

# GETTING STARTED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA //



# CLOUD9 MARKETING //

**Cloud9 Marketing** is a creative marketing agency based in the resort town of Whistler, BC. We deliver cutting edge, innovative and digital solutions through strategic market and data analysis tailored specifically to your business.

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# INTRODUCTION //

Social media is everywhere today and permeates all areas of business and society. No longer is the question, “should I use social media?” it is, “how should I use social media?” Social media is a great way to reach prospective clients and engage with current ones but its power goes far beyond that. Having active social media profiles helps create brand credibility and improve a business’s **SEO**. Google and other search engines now use content shared through social media in their **algorithms** to help determine search engine ranking. By sharing content from your website on social media you will drive traffic to your website and expand your **reach**.

According to Forbes Magazine Facebook has over 1.8 billion users with 936 million of those logging on daily. But social media is far more than just Facebook. There are several social media platforms available and to determine which ones your business needs, an effective social media plan should be created. We will get to that, but first, here is a brief snapshot of the main social media platforms and how you can use them in your business.

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## FACEBOOK

Facebook needs little introduction. Most likely you operate a Facebook profile as well as a Page for business. Your friends have Facebook, your colleagues have Facebook, and your grandma probably even has Facebook if she’s still alive. A Facebook Page is absolutely essential for any business. With over a billion active users Facebook is the social media platform with the greatest potential reach; however, due to recent algorithm changes you will most likely need to pay if you want people to know what you’re up to. Luckily Facebook offers cost effective advertising that is highly targeted. With a strong database dominated by +25 users you can easily specify what demographics you want to target with your advertising. The best type of content for Facebook includes links, videos, images, lifestyle, light-hearted, entertaining, educational and stories.

## TWITTER

Twitter is a **micro-blogging** platform that allows users to engage with each other using 140 character limited posts. Twitter is an active platform meaning successful users post frequently with engaging and captivating **copy**, links, videos or photos. **Hashtags** are used on Twitter to filter information and to create strong brand identity. Twitter is popular for celebrities, news channels and public figures and is becoming increasingly popular for businesses to connect with potential customers by providing timely and relevant information. Twitter has nearly 300 million users worldwide with 18-49 being the dominant age group.

## INSTAGRAM

Instagram has seen tremendous growth over the last few years with over 200 million users; this platform is especially popular with younger users (teens-30s). This visual platform allows the posting of photos and videos from mobile devices. Instagram is great for brands which have a strong visual component and **hashtags** are commonly used in Instagram as a way to filter information and create brand storey-telling. Inspiring and beautiful posts that trigger an emotional response are key to captivating an audience on Instagram. Frequent posting using brand specific images or sentiment and relevant hashtags are essential for Instagram success.

## GOOGLE+

Google Plus is Google's social media platform which records approximately 300 million users. Since life seems to revolve around Google (Google searches, Gmail, Google Drive, etc.) Google+ is a convenient social media tool to complement your other Google accounts. Google Plus's functionality is similar to Facebook in the way you connect, network and communicate. Google loves it when you play their game and therefore participation in Google+ will do wonders for your website's SEO. Even if your clients or target market do not use the platform it is important to be active with your Google+ business page in order to help with your website's search ranking.

## LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a professional platform designed for networking, connecting and recruiting. With over 300 million users who are professional and educated this is a great space to create rapport in your area of work. Content shared on LinkedIn is often related to professional growth, wealth, inspiration and industry news. The advertising functionality on LinkedIn is targeted to companies, industries and geographic locations. Creating a LinkedIn profile is a must for all professionals especially those who work in a **B2B** marketplace. Engaging with other professionals in your industry or **key influencers** is a great way to network.

## PINTEREST

Pinterest is a virtual pinboard platform where users can 'pin' images found online and label collections. This platform has over 70 million users, most of whom are women between the ages of 18-49. If women are a key demographic for your business consider using Pinterest. Content that does well on this platform includes pretty, inspiring, innovative and DIY type photos and collections.

## YOUTUBE

Youtube has over 1 billion users, 4 billion views per day and is the internet's largest video sharing site. What was once only a free service Youtube has recently introduced 'Youtube Red' which is a subscription service where users can stream videos without advertisements. Advertising on Youtube's free service is highly targeted enabling you to specify location, interests and key-words. Content that works well on Youtube includes entertaining videos, instructional videos, commentary, news, demonstrations and how-tos. Another benefit of Youtube is the ability for users to share videos across a variety of platforms plus the ability for your videos to be indexed by search engines.

## PERISCOPE

Periscope is a new social media platform that currently has a user base of over 10 million. Periscope is a live video streaming platform available for mobile devices. The platform allows you to, 'go-live' at any given time for whoever wants to tune in. Users can locate broadcasters in a geographic area and tune into live-broadcasts. This interactive platform allows for live discussion and feedback. Periscope is great for businesses introducing a new product, for hosting Q&A sessions with current and prospective customers, and for showing off your product or service offering. Periscope videos can be published and shared online just like any video.

## SNAPCHAT

Snapchat is a video messaging application that allows users to send video or picture messages which self-destructs after a few seconds of the recipient viewing them. Snapchat is popular amongst teenagers and young adults and as of 2015, had 100 million daily users and 8,796 snaps shared every second. Many businesses are turning to Snapchat to strengthen their brand. Snapchat stories, which are a series of snaps taken over 24 hours, are great for creating a video or photo narrative of an event or day in the life of your business. Snaps are also an engaging way to give your audience access to live events, deliver private content or offer perks or promotions.

## VINE

Vine is a mobile application, owned by Twitter, that links several video snippets to create a short video up to six seconds long (called a Vine). As of February 2015 Vine had 200 million monthly active users with 1.5 billion vines played daily. The main demographic using Vine are teenagers and millennials. Vine is a great way to start a conversation with your followers giving visual cues to a desired action you would like your followers to make. It is also a great way to display your products or recent project in a time-lapse sequence. Early adopters of Vine are seeing great results, especially if your target market is under 30.

# CHAPTER 01 //

## Building Your Social Media Plan

**Your social media plan is like the rails that your social media train runs on. Without the rails, the train could still move quickly – But it would just run everywhere, and quite possibly be dangerous. The same goes for social media.**

You can spend a lot of time on social media without actually getting much done. You can even damage your brand by spending too much frivolous time on social media. On the flip side, with a strong social media plan, social media can be an incredibly powerful tool for building your brand and your following. So what should you include in your social media plan?

### CORE GOALS AND METRICS TO TRACK

To start with, you should have your core goals and your core metrics figured out right at the very beginning.

Begin with your goals. What do you want to use social media for? Are you trying to meet JV partners? Are you trying to land speaking engagements? Are you trying to expose your brand to more people? Are you trying to build up your follower count? Are you trying to drive traffic to your site and get actual buyers?

The metrics you'd track stem directly from your goals. For example, if you're trying to build up your follower count, you might track **virality** and new followers per day as your core metrics. On the other hand, if you're trying to make sales, visitors to your website might be your most important metric. Post **engagement** is another metric you may want to consider. If your goal is to develop a loyal brand following, post engagement in the way of likes, shares, and comments are a good way to monitor how interested people are in what you're saying.

You can't have a good social media plan without clear goals. Start your planning by figuring out what your goals are, then pick your core metrics to track.

### WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA SITES YOU PLAN TO COVER

Your plan should cover exactly which social networks you plan to be on. The networks you use depend mostly on who you're trying to reach.

Let's say you're trying to land more speaking gigs. In this case, being on Facebook might not be the only platform to reach your target audience. Instead, getting on LinkedIn is probably your best avenue, followed by Twitter.

Instagram is a must for brands that have a strong visual component and who target the younger demographic. With vivid and engaging photos you can create a lifestyle brand which entices followers to buy-in.

Don't neglect smaller social networks either. Periscope is a great platform for early adopters and is a fantastic way to broadcast a new product to your audience.

The long and short of it is this: Go where your audience is; however, don't isolate yourself to just one or two platforms. Choose a portfolio of social media channels that best leverage what your business goals are.

## BREAKDOWN OF HOW TO SPEND YOUR TIME

Your plan should have a detailed outline of how you plan to spend your time. For example, your plan might look something like this:

**Monday:** 30 Minutes Scheduling Facebook Posts, 30 Minutes Scheduling Twitter Tweets

**Tuesday:** 30 Minutes Replying to Messages, 30 Minutes Posting on LinkedIn Q&A

**Wednesday:** 60 Minutes Post on Forums, Comment on Blogs

**Thursday:** Repeat Monday

**Friday:** Repeat Tuesday

Try to segment your activities into different “buckets.” When your time in one bucket runs out, move on. Don’t let yourself get sucked into one thing for too long.

When managing a portfolio of social media profiles, management programs like Hootsuite, Tweetdeck and Sprout Social can be real time savers. Not only do these platforms offer bulk scheduling tools they also offer reporting functionalities so you can monitor your key metrics and their performance.

## LIST OF ESSENTIAL ACTIONS

What are the most important things you have to get done every week?

If you’re trying to land speaking gigs, then an essential action should be to respond to any conference organizer within 3 business hours. It doesn’t matter what else you’re doing, this takes precedence.

If you're trying to build a social media following, your essential action might be not missing a post. You have a schedule and you stick to it rigidly. If something might detract you from hitting your posting deadline, those things have to wait.

Having a list of your essential actions can help you prioritize tasks in a busy work environment.

## A PLAN FOR OUTREACH & CONNECTION BUILDING

*Two things you should have as part of your plan are building your audience and deepening your connection with your community.*

Your outreach strategy should be, again, tailored to your goals. If you're trying to reach influencers, you might comment on their blogs for several weeks before shooting them a direct Twitter message. If you're trying to build a Facebook audience, your strategy might involve putting out innovative content every month.

As for building connections, the most important thing to realize on social media is the value of a single person. It's easy to get lost in the statistics and the crowd of a thousand likes. But often time's your biggest breakthroughs – PR7 links, JV opportunities, speaking gigs, etc – Will come from the most unexpected places.

Whenever you can, reach out and get in touch with people one on one. Acknowledge your fans and build real connections.

## **TREAT THIS AS A LIVING DOCUMENT**

Don't treat your plan as something that's set in stone. Treat it as something that's organic. Your plan should grow as you grow and as your audience grows.

Figure out what's working and what isn't about your social media plan, then adjust your plan accordingly. Treat your plan as a living document. Use it as a tool to keep yourself and your company on track as you head towards your goals.

## CHAPTER 02 //

# 10 Tips for Staying Focused on Social Media

**Getting sucked into social media distractions is a real concern for anyone using social media professionally. You might only plan on working on your Twitter account for 20 minutes, then look up 90 minutes later wondering where your time went.**

Social media is notoriously distracting. So how do you stay focused when you're working on your social media strategy? These ten tips will help.

### **TIP #1: KEEP YOUR BUSINESS & PERSONAL ACCOUNTS SEPARATE**

Mixing the two accounts is a recipe for disaster. You'll log on to update your Twitter status, then get sucked right into the funny video of your next door neighbour's niece.

If you have your accounts mixed, separating them alone will drastically boost your productivity.

### **TIP #2: DO NOT MULTITASK**

When you're working on social media, you should spend that time only working on social media. Don't do other things at the same time.

People will often try to do social media "on the side" while they're taking care of other things. For example, you might be listening in to a company wide call that isn't taking up your full attention. So, you might hop on Twitter at the same time to post a few things.

This is bad, because it trains your brain to not separate social media work time from other things. By not multitasking and only doing social media during social media time, you train your brain to work on social media in a very focused way.

### **TIP #3: HAVE A DAILY ACTION PLAN**

Having a plan for how you spend your time on social media can really help minimize distractions. For example, if you plan on using your social media time to build an influence, you might break your time down like this:

**5:00** – Schedule Posts in HootSuite

**5:30** – Respond to @Mentions, Read Tweets, Retweet

**6:00** – Send Personal Messages to Influencers

Don't "wing" your social media.

### **TIP #4: DO SOCIAL MEDIA WHEN YOUR WORK IS FINISHED**

Plan your social media time after the majority of your work is finished. Though social media is an important marketing venue, it's rare that it's really so urgent that it needs to be done early in the day.

Doing your social media last helps cut down the likelihood that your social media work would detract from the rest of your day.

### **TIP #5: AVOID CHATS**

Turn off your chats. Turn off Facebook chat, Google chat and any other chat programs you have running in the background. Many social networks will have a chat program weaved into their basic functionality. Make sure those chat systems are off.

Chats can throw your entire day out the window. Someone might message you and a 15 minute social media session suddenly turns into a 40 minute conversation. Often times you'll have trouble saying no to someone's communication because you don't want to damage the relationship. You're better off just turning your chats off in the first place.

### **TIP #6: LEARN TO RECOGNIZE SEEMINGLY URGENT BUT UNPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOURS**

Do you really need to watch that 2 minute video that someone just uploaded? Do you really need to respond to that provocative comment?

A lot of the content you see on social media is designed to be inherently attention catching. They can seem urgent. But when you look at them objectively, you'll find that it's really counter productive to spend your time on it. Whenever you're tempted to click on a link, ask yourself: "Is this really going to forward my business?"

### **TIP #7: DON'T DO IT ALONE**

Doing social media alone is a big pitfall for many reasons.

First, there's nobody to tell you when you're going off course. Second, it's easy to get distracted and not get things done if there's nobody you're accountable to. Third, you have nobody to share your triumphs with, which makes social media less exciting.

Having someone to share your social media ventures with gives you a strong framework to work in. Sharing your projects with a supervisor, a peer, with your business partner or with fellow online entrepreneurs can really help boost your social media focus.

### **TIP #8: FOCUS ON LEARNING ONE THING AT A TIME**

Social media users often try to take on far too much at once. They try to learn how to run a contest, how to learn new software, how to use a new social network and so on all at the same time.

Each task individually might not seem like it's challenging to learn. But when you pile your plate high with new things, you're going to have a scattered attention span. That sense of being scattered will cause you to be more easily distracted. It'll also take you longer to learn any skill than if you learned them thoroughly one at a time. Learn to focus on learning one thing at a time. Once you master that one thing, then you can take on something else.

### **TIP #9: USE TOOLS TO CONDENSE YOUR SESSIONS**

It's nearly impossible to focus on your work if you have to log into Twitter, Facebook and other social networks many times throughout the day. But many audiences do expect you to post updates throughout the day.

That's why it's absolutely crucial that you use tools like [HootSuite](#) and [TweetDeck](#) to schedule posts and updates. These tools allow you to communicate at the frequency that your followers expect, without having to distract yourself from your workday all the time.

### **TIP #10: BE METRIC DRIVEN**

When you're accountable for delivering metrics and you use your social media time in a goal driven manner, you're going to be much more pro-ductive. It's when you're just "doing social media" for the sake of doing it, without a goal, that tends to detract from focus.

If you don't have clear metrics, you'll have a hard time staying driven. After all, you won't know when you're doing things right and when you're doing things wrong, so it really doesn't matter what you do. But when you have clear metrics, you'll know exactly when you're on track and when you're not. What you track improved. Track your social media progress.

These ten tips will help you stay focused on your social media activities, so you progress quickly in the social sphere and so your social media activities don't detract from the rest of your workday.

# THANK YOU!

We hope you have enjoyed this eBook:

**A GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA**

If you would like to find out how **Cloud9 Marketing** can help your business with your [social media marketing strategy](#) and / or [management of social media channels](#), contact us today.

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# GLOSSARY

**Algorithm-** A set of formulas developed for a computer or website to perform a certain function. Algorithms can determine ranking of web content and reach on social media.

**B2B-** Business to Business

**Blog-** A webpage (or web-log) updated regularly with news, information and/or opinion of an individual or business.

**Click-thru Rate-** An important social media metric representing the number of times content was clicked on compared to the number of impressions received.

**Conversion Rate-** A social media metric measuring the number of people who performed a desired action.

**Copy-** Written content primarily used for the purpose of advertising or marketing.

**Engagement-** A social media metric measuring the amount of interaction (likes, shares, comments) a post receives.

**Fans-** A Facebook term for people who like your page or profile

**Followers-** A term for people who follow your account to see what you post, used in Twitter and Facebook.

**Hashtag-** A word or phrase that is annotated with # designed to filter information and create brand identity.

**Impressions-** The number of times a social media ad is viewed

**Key Influencers-** Social media users with a large follower or fan base who you can leverage off to get more reach

**Micro-Blogging-** Writing content under a certain character amount (Twitter is 140 character max.)

**Metrics-** Key indicators to measure social media performance (reach, engagement, virality, etc.)

**Reach-** The number of potential people who may see your post

**SEO-** Creating content online that improves your organic search engine ranking

**Social Media Platform-** A web-based technology that creates a highly interactive platform for social networks

**Traffic-** Visitors that visit a website

**Trending-** A topic or hashtag that is getting lots of attention on social media

**Viral-** When a post or video gets shared on social media rapidly