

Seven Big Ideas for Social Media Mastery

Building a social media plan can seem overwhelming; especially if you see all platforms as broadcast channels. Don't give into the invisible pressure to jump on everything all at once, all the time. And, most importantly, remember social media strategies are successful when they help people connect, not when they create more promotional noise.

The good news is it's a lot simpler than people make it. With just a few questions in mind, you can be confident and methodical as you get your ducks in a row and in the right pond. Pro tip: these questions should be revisited regularly.

1. **Where are my people?** Don't start a Snapchat account just because you read it's the fastest growing social media app today. That doesn't make it the biggest crowd or the right crowd. First, find out where the majority of your audience hanging out. Join them there. Pay attention to how they're using it, responding to other accounts, commenting and sharing (or not). When you see what resonates with your intended audience, you can refine and focus your messaging as a result. A big part of a defining a content strategy is social "listening." [Read more about that here.](#)
2. **What am I doing here?** Once you're found your people, figure out what need you're going to meet or problem you're going solve for them. Your content strategy shouldn't be driven by what you want to say, but what your people are looking for. Don't make frequency your goal; post only when you have something worthy to add to your intended audience. [Here are just a few ideas.](#)
3. **Do I know where I'm going?** After you find your people and identify your purpose, you can make a plan. Just don't overthink it. An uncomplicated cue card can give you the basic compass to build a team around and stay on track. Take a look at this sample [super simple social media framework.](#)
4. **What's on my playlist?** You don't need it to get started, but draft a content calendar when you're ready. It's just a schedule with the themes and rhythms to make sure you're talking about the right stuff at the right time in the right place. The idea here is that your communication is varied, strategic and fresh. Again, there are some fancy formats and templates out there if you look for them. But, you don't need to over engineer this thing. Take a look at this sample [super simple weekly content calendar](#) from my friend [Tiffany.](#)
5. **Who else needs to know about this?** Many times, the biggest threat to a successful social media plan doesn't have anything to do with the technology, and everything to do with people who are going to be using that technology. Give your staff and stakeholders a heads up about the new social media plan, what to expect, how it will or won't affect them, how they can participate and where to go with questions. Remind everyone social media plans are not concrete, but an evolving ecosystem the changes with the culture around it.
6. **Am I on track?** Evaluate how things are going. Celebrate and nurture what's working. Course correct or eliminate what's not. Spend less time on the things that don't fit your brand personality and more time on the things that do. Experiment with some new trials and see what you learn. Have fun with it. Make adjustments. Keep going.

7. **What are the “experts” saying?** Don’t look at articles and professional advice as a rule book, but as cues and context to apply to your situation. Despite what some people say, there is no fail-safe scientific formula. You should pay attention to best practices, but remember all expert advice has a shelf life. Check in on occasion to see what industry insiders are saying. Here are few infographics to get a good orientation.

- [Non-profit guide to when and how often to post](#)
- [How much social media gas do you need](#)
- [What’s dead and when to pounce](#)
- [2018 social media image size cheat sheet](#)
- [Pew social media demographics](#)
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