

the assignment of staff to be responsible for preparing and carrying out platform-specific tactics and the development and dissemination of content on the various platforms.

SELECTING PLATFORM-SPECIFIC TACTICS

Each social media platform requires unique and customized tactics to successfully execute the company's overall strategies for reaching its marketing goals. The following sections summarize the marketing tactics for key social media platforms as discussed in earlier chapters. Chapter 5 discusses Facebook and LinkedIn. Chapter 6 discusses marketing strategies for Twitter. Chapter 8 discusses YouTube, while Chapter 9 covers Instagram. Mobile marketing strategies and examples are the subject of Chapter 12.

FACEBOOK Facebook is the most popular social network, having grown from 750 million users in 2011³² to 900 million in 2015 (see Table 15.1). It is especially well suited for interacting with end consumers. Although not exhaustive, the following list of Facebook tactics can strengthen a brand by improving brand awareness, recognition, and perception as discussed in Chapter 5.

Facebook tactics:

- If not already done, create an officially branded company Facebook page (not profile) that represents the business and allows users to follow or become fans of a company.
- Customize the page to reflect the company's style and values, but provide some content distinct from the firm's primary website.
- Frequently update the company page with content that is relevant and engaging for Facebook users—no more than three updates per day. Be persistent, consistent, and genuine.
- Focus on content:
 - Create share-worthy content that encourages further discussions among the target market to advance a brand's position by making the brand more memorable or personable.
 - Content needs to be light, engaging, and informative.
 - Offer a special deal or value.
 - Give away free products to encourage likes so that the company's brand will spread rapidly through Facebook friend networks.
 - Run contests or offer discounts to Facebook members to convince people to follow a Facebook profile. Contests should be tailored to the product being offered.
 - Give useful tips, or ask open-ended questions that will interest the audience.
 - Not every content item must be original; sharing links to interesting items can also be valuable.
- Facebook is about personal connections, so letting some personality through in updates and giving a human voice to a brand are some of the most powerful advantages of this social networking platform. Engage with users to create an emotional connection; this engagement will build brand loyalty. Used correctly, Facebook is an excellent tool for business-to-consumer marketing.
- Facebook users are often picky about which items they will like. To get an idea of what sort of content to post, look at other Facebook pages—particularly those of businesses offering a similar product or service to the one being marketed—and see which statuses or comments are being liked the most. This investigation will

give some insight into what potential fans want to see. Often less serious posts will be liked more, so keep content funny, personable, and entertaining.

- To gain viewers for a page, put links on other websites, email signatures, business cards, and outgoing communications.
- To make the URL for the Facebook page easy to write and remember, use a shorter vanity URL. A customized URL makes the page more memorable, increasing the chance Facebook users will visit and become fans.
- Use Facebook ads to generate traffic to the company website.
- Use the Facebook ad tool to specify race, gender, interests, and location; the Estimated Reach section can give an idea of how many users fit the target market. Facebook ad costs can be set very low (well under \$100 per month) depending on the budget.

Figure 15.9 shows how some of these Facebook tactics can be customized for a specific company.

TWITTER Twitter is currently the second most popular social media platform, with over 200 million unique monthly visitors in 2011,³³ growing to 310 million in 2015 (see Table 15.1). With Twitter it is possible to instantly reach a large (often mobile) audience with brief but focused messages, making it a great marketing platform for interacting with users on the go. These features make Twitter especially useful for customer service. Marketing on Twitter is discussed in Chapter 6.

Twitter tactics:

- Customize the company's profile page, starting with a good avatar picture and customized background, text color, and company description.
- The profile's description should complement the avatar by providing context and important details. Writing space is limited, so the description will have to be concise.
- A custom-made background image can display personality, a longer explanation of the product or services, and past accomplishments. The background is also a place to put URLs for other social networking profiles, websites, or blogs.
- Use Twitter to start a discussion or to participate in an ongoing conversation.

Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social network, with more than 900 million monthly users. It is especially well suited for interacting with existing and potential consumers. Hence XYZ Coffee Company will use its Facebook presence to strengthen the brand by improving brand awareness, recognition, and perception, especially with the affluent youth target market.

Following are the key tactics that will be implemented on Facebook to help build the company brand:

- Post content that is of interest to the youth target market such as popular coffee drinks, music, teenage icons, and fashion, funny YouTube videos, community events, etc.
- Post content three times each day
- Light or funny ads to direct traffic to company website
- Promote offers, coupons, promotions, and events
- Participate in industry pages
- Include links to company Facebook page on all outbound communications such as promotional materials, brochures, and email signatures, as well as on the company website

Figure 15.9 Facebook Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company

- Twitter can operate as a “global human search engine” in almost any field of expertise. It is possible to find someone on Twitter with relevant information to share.
- Use *targeted follow* strategy—search for and follow target markets and always follow back. Use the phrase “You should follow me on Twitter.”
- Putting out updates when people are online to see them is essential to make an impact; research shows that midday and midweek tend to produce the best results.
- Promptly respond to questions and comments.
- Providing useful information can build a brand’s reputation and thought leadership.
- Ask for opinions or product reviews to seek feedback and engage the followers.
- Being kind, polite, and appreciative helps to grease the apparatus and keep it running smoothly.
- Tweet things that are of interest to your target market. Be sure to use appropriate hashtags.
- Twitter profile must answer the question “Why follow and listen to the messages being offered?”
- Offer special deals on Twitter including coupons, promotional discounts, special products, and free shipping.
- Use Twitter to increase brand awareness, connect with customers, provide support, and distribute information.
- Use Twitter to identify influential people and those who have common interests in order to create potentially valuable relationships.
- Provide content that is fun, interesting, and valuable, and people will come looking for more.
- Be creative in persuasively conveying much larger ideas.
- Use link-shortening services such as bit.ly to track real-time interest in posts.

Figure 15.10 depicts how several of these Twitter tactics can be tailored for a particular company.

Twitter

Twitter is currently the second most popular social media platform, with over 310 million unique monthly visitors. With Twitter, it is possible to instantly reach a large (often mobile) audience with brief but focused messages, making the site a great marketing platform for interacting with users on the go, especially the upscale-income youth market that XYZ is targeting. These features make Twitter especially useful for customer service.

The following tactics will be pursued to take the utmost advantage of this platform for strengthening the brand among the target audience:

- Respond to questions and comments promptly
- Average of 10 to 15 tweets daily and use hashtags frequently
- Use shortened links to share interesting articles, videos, breaking news, etc.
- Use Twellow to search for targeted users to follow 20 new people daily to generate more followers
- Retweet to increase sharing of our content in return
- Cross promote Facebook offers, coupons, promotions and events
- Include links to company Twitter on all outbound communications such as promotional materials, brochures, and email signatures, as well as on the company website

Figure 15.10 Twitter Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company

LINKEDIN LinkedIn is one of the most popular social media platforms, with over 200 million unique monthly visitors in August 2011,³⁴ growing to 255 million in 2015 (see Table 15.1). With the great majority of business-to-business marketers using LinkedIn, it is the dominant B2B social network, making it ideal for a company to connect with suppliers in order to improve provider relationships. LinkedIn as a B2B marketing platform is discussed in Chapter 5.

LinkedIn tactics:

- Create a company page, and use it to showcase job openings, new positions, or similar information in order to develop a large company following and to raise awareness of a brand because more people will see that company as a suggestion based on their contacts' interests.
- All employees should strive to complete 100% of their profiles and optimize with appropriate keywords. In addition, employees should include links to the company website, Facebook, Twitter, and blog, among others. Also include such applications as SlideShare to add relevant content and link to third-party articles in order to appear less self-promotional.
- Employees should ask contacts, past customers, industry analysts, and employees to join the group and/or follow the brand.
- Each employee should request recommendations from past employers, customers, supervisors, and so on to showcase expertise.
- Key employees should be assigned the responsibility of regularly participating in industry groups.
- Groups should be launched with descriptive names in order to address a common issue or problem.
- Content should be formatted so that it follows the group's theme, using a regular series of tips and showcasing the company's product's subtlety.
- Employees should post regularly in the group with contents of interest to the group members such as the latest industry information or thoughtful questions.
- Join associated group, first taking the time to learn what the group deems relevant before posting. Be courteous and show respect for other users' time by posting only relevant, well-considered, and valuable thoughts to group discussion boards.
- LinkedIn Answers should be used by employees to contribute valuable and well-considered answers in order to draw in business leads by highlighting personal expertise.
- Company representatives should focus on fostering relationships before asking for assistance and personalizing communications in order to demonstrate sincere interest in getting to know a person.
- Posted titles and summaries should use catchy, keyword-rich titles.
- Use InMail to ask to be connected. Send a personalized message, and explain why you would like to be connected.

Figure 15.11 shows how several of these LinkedIn tactics can be adapted for a particular company.

YOUTUBE YouTube is the largest video platform (see Table 8.1). According to YouTube Statistics it has over a billion users worldwide and gets over half its views from mobile.³⁵ As more people choose to consume information visually, YouTube's vast (and growing)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is one of the most popular social media platforms, with over 255 million unique monthly visitors in 2015. With 81% of business-to-business marketers using LinkedIn, it is the dominant B2B social network, making it ideal for XYZ to connect with suppliers to improve provider relationships.

The following LinkedIn tactical actions will be taken:

- Key employees should strive to complete 100% of their profiles and optimize with appropriate keywords
- Employee profiles should include links to the company website, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.
- Employees should ask recommendations to show credibility
- Participate in industry groups a minimum of once per week to establish credibility and build brand awareness
- Connect with industry thought leaders
- Build relationship with suppliers

Figure 15.11 LinkedIn Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company

reach and compelling content make it the perfect platform for engaging consumers to drive word-of-mouth recommendations.

YouTube tactics:

- Create authentic videos with real people in actual locations to make the videos more persuasive in order to engage viewers. Offbeat and unusual videos tend to get more attention.
- Include links to videos on all other social media properties (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
- Actively comment on videos that relate to your industry in order to make connections. The more influential you can appear in the community, the more credibility your business will have.
- Choose keywords for videos carefully. Tag videos with various keywords to rank higher in the YouTube search engine. Make them relevant to the subject matter or niche. Think about what customers will be searching for, and target those keywords.
- Produce videos that are informative and entertaining. Use videos to educate the audience about issues its members face in your industry. Be sure to provide helpful hints.
- Get to the point quickly, and make the video 2 minutes or less to encourage viewers to watch the video to completion.
- Email the video links to customers.
- Cross-marketing: be sure to include links to your website or other social media properties in your videos, and promote the video on your company website and social media properties.
- Ask friends and associates to share the videos on their social media properties.
- Identify YouTube opinion leaders, and ask them to rate the videos.
- Create contests or feature user-submitted videos on the corporate website or blog. The result can be a series of testimonials, how-to tutorials, or other indirect promotions, which cost nothing for a social media campaign that achieves substantial results.
- Start a video channel, and update contents regularly.

YouTube

YouTube, owned by Google, is the largest video platform with over 1 billion users worldwide. As more people choose to consume information visually, YouTube's vast (and growing) reach and compelling content make it the perfect platform for engaging consumers to drive word-of-mouth recommendations.

The following YouTube tactical actions will be taken on behalf of the company:

- Creative, entertaining, light-hearted videos focused on the youth market
- Tag videos with relevant keywords to rank higher in the YouTube search engine
- Videos should be 2 minutes or less in length
- Embed company logo/image in all videos
- Post one video per month
- Reply to comments daily
- Cross-marketing by using Facebook and Twitter to promote videos

Figure 15.12 YouTube Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company

Figure 15.12 illustrates how several of these YouTube tactics can be adapted for implementing a particular company's overall strategies and marketing goals.

INSTAGRAM Instagram has experienced explosive growth since its founding in 2009 and had over 100 million unique monthly visitors in 2015 (see Table 15.1). It is well suited for engaging customers with photos of the business, thereby personalizing the company in ways no other social media platform can match. For example, sharing photos of a coffee shop with a warm, friendly atmosphere humanizes the business. When a business creates a buzz on the social web by sharing photos, people start sharing and talking about it, causing others to become interested in knowing more about the company. This level of engagement with customers can help drive word-of-mouth recommendations and traffic to the website.

Instagram tactics:

- Use the company's Instagram page to share pictures with customers, thus keeping them up to date with current events at the business.
- Use Instagram to personalize the company by showing what is going on behind the scenes, featuring interesting and informative pictures of product preparation, customer service, festive holiday parties, or employees just enjoying doing their jobs.
- Use photo sharing on the company's Instagram page as a teaser for more information elsewhere, such as the company's website and Facebook page.
- Share photos of employees at a philanthropic event, and provide a linking to the corporate blog for followers to learn more about the event.
- Ask customers to share photos of the business that capture distinctive aspects of it, such as a storefront's appearance during a beautiful sunset. Recognize the best submissions with some form of award.
- Create a positive buzz about the company by sponsoring a photo contest in which the person sharing the most innovative picture of the business wins a discount or other prize.
- Upload images of a product with detailed specifications and technical details. Include customer reactions. Place a link to the company website in the description that will bring traffic to the company website.

- Company pictures can be highly persuasive for potential buyers, even when they are not directly about the product. Posting photos online can give “a strong sense of culture and provide a human face to the company.”³⁶
- Use photo sharing to help draw traditional press attention. In addition, with appropriate keywords, a photo result often shows up on the first page of results, bringing many to view the content.
- Use multiple photo sharing sites to upload images in order to expand the company’s reach to different audiences.
- Be diligent about using titles, descriptions, photo sets, and tags to secure top Google Search results. Hashtags, headlines including hashtags and emojis are important Instagram tools.
- The most popular shared images tend to be humorous, unplanned, or spontaneous in appearance. Detailed, up-close photographs with a simple background draw more interest than landscapes.
- Post a link to images using Facebook, Twitter, and a company website to generate traffic.

Figure 15.13 illustrates how several of these Instagram tactics can be adapted for implementing a particular company’s overall strategies and marketing goals.

SWARM Swarm is Foursquare’s replacement for its popular Foursquare app, in partnership with Twitter. Like Foursquare, Swarm provides the ability for people to share their location with friends and to win prizes for visiting businesses and checking in. Since its launch in May 2014 the Swarm app has experienced some technical difficulties but managed to acquire about 2 million unique mobile users.

Foursquare provides merchant data and other services to Swarm, so brands must use the two in conjunction with one another, although consumers will use Swarm for its check-in and other social functions.³⁷

Instagram

Instagram is the most popular photo sharing site with over 300 million monthly users. It is well suited for engaging customers with photos of the business, which can personalize the company in ways no other social media platform can match. For example, sharing photos of a coffee shop, with a warm, friendly atmosphere, humanizes the business. When a business creates a buzz on the social web by sharing photos, people start talking about it and cause others to become interested in knowing more about the company. This level of engagement with customers can help drive word-of-mouth recommendations. The best use of Instagram is to encourage customers to post their own photos of enjoyable and satisfying brand experience.

The following Instagram tactical actions will be taken:

- Upload photos featuring funny pictures, interesting events, product preparation, customers enjoying coffee, festive holiday parties, or employees just enjoying doing their jobs
- Be diligent about using titles, descriptions, photo sets, and tags to secure top Google Search results
 - Use hashtags, headlines with hashtags and emojis to generate attention and engagement
- Upload high-quality pictures weekly or more frequently to highlight promotions and events
 - Run a contest and in other ways encourage customers to upload photos to Instagram
- Reply to comments daily
- Cross-marketing by posting the most interesting pictures on Facebook and links on Twitter to photos, etc.

Figure 15.13 Instagram Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company

Swarm and Foursquare tactics:

- Verify or create a Foursquare business listing.
- Update all account information.
- Create special offers for customers on Foursquare.
- Add customer tips.
- Advertise on Foursquare.
- Encourage customers to download and use the Swarm mobile app.
 - Customers still enjoy game-like features including becoming mayors and earning stickers (originally called badges on Foursquare).
 - Any updated information to Foursquare shows on Swarm.
 - Customer photos uploaded to Swarm appear on Foursquare as well.
 - Customers can view special offer on Foursquare as well as Swarm.
- Brands can still see who has checked in to your place of business via a Foursquare profile.

Figure 15.14 demonstrates how several of these social location marketing tactics can be modified for a particular company.

CREATING CONTENT

Although each social media platform will require specific types of content, it is possible to provide some general guidelines for generating and using content across most platforms:

- **Developing or Acquiring Content:** A thorough analysis of the content needs for each social media platform should be conducted, identifying the specific needs of each community, finding the gaps in content, and either creating or acquiring the content. A careful inventory of existing content within an organization may uncover material that can be repurposed for use on social media platforms. In addition, third parties, such as freelance writers, can be contracted to prepare platform-specific content.
- **Managing Content:** Regardless of whether platform content is prepared in-house or outsourced, it will still require editing. Moreover, user content on

Swarm by Foursquare

Swarm is a popular check-in service, providing the ability for people to share their location with friends and win prizes for visiting businesses and checking in.

The following Foursquare tactical actions will be taken:

- Create or verify a Foursquare business and ensure that the profile is complete and correct
- Upload photos to your Tips and check-ins
- Offer coupons and special discounts
- Offer free product after a certain number of check-ins
- Offer stickers or special status to loyal customers after a certain number of check-ins
- Create special deals to encourage customers to bring their friends
- Place a QR code on coupons and special offers in order to provide instant links to the company's social media properties such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, blog, corporate website, etc.

Figure 15.14 Swarm and Foursquare Tactics for the XYZ Coffee Company