



# SOCIAL NETWORKING GUIDE

Are you addicted to social media? In limited doses Social Media is good for you, but without a plan you can find yourself wasting hours every day. So we don't suggest you go cold turkey and give up social media, you just need a plan to manage your addiction.

This is our 12 Step Social Media Process to help you decide when, where, why and how to use social networks for business.

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## STEP 1: SET OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

Start by asking yourself why you are participating on social networks. Select any or all that apply from the list below

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand Awareness                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Track Competitors          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Build Professional Networks     | <input type="checkbox"/> Track industry trends      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Showcase Expertise/Portfolio    | <input type="checkbox"/> Find news                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Launch new products or services | <input type="checkbox"/> Find Resources/Tools       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive Web Traffic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay in touch with clients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lead Generation                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contests/Promotions             | <input type="checkbox"/> Find Employees             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct Research                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                |

Social Media can do all these things, but you need to be realistic when you set your objectives. Select no more than three to start.

What are you primary objectives?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## How will you measure success?

When asked, almost 80% of small business owners will say they use social media to build brand awareness. The question is how do they measure whether or not it is working? As you select your objectives think about how you will chart your progress.

It is easy to track leads or web traffic but harder to measure brand awareness increases as a result of your social actions. List three metrics you will use to define success.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP TWO: DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

The correct answer to the question who is your audience is not, “anyone who will listen.” The primary principal is focus. When you know who you are talking to, it is easier to decide which social networks make sense for you.

Characteristics like age, income, marital status, interests and hobbies may help define an audience for a consumer product. Size of company, specific industry, or the job title or level of seniority may be relevant factors when defining companies to target. In some instances you may want to reach influencers, and not your primary customer.

### Describe who you are trying to reach

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP THREE: MAKE CONNECTIONS

It is called **social media** so you need to be social. Invest the time to make the experience more interactive for you and your business.

**Join groups** – Both LinkedIn and Facebook have private communities of people who share common interests. Treat these groups the way you would a face to face networking event. Look for people to connect with and share your expertise, but don't use these groups as a platform to push advertising messages.

**Connect with thought leaders** – Look for people who share interesting content, have large groups of contacts and followers and are engaged on the platform. (Skip the celebrities for whom social media is simply a one way megaphone.) Share their content, ask questions and comment on what they are sharing. They may not respond directly, but their followers are likely to take notice of you.

**Move between on and offline** – When you come home from a networking event be sure to connect to people on LinkedIn. Conversely, if you are heading to a conference or meetup, be sure to post that information on social media and ask other's who will be there to connect with you.

## STEP FOUR: FIND YOUR VOICE

There is no one right answer for all companies. Your social voice should be consistent with your brand image. You may choose a serious, playful, sarcastic or sympathetic tone. The trick is not to let that happen by accident. Defining the tone and voice for your company allows multiple people to contribute and support your social media program.

Think of your brand as a person. Describe the traits of that person to make it easier to choose the right words.

What are the traits of your brand personality?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP FIVE: CHOOSE YOUR TOPICS

Go back and look at your objectives and target customer. Make a list of topics which make sense for you to talk about and focus the majority of your time on these topics. This doesn't mean you can't talk about anything else, but the more relevant you are around a specific type of content, the easier it will be to build a loyal following.

Also once you select your primary topics you can begin connecting to other influencers on those same topics.

### Primary Topics

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP SIX: PICK YOUR PLATFORM (S)

Refer back to step two. If your objective is to reach C-level executives, you don't need to spend a lot of time on Facebook. On the other hand, if you are trying to reach teenage girls, you might want to look closely at Instagram or maybe even Snap.

As you evaluate platforms, also consider how much time you will need to create a viable presence on each platform. Instagram works even if you only share one awesome image every few days. On the other hand Twitter works best if you have time to interact and share multiple updates every day.

### Primary Platforms

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP SEVEN: CREATE A SCHEDULE

Social media can be a huge time suck. One way to manage you addiction is to set boundaries. Plan ahead, schedule some basic content to fill the timeline then set aside one or two short periods of time each day to actively interact. Check notifications, respond and actively see out others.

When are you most likely to have time to concentrate on social media?

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## STEP EIGHT: BE ORIGINAL

Everyone in your industry can write essentially the same tips on how to use your products or services. Your challenge is to look for new ways to tell familiar stories. Share real case studies, skip the stock photography and use real photos, talk about your experiences. Introduce your employees and show some of the behind the scenes of your business.

On social media, don't be afraid to show the lighter side of your brand.

### Brainstorm Three Unique Company Stories

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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## STEP NINE: BE VISUAL

With a smart phone in your pocket, your camera is always with you. Take lots of photos and use them to enhance your written content. Photo editing tools on Instagram, and enhanced galleries, slide shows and carousels on Facebook give you tremendous creative freedom.

Take photos around the office or when you meet with clients and peers. Be sure to tag these people when you share the image on social media. People like to see themselves.

What type of pictures will you take today?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP TEN: BE RESPONSIVE

When fans and followers reach out and comment on something you say, respond. Remember that social media is about ego and when you notice someone, they are more likely to notice you next time.

## STEP ELEVEN: USE TOOLS WISELY

There is a huge difference between using tools to supplement your social activities and using the tools to run them. We schedule 5 – 6 posts to run though out the day on Twitter and one update a day on Facebook and LinkedIn.

This keeps the Roundpeg brand in the news feed for our followers. We add updates as they happen and respond to comments and questions so we don't start to sound like a robot. We also use free time to seek out others and share their content.



Facebook and Twitter both have native scheduling tools built in. LinkedIn does not. If you want to control all your content from one location, you might want to consider using a tool like Hootsuite or Buffer.

**Hootsuite** – Allows you to manage multiple accounts both personal and professional across multiple platforms. The dashboard allows you to view and interact on those platforms from one centralized location.

**Buffer** is purely a scheduling tool, but the browser extension allows you to tag content anywhere you see it and instantly share it or put it in your schedule. You can create status updates without switching to an individual network.

## STEP TWELVE: MEASURE AND START AGAIN

If what you are doing is working, keep doing it. If it isn't, change. Recovery from a social addiction is an ongoing process. Refer back to your objectives. If your goal is to increase web traffic, review your Google analytics to see which social media platforms are driving traffic. If your goal is leads, then count the leads and adjust if the results aren't what you were looking for.

You can't really cure a social networking addiction, but you can manage it and grow your business over time.