
  • Brand logo by itself
  • Brand logo with small variations or added graphics (great for cover photos)
  • A favicon or small square version of your logo
  • A fun pattern that incorporates your brand's colors and can be easily tiled (great for your Twitter background or cover photo)

I always find it easier to **make/gather all of these images at once to help ensure they are consistent with one another**. And don't forget to keep multiple, high-resolution options for each in the ever changing world of social media. You never know when that alternate logo will come in handy.

Step 3: Share Content

Once you've picked your platforms and built your profiles, it's time to start creating, finding, and sharing content. There are **3 types of content** that are best to share on social media platforms in equal quantities:

1. **Conversion content.** This encompasses things like blog posts, promotional announcements, sales page links, and other types of content that will directly convert into subscribers or sales for your business.

2. **Industry relevant content.** Your social platform isn't just a place to discuss your business - it's a hub to prove yourself as a relevant thought leader in your industry. You know what's trending. You know what's up and coming. You've been bookmarking interesting reads from 'round the web. Share that information with your fans and establish yourself as an authority figure on topics that matter.

3. **Humanizing content.** Social media is a great way to remind your fans and customers that behind those big brand walls are real people. Share personal tidbits to encourage real connections between the people that build your brand and the people that support your brand.

This **rule of thirds** helps keep your content fresh and relatable. Nobody wants to be bombarded with the same call to action over and over and over and over again. Switch things up and remember to have fun with it!

As long as you use common sense, it's hard to go too far on social media. But just in case you need a guideline, I'll give you my best piece of advice to avoid oversharing: **"If you wouldn't say it to a stranger on the street, it probably doesn't belong in a tweet."**

+ Hashtag How-To

When posting content, it's important to find relevant conversations to insert yourself into. This means identifying what you want to use social media to talk about, finding those conversations, and building relationships with the people having them.

Hashtags are marked keywords that help categorize your content and are the easiest way to search for very general or very specific discussions on social media.

You can do a search for #Love or #ShoeSalesInNYC and find an equally impressive list of results for both topics.

There are 3 main ways to use the hashtag:

1. **To build a digital clubhouse.** Whether your topic of discussion is a class, a conference, a holiday, or even a TV show.... something's happening and you want to share your thoughts with all the other aficionados 'round the web. And maybe even read theirs too! Lots of events generate unique hashtags for social media conversations these days to collect all the chatter under one umbrella. These tend to be very specific and generally have an expiration date (when the buzz surrounding the event simmers down) or a trending time frame (when a TV show is on every week). Some good examples are #Oscars2014, #Thanksgiving, and #WWDC.

2. **To highlight keywords.** Sometimes we want to highlight a high impact keyword in the content we are sharing and use it to categorize the post. This helps us offer + find content, products, articles, images, and more related to that specific topic. These are usually very general to encompass more broad topics, but can sometimes be hyper specific. Think along the lines of #ebook, #marketing, #NYC.

3. **To offer an aside, a snarky comment, or comic relief.** It's no secret that hashtag culture has taken on a life of it's own. Sometimes we use hashtags to add a quick note about our mood, to incorporate some modern slang, to poke fun at any/all situations, or even just to be obnoxious. I generally save these for my more personal social media posts, but if I'm feeling particularly sassy, they might slip into some of the more professional stuff too. Some of my all time favorite (and somewhat cringeworthy) examples are #blessed, #bae, and #iwokeuplikethis.

Search for conversations about any topic and then comment, favorite, retweet, +1, or reply to statements that you agree or disagree with. **Social media is often used as a digital soapbox to promote or protest just about every topic out there.** Think of hashtags as the keys to all the discussion doors being built 'round the digital sphere.

Step 4: Gather Data

So you've started posting things on your social sites. Fabulous! But maybe you're wondering if all this social media stuff is **worth the time and effort you're investing**. Excellent question! Let's take a look at some of my best tips for tracking results, gathering data, and measuring your efforts.

+ Important questions to keep in mind

- What's working? What's NOT working?
- Who is my main demographic? Who keeps coming back for more? **Does this match my perception of my target audience?**
- What are people coming back for more of? Photos? Articles? Videos? Quotes? Witty status updates? Discount codes? Selfies? **What do the people want?**
- When are my fans most active? **When is the best time to post?** Does the majority of my community check this social network while having their morning coffees, or are they more inclined to check-in after dinner?
- Are my efforts bringing in new people, losing my existing fans, or are we just plateauing? Why?
- Is there something I should be posting more of? Less of? **What should I do differently moving forward?**
- **Does this still feel manageable and valuable to me?** Am I feeling overwhelmed with social obligations and not seeing the results I want to see?

+ 4 FREE and Easy to Use Measuring Tools

1. **Facebook Insights.** Once you hit 30 likes on your page (not your personal profile, but rather your business/brand/product page), Facebook starts tracking the number of Views , the Total Reach, and the Virality of each of your posts. But that is literally just the tip of the iceberg – you can also see how many people clicked on your post, or how many visits your Facebook page has had this day/week/month, or even where your fans live on a map. Super comprehensive and super useful.
2. **Twitter Analytics.** This is hands down the most powerful tool to measure your Twitter efforts. Analytics offers tons of information, but some of the most important data to consider are Follower Interests, Engagement Rates, Tweet Reach, best times to post, and your follower breakdown by region.

3. **Tweet Reach.** This tool allows you to generate a report for individual user accounts OR for individual hashtags. The report will show the account/ hashtag's reach, exposure, activity summary, top 40 contributors, most retweeted tweets, and the last 50 tweets from that person or with that hashtag.

4. **Bitly.** When sharing your own blog posts or web articles on Facebook or Twitter, be sure to use a tool like bitly to shorten long URLs. Not only does it save you some characters in your posts, but Bitly also saves the link and tracks it's reach in all the places you use it. How many people clicked that link you tweeted out yesterday? Bitly knows. How many other people shortened, saved, and shared this link? Bitly holds the answers you seek. Use this tool. It's pure magic.

Social media tracking can be really fun – it's exciting to see the real time results of your efforts! You can either check in every few days sporadically or set aside a chunk of time every month to do an in-depth analysis, but definitely check your stats every once in a while to make sure your efforts are being seen by the right people on the right platforms.

Step 5: Build a Strategy

Ok, so. We've picked our platforms, built our profiles, shared content, and gathered data. Now what? Well now you build a strategy!

Take all that data, combine it with the lessons you've learned about social media and your social habits so far, and start making an actual plan for your social efforts. Just sitting down randomly and sharing whatever comes into your head is great, but for social media to actually be a useful tool for your business, you need to think about the **5Ws**:

- **Who** is in my target audience?
- **What** kinds of content are they craving?
- **When** are they most active on social media?
- **Where** are they most active?
- **Why** does this feel like a good fit for my business/brand/budget?

Once you have those answers, start making a plan to share certain kinds of content on a loose schedule. I'm not saying that you need to sit down and plan out exactly what you're going to post to your Twitter for the next month, but maybe have a rough idea of how many times a week you'd like to be posting on your various social platforms. **Make a list of guidelines and really stick to them!**

If it's feeling like too much pressure or work to be sustainable, consider **hiring** a virtual assistant, marketing manager, or intern. Have them curate content for you, respond to comments/mentions, run analysis reports, or schedule posts. Take your social marketing strategy seriously and **invest the time, effort, money** that you need to keep the ball rolling.

To help make your life easier, here are 3 of my favorite social scheduling tools:

1. **HootSuite.** This is a great tool for scheduling Twitter and Facebook posts, but also for aggregating all your various social media feeds in one nifty browser window. Perfect for the person who wants to keep all their social media streams in one place as opposed to eighteen different tabs.

2. **Buffer.** Same concept as HootSuite minus the stream aggregation, but completely different interface. Buffer also offers some built-in analytics and tracking tools alongside its easy to use scheduling software.

3. **CoSchedule.** This is a paid service, but I'm obsessed with the interface. Super sleek and easy to navigate and lays out your social posts AND your WordPress blog posts all in one nifty ACTUAL calendar. In my opinion, it is worth every penny.

Important Reminder: There is no formula for social media marketing. What works for one person, might not work for you. Just because your industry idol is massively popular on Instagram, doesn't necessarily mean that it will be the best fit for you. Just like any marketing strategy, efforts need to be watched carefully and tweaked frequently.

And that's it!

Congratulations - you made it through! I hope that you've enjoyed this little guide. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me via email or on my Facebook or Twitter profiles. **Now get out there and start establishing your social presence!!**

About npamani...

My name is Nicole and I'm a Digital Strategist & Copywriter. I help solopreneurs, small businesses, and big brands structure their businesses and bring their big launches to fruition.

Whether you need help building a mailing list, promoting new products/services, planning your next e-course, or overhauling your whole business model… I'll be right at your side with timelines and to-do lists galore.

I've got the big ideas, savvy, and skills to reach your **target audience** and bring in new, **long-term clients**. I understand that you're not just looking to make the sale, you want to develop lasting relationships and develop a community of **dedicated fans and followers**.

When I'm not furiously scribbling down lists or cranking out content, I can be found planning my next big trip, testing new makeup at the 59th St. Sephora, or cooking up a storm in my tiny kitchen. I live for food, friends, and fun.

If you'd like to learn more about me and the services I offer, please visit: http://npamani.com. Thanks!

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