

Building Connection with Your Customers Through Social Media – Part 1

Based on a webinar presented by Ingrid Deon from [word-craft](#) in partnership with Digital Nova Scotia

Social media use has increased by 60% since the COVID-19 pandemic began. It is one of the best ways to connect with people who are already interested in your business and is vital for reaching those who haven't heard about you yet. Whether you're just getting started or already have social media accounts for your tourism business, this information will help you get to the next level to connect with your customers.

Start by setting goals

Set goals for your social media marketing that are specific, measurable and actionable.

- Don't plan too far ahead
- Stay nimble and continuously re-evaluate your goals
- Post evergreen content (things that aren't time sensitive like how you got started or local features)
- Stay relevant

What to post and where

Facebook

Anything goes on Facebook with a broad audience of users in the 28-65 age group. Videos, live videos, your blog posts, events, and third-party content all work well. Live video engagement on Facebook is three times higher than recorded video.

Instagram

Beautiful photos, inspirational quotes and stories work well on Instagram. Use your bio to post links on Instagram as links aren't clickable on grid photos.

Facebook & Instagram "Live"

Engage with your followers by hosting an "Ask me anything" session with your followers where you

answer their questions live. Create an online demonstration with virtual tours or experiences; and entertain your followers with local music from your area or a chef cooking a signature dish. Keep your "live" posts authentic.

Twitter

Connect with followers with news, current trends, links to blog posts, third-party articles, and GIFs. Use trending hashtags (#) relevant to your business.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is designed for business professionals and is a great place to share job and career info, industry news, and any professional content.

Keep your destination top of mind

It's important for your potential visitors to remember you!

- Your customers love to help. Use your social media posts to encourage them to:
 - Shop online
 - Buy gift cards
 - Write a positive review
 - Order delivery or curbside pickup
 - Post memories of your business
 - Participate in contests by posting photos of past visits
- Share the latest news about your business or organization.
- Feature other local businesses and encourage your audience to support them.

Best time to post

The best time to post depends on your actual followers so it's important to watch their behaviour by checking your analytics. During COVID-19, the best times to post are:

Facebook / Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1 p.m. AT

Instagram / Monday, Tuesday and Friday at 1 p.m. AT

Twitter / Friday between 9-11 a.m. AT

LinkedIn / Wednesday at 5 p.m. AT; Thursday between 12-1 p.m. AT; Friday at 1 p.m. AT

Creating Content

Most businesses will have four to seven content pillars. Always be considerate with the tone of your posts. Be kind, be human, and be thoughtful. Here are some examples of content pillars you could use for your business:

OUR STORY

- Sharing the company story – how you got started.
- The people behind the scenes.
- Employee profiles
- Showing off swag
- Milestones and anniversaries

PRODUCT

- Showcase product
- Announce the release of new product
- Highlight ingredients (ie: local)
- Ask for user opinions
- Education

PROMOTIONS

- Giveaways and contests
- Partnering with local businesses
- Sales & specials

PRO TIPS

- Travelling responsibly
- Best practices
- Operator tips

Hashtags

A hashtag, or hash symbol (#), is a tag that social media users include in posts that helps other users easily find messages with a specific theme or content. Hashtags are commonly used on Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Hashtags are not useful on Facebook.

Instagram / 9-12 per post; in caption or first comment; reuse some; try new ones; relevant to your ideal customer

Twitter / Less than 5 per post; watch for trending hashtags relevant to your business/customers

LinkedIn / 2-3 per post; trending hashtags; make sure they're relevant