



Social Media and how it can help you

Think carefully about which social media channels to choose. Facebook, the largest social network in the world, is likely to be most relevant for retailers wanting to build a closer relationship with customers. Twitter, which has 200 million users, is probably more appealing to retailers wanting to network with other retailers.

All the networks have directions on how to set up a profile but some guidelines apply to all:

- Take time setting up your profile page. It's a window into your business and, done well, can drive people to your store, promote products and boost sales. You need to make it as impressive and easy-to-discover as possible.
- Take care with photos and take note of the dimensions recommended by the network. A picture paints a thousand words but simple is usually better.
- Update the page or profile regularly. People need a reason to visit often. Interact with visitors. Make someone responsible for it.
- Let the conversations work both ways. To build a relationship, you need to interact with your customers
- Make the most of each network's built-in tutorials and tools to maximise your social media effectiveness
- Monitor your social media presence – number of visitors, responses etc. This will tell you about your shoppers' missions, and which categories and brands are most important to them. You'll also be able to address any issues with dissatisfied customers quickly.

Facebook tips

- Include business details, such as location, products, services and contact information under the 'About' tab. Give a description of the business - make it sound positive and welcoming.
- Tell people you are on Facebook. Use other social networks, like Twitter, to post links to your Facebook page.
- Your page should be a place for conversations between you and your customers. You can ask people questions and make them feel involved with your decisions. Your page is a real online community, so you can use it as a way to gather feedback about your business.
- Use keywords in your profile and posts that people are most likely to search for in relation to your store. A key advantage of having a Facebook page for your business is that customers will be able to find you more easily from their mobile devices.

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Facebook tips (continued)

- Reward your Facebook followers by running competitions or providing exclusive deals. Many people use Facebook to find special offers that aren't available elsewhere.
- To keep a close eye on photos the business is tagged in, turn on the 'Timeline review' feature. This allows you to vet and approve tags before they appear on your profile.

Twitter tips

- Choose a profile photo that visually represents your business and fits well in a small space. This image isn't just on your profile page; it will be shown as the icon in every Tweet you post. Choose something that is instantly recognisable. Logos work well, but you can also feature a person or character.
- Your @username, also known as your handle, is your business's unique identifier on Twitter. It should be 15 characters or less and should be memorable and representative of your business so that you can be easily found. Try to promote your @username everywhere, including your website.
- Get creative with your header and showcase your business with a large, rich image. You could feature products or services, or you could edit the image to include copy highlighting a special sale or promotion.
- Use the 'Pinned Tweet' feature to get maximum exposure for your best Tweets.
- Pay special attention to the 'bio' field in the profile. You only have 160 characters so tell people why your business is unique and why they should follow you. You could also add in useful information such as opening hours and location. If you're stuck, check out other retailers' accounts for inspiration.
- Get visual and creative - followers are more likely to respond to Tweets that are fun, newsworthy and inspiring.

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