

# Digital Media Strategy Guide

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# Why should you use Social Media?

The purpose of this Digital Media Strategy is to share some basic information about how to begin using social media and other forms of communication to promote your organization and its programs. The provided information will help you to create, develop, and manage the social media presence of your organization. You can do this by utilizing the most current and up-to-date trends in digital media marketing. Social media also helps to reach people when, where and how they want to receive messages. It makes information more available and accessible to those interested in content of a particular subject matter.

Recently, social media has become a tool to raise awareness around health and social issues. Using social media has become an effective way to expand reach, foster engagement and increase access to credible, science-based health messages.

It allows for organizations to leverage social dynamics and networks to invite participation and open discussion about the messages being shared as a way to influence decisions and behaviors regarding matters of children and families.

Social media also makes these messages more available to the audience in which they benefit.

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*There are several essential parts in creating a successful social media strategy. It is important to identify the target audience, your organization's objectives or goals and the resources you are able to direct toward this project.*

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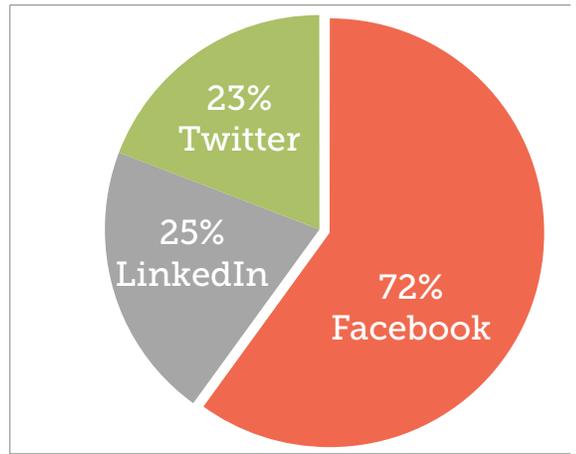
# Who uses Social Media?

Similarly to using different messages for various audiences, you should also choose your social media platform based on the same idea. Social media has become a popular outlet for sharing information throughout the last ten years, but some are more popular than others for a certain age group or demographic.

According to the Pew Research Center, 72 percent of American adults who spend time online are using Facebook, 25 percent are using LinkedIn and 23 percent are using Twitter. This information can help you determine which social media platform is the most beneficial for your organization to use to

reach your target audience. As the research shows, all of these platforms are widely used by adults who spend time online, but now you would need to look into which one is most used by the specific audience you want to reach. Your message might best be received by adults in certain age ranges, marital status, occupation, etc. You may also have an audience that is a bit broader, which may require a variety of messaging to reach all of your audiences.

The area your target audience is in can also have an impact on what social media platform might be best to reach them. For example, studies show that Twitter and Instagram are far less common to audiences living in more rural areas as compared to those living in more urban areas. Understanding how geographical locations can have an effect on your target audience will influence what platforms you should be using to reach them. Being aware of what platforms are the most used by



*72 percent of American adults who spend time online are using Facebook.*

those in your target audience will help expand your reach to those most interested in your work and it will lessen the chance of you not getting the best results possible from using your efforts on an audience that isn't paying attention to your messages.

### Facebook Demographics

*Among internet users, the % who use Facebook*

	Internet users
Total	72%
Men	66
Women	77
White, Non-Hispanic	70
Black, Non-Hispanic (n=85)	67
Hispanic	75
18-29	82
30-49	79
50-64	64
65+	48
High school grad or less	71
Some college	72
College+	72
Less than \$30,000/yr	73
\$30,000-\$49,999	72
\$50,000-\$74,999	66
\$75,000+	78
Urban	74
Suburban	72
Rural	67

Source: Pew Research Center, March 17-April 12, 2015.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Who is your Target Audience?

Determining your target audience is an important aspect of your social media strategy. You want to be sure that the messages you are sharing are in line with the beliefs and lifestyles of the audience you are trying to reach. Your target audience is dependent on the services you are providing and promoting. You want to determine what population is most in need if those services and what types of messaging are they most likely to be responsive to.

By focusing your prevention messages to targeted populations, you are able to provide useful and specific information to those individuals working in the child welfare field and have similar mission and goals as your organization. You can create your messages with the intent of providing the resources and tools needed for service providers, families and community members to prevent abuse or neglect and where to seek help in the intervention of abuse and neglect.

Pinpointing a specific audience will help you know how to create the best messaging for that particular group. The tone, language and formality being used would differ based on the demographics of your audience. For instance, you wouldn't post the same messaging to target teens as you would adults. These two groups are at different stages in their lives and have different values; therefore they will likely not respond to the same types of messaging. However, the same product or service could be marketed towards them but the way in which that marketing is done should be different.



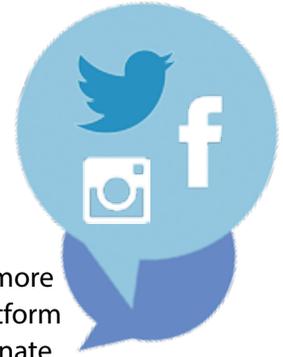
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# What Social Media Outlets are Right for You?



## Facebook:

You can use Facebook as a means of delivering key messages to your target audience about your mission, programs, and resources. By offering valuable information, you are more likely to generate a larger following. Facebook allows users to share updates and other content in real-time. This lets followers feel connected by having the most current information available. By using Facebook, you are capable of sharing more content-rich posts, including images and videos.

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Facebook also has other beneficial capabilities such as event pages, groups and applications.

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It is important to note the difference between a Facebook page and an individual Facebook profile. Facebook pages are utilized by organizations and businesses while Facebook profiles are for individuals. Unlike profiles, pages are moderated by page administrators who log on to post content or monitor comments and they do not receive notifications when users take action. It is important that you have a designated person to monitor activity happening on the page throughout the day.

## Tips

Always have a call to action in your posts. This is your opportunity to invite your audience to help you reach your goals by doing something. Your call to action can be something very simple to something that could require a little more commitment. This can include: clicking to learn more, making a comment and sharing stories to add to the conversation, sharing the post to spread the word, donating by clicking here and more.

Develop a comment policy and include it in your profile. This will serve as a warning regarding your response to comments that are inappropriate or derogatory. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Media Comment Policy serves as a good example to follow: [Social Media at CDC](#).

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Make sure the first part of your message packs a punch. You want to intrigue someone enough to read more or click on your links.

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Images and videos are great because they are eye catching on such an over saturated platform.

## Twitter:

Twitter is more than a platform to disseminate information; it provides opportunities to listen to conversations and gather information in real-time.

Twitter also allows for real-time sharing with your audience from an event to highlight key points of a presentation, audience engagement and comments, and play by play moments. This is known as live tweeting. It allows followers not attending to follow your events and feel connected. A variety of activities are performed by Twitter users including sharing links, videos, photos and retweeting material posted by others.

## Tips

Don't forget to fill in the biography section of your profile. Make the contents of this section the first tweet from your new profile.

Be concise. You only have 140 characters so make them count.

Use hashtags that relate to your mission that are already in use. Do your research and don't always try to reinvent the wheel.

Use shortened URLs to lead followers to your website for further information. Shortened URLs allow you to save space for more informative content. You can use sites like [bitly.com](#) and [tinyurl.com](#).

Post regularly to keep your followers engaged.

## Instagram:

Another social media platform that is somewhat newer than the ones previously mentioned is Instagram. It is most commonly used by a demographic used by the 18-28 year-old demographic. Its focus on imagery makes it a very interesting platform to its users. This also makes it a more difficult medium for organizations and businesses. There is a need for quality photos, images and videos and someone who knows how to edit them in the best way possible. If you have the skills and knowledge for images and video, then Instagram can be used for marketing and promotion very successfully.

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Instagram has proven to be an effective means of communicating with audiences using visuals and short messages.

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It is a great platform for sharing things like PSAs, infographics, and images from special events in real time. It is also a fun way to include community members in your posts. When people volunteer or donate, etc., you can share those photos on Instagram. It is also a great way to spread awareness campaigns. An example would be the ice bucket challenge from a few years ago. People nominated friends and family members to either dump a bucket of ice water on themselves or donate to the ALS Association and to them nominate more people to do the same. This campaign went viral and raised a lot of awareness for this disease as well as solicited donations. As you can see there are many ways

that Instagram can be used to your organization's advantage.

## LinkedIn:

LinkedIn can also serve as a very effective tool for organizations to promote their work.

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With over 380 million users, it is the leading social media platform for professionals to connect with other professionals or organizations in similar or like-minded fields.

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Organizations can create "company pages" on LinkedIn to promote programs or services that they offer. Users can follow your page for updates just as they can on Facebook and Twitter. Employees can also contribute to the success of your organization's page by promoting it through their personal accounts, which can be linked to the company page. You can also increase your organization's exposure by creating or participating in groups on LinkedIn. You can share information about webinars, speaking engagements or other educational opportunities to help increase your organization's visibility and credibility. When creating a company page be sure to include an eye-catching cover photo and give as much description in your bio as possible in order to draw in followers.

## Email Marketing:

You can utilize an automated email marketing system to further your communication efforts with your audience. Consider sending a quarterly newsletter containing

up to date information regarding programs and services, grants being released for bid, updated policy and legislation, statistics and research, and any other information that is relevant to your audience regarding your mission. The content of a newsletter should correlate to what is being shared on Facebook. The newsletter also provides a call to action inviting subscribers to like and follow social media pages, volunteer in programs or donate funds.

## Talking Points:

The purpose of using talking points is to provide brief explanations, descriptions or facts about your organization or a particular program or event. They should be concise and to the point, so that they are easy to remember. They are not meant to be read verbatim or distributed, instead they should serve as a tool.

The number of talking points may vary depending on the topic. When writing your talking points, try to limit the length of each one individually.

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Each talking point should be able to serve as a standalone sound bite.

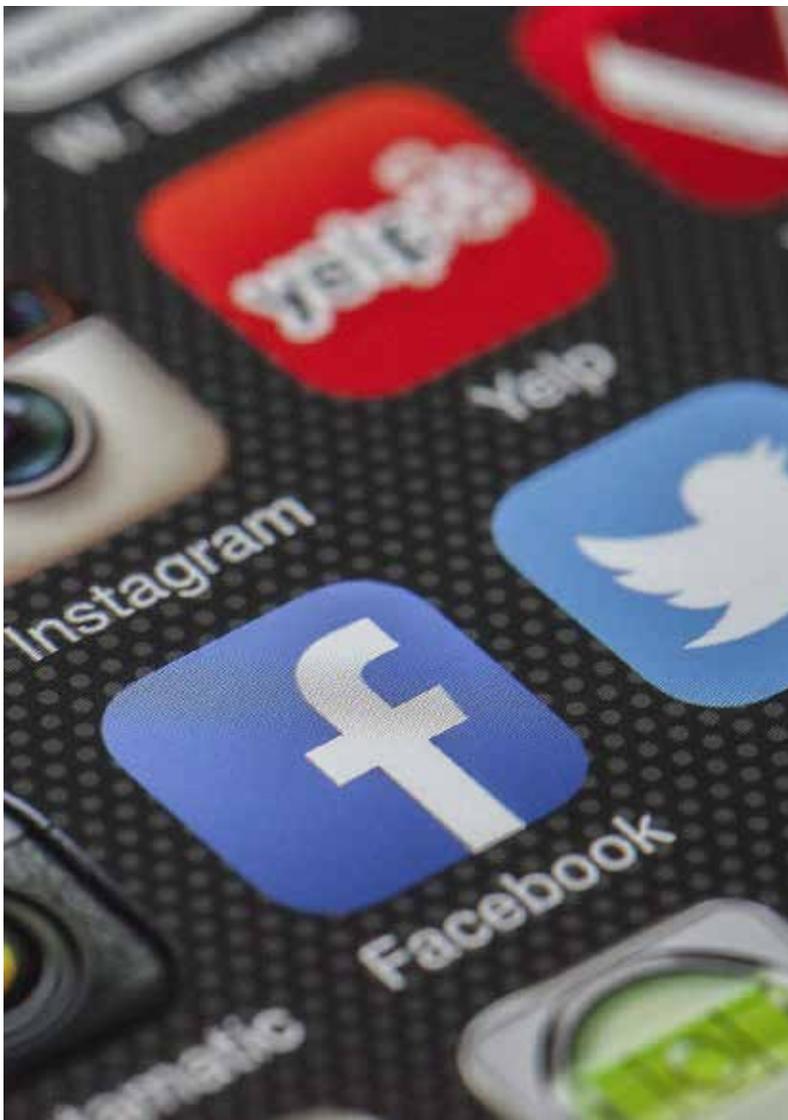
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The reasoning for this is if and when you are asked questions by the media for quotes regarding your program. Your organization's talking points should all be complete enough to be understood and communicate a message about your mission, without being too wordy to fit in a media sound bite. Remember to keep them concise and to the point. Write them in a list form using numbers, bullets, etc. to separate out each statement.

# How can you measure your success?

The success of your Facebook page can be measured with analytics. The analytics you would likely track include traffic driven back to your website, influence and reach, and your followers interactions and engagement through comments, likes and shares. You can monitor things like page likes, engagement on each piece of content posted, number of likes and number of shares. After a few weeks, evaluate the frequency of your posts. Initially, you can try posting at various times throughout the day and see what time of day receives the most engagement. This will give you a better idea of the best time to post to reach your target audience. You can also track how many followers were brought to your Facebook page through your website button. This can help you to see if you are adequately promoting your social media in the most beneficial way through your website. For posts that link back to our website, you can also track how much more traffic was brought in through social media clicks.

Monitoring this information regularly will help you to keep your social media content interesting for your followers. Recognizing what you are doing that is getting the most engagement will help you tailor future posts to your audience's liking. It is also important to realize that you will likely be changing your strategy over time as the social media platform, as well as your audience, evolves.



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# What type of content will we share?

Once you have determined your target audience and what your organization's social media goals are, you will be able to determine the type of content that you should be sharing. When choosing what content to share, utilize demographic and user data to create messaging. The posts you develop for dissemination through social media should be accurate, consistent and evidence-based.

When developing your content it is also important that you encourage followers to share the information. Social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube encourage sharing among users. You can create a YouTube channel to host videos and share them on your Facebook page, encouraging your followers to share them as well. Social media allows for the tailoring of messages to promote action and listen to what people are saying about health-related topics in your community. Starting conversations with your social media followers can foster meaningful communication between your organization and your audience that can enable further sharing and interaction.

## Tips for sharing content:

Include information on your profile page about your agency or program. If possible, also include a link back to your organization's website to drive traffic to your website.

Think about your audience when choosing images. What kinds of images will be most helpful to them or best portray your communication objectives? Ensure your images are culturally-appropriate.

Be thoughtful about selecting, naming, describing and tagging images. Do you need to post all of the images available or will posting only the best images better serve the viewers?

Consider engaging online communities and encouraging viewers to add tags, notes/reviews and comments. By tagging a page on Facebook, others viewing the post are able to click on the tag and be taken directly to the tagged page. For more information about "tagging", click [here](#).

