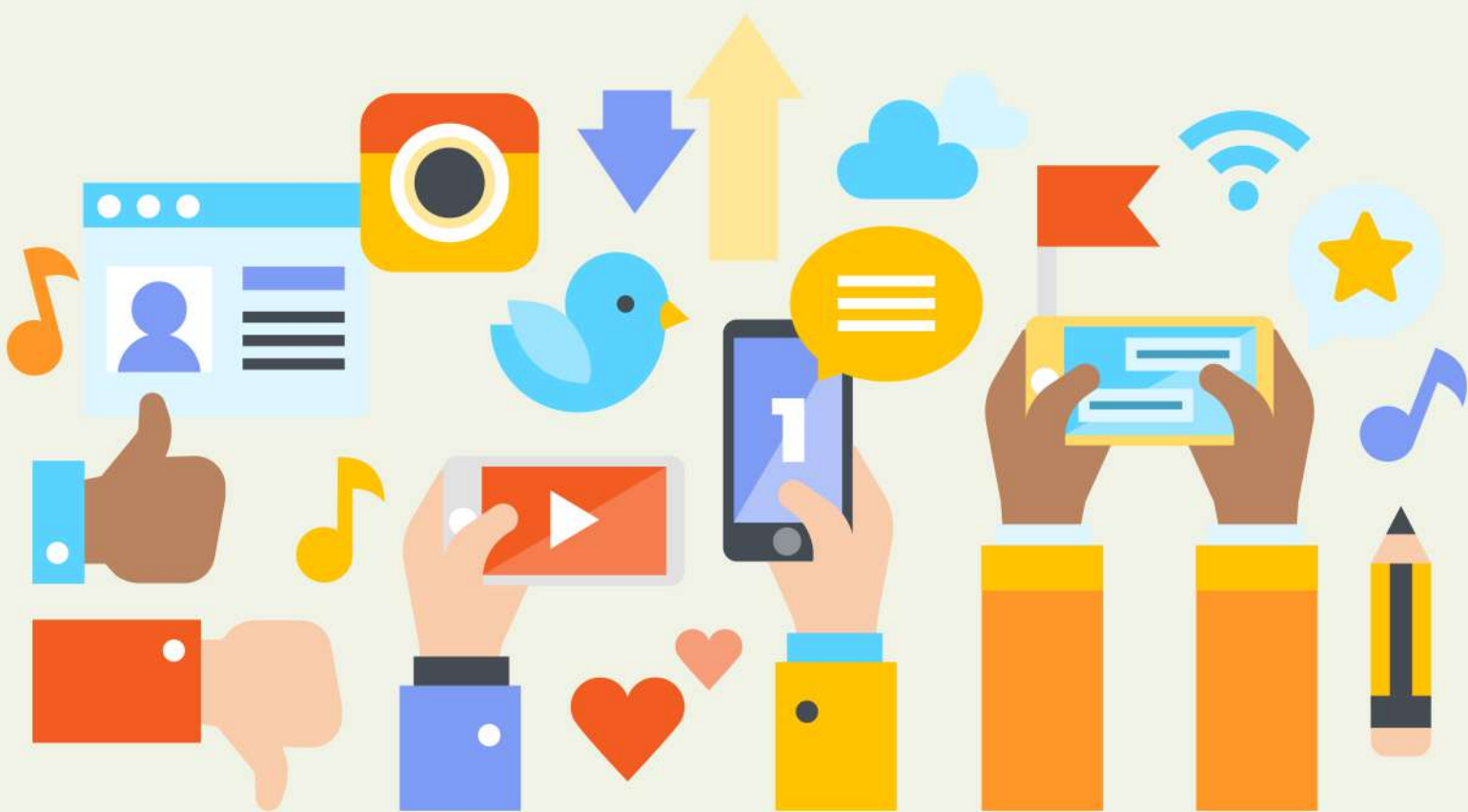


# 5 Step Guide for Printers to Start with Social Media

Because it's not just an activity, but an investment.





Why **Social Media?**

Do Your **Homework**

Coordinate Your **Social Channels**

Create Your **Activity Plan**

Get **Started**

Make It **Work & Analyse**

**Take Away**

**Free Tools**

**Know More**

Are you ready to connect with a wider audience? Want to know the best ways to leverage social media for promoting your online printing services and connecting with your customers? The welcome news for those of us in the printing domain is that our community online is bold, positive and progressive. If you haven't used the social media or are willing to market your products and services but haven't started yet, you're going to love how easy it is to get started.

In this eBook, I'll show you five simple steps you can take to make social media marketing work for you.

## But let's First Discuss, Why Social Media?

Whether you're just getting started in printing business, or you're an established business, social media offers an inexpensive, fast, and most importantly measurable way to engage with your online buyers and grow your business. In fact, it can even be your best friend. Out of the world's 3 billion internet users, more than 2 billion have active social media accounts. That's a pretty big addressable market!

As a print business owner, you know there's a lot to accomplish with limited resources. Traditional marketing can be a drain on your funds whereas social media marketing, on the other hand, is pretty low-cost and gives you a direct line to your current and prospective customers. It's a trade-off though. What you save in dollars you'll invest in time. You have to be smart and efficient with using social media resources if you have to achieve the results you need.

This guide is for print business owners with limited resources, but who want to learn how to establish and build their brand online using social media.



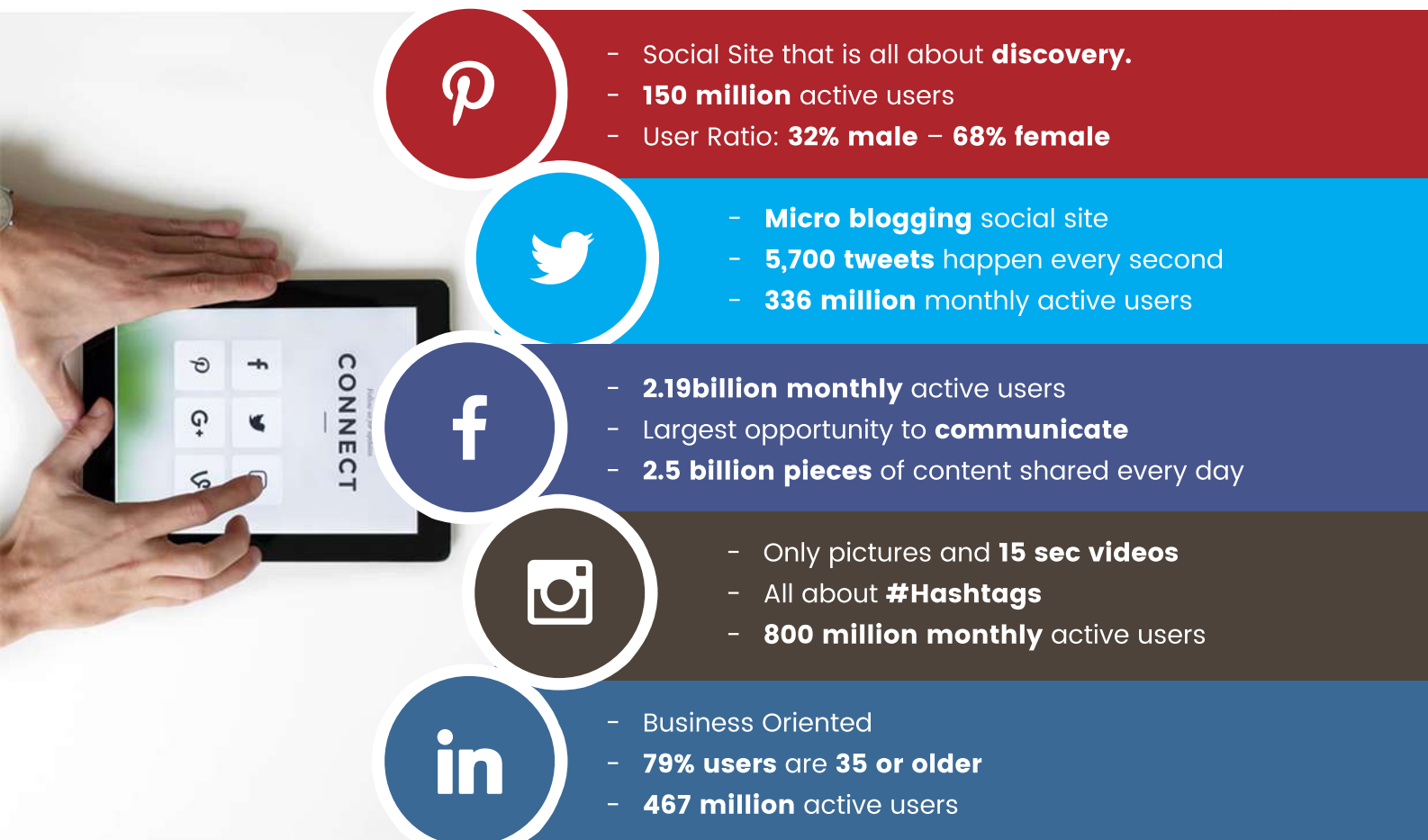
## #1: Do Your Homework






Social media is, first and foremost, a communications medium. It's a way of presenting your brand, its products and services, in a way that's less formal than your website or official marketing materials. You get to show exactly what it is you do – and you can usually involve your loyal customers, whose recommendations, as we know, are more powerful than your own.

You can even use Twitter and Facebook as a service channel, accepting enquiries and informing your customers about crucial events, such as downtime or extended opening hours.

Visibility, marketing and communication are the three central pillars of this plan, but what can realistically be achieved? Based on the time and manpower you can invest for social media marketing, create a quarterly plan, broken down into weeks, with monthly review points. As with your business plan, some of your numbers might have to start with guesswork, but even modest incremental growth means that it's working.

Behind every social media campaign that is doing exceptionally well, is a great strategy that has been successfully implemented. Social media is all about connecting with your audience and to do that, you have to understand not only your potential customers but the current ones too.



- 
  - Social Site that is all about **discovery**.
  - **150 million** active users
  - User Ratio: **32% male** – **68% female**
- 
  - **Micro blogging** social site
  - **5,700 tweets** happen every second
  - **336 million** monthly active users
- 
  - **2.19billion monthly** active users
  - Largest opportunity to **communicate**
  - **2.5 billion pieces** of content shared every day
- 
  - Only pictures and **15 sec videos**
  - All about **#Hashtags**
  - **800 million monthly** active users
- 
  - Business Oriented
  - **79% users** are **35 or older**
  - **467 million** active users

You can begin by defining all the character profiles on the basis of age, gender, interests, profession, etc. and write down the details that represent your target audience. Now find out the key problems or pain points that can be addressed or solved based on this defined target audience and then write it down for each character under their profile. Also, write down the three key marketing messages that you want to communicate to that particular audience group.

Now that you've defined your audience and the message for each group, take time to find out their preference towards social networks. All social media channels are not created equal. It's important to understand that each one has a different primary audience and focus so you expand your efforts on the right channels.

## #2: Coordinate Your Social Channels

Social media is most interesting when it gives an honest reflection of what the company does, be it a team of problem solving geeks, slick professionals or wizard designers. Make your brand your tone of voice and let your content reflect that. Show how your approach makes you different, and what it can do for your customers. It doesn't need to be complicated, but it does need to be consistent.

Prepare a right mix of all channels and be in sync with content published on all chosen platforms. You have to design your content befitting to the style of each individual platform.

### Half-life (in Hours) of Social Media Posts



2.8h

**Twitter** is a real-time short dialogue media channel. Since the link life is so short, Twitter is best used for showcasing events as they occur.



3.2h

**Facebook** is more of a dialogue-based social media channel. With less posts happening per minute than on Twitter, it is easier to locate a post and interact with the content.



7.5h

**Youtube** is a longer-lasting channel that puts content into action, is easier to consume, and is readily incorporated into other media channels.

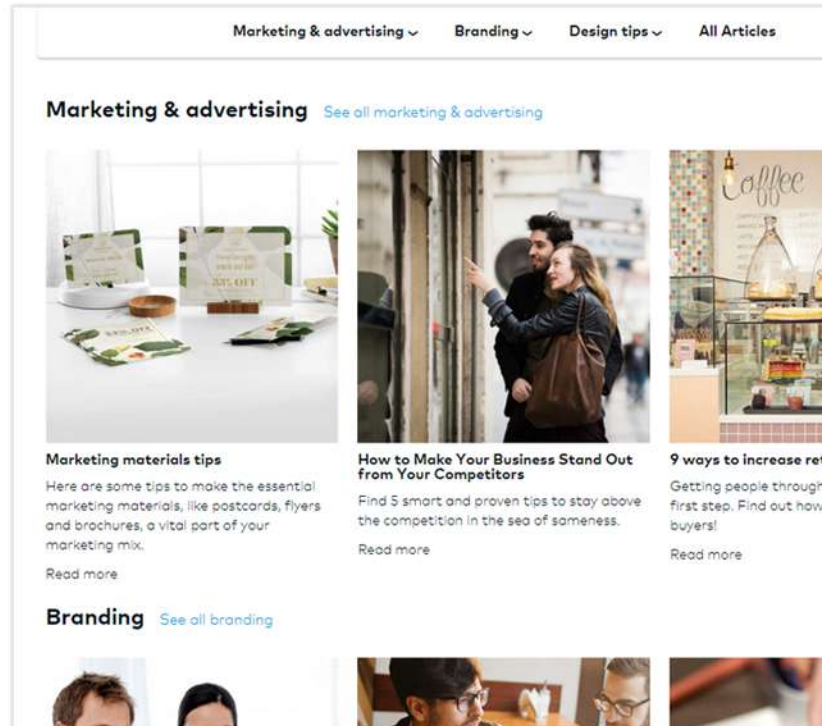


24h

**Blogs** are searchable content that serve as a resource beyond the original posted date and are frequently linked in other social media channels.

Using your blog is also a valuable opportunity to establish your brand's voice and share information to engage your site visitors and lead them through your sales funnel. You can also use your blog as a way of answering your top ten sales and support queries, and then post these across your social channels.

“  
The **blog section** of VistaPrint guiding small businessse with their ever-expanding collection of marketing tips and insights.



## E-mail Newsletters

are also an important way to stay in front of current and prospective customers. Do not forget to display your social media icons prominently in the newsletter design and include a CTA inviting your audience to join your social media communities. If you haven't started an email newsletter, I encourage you to start one now.

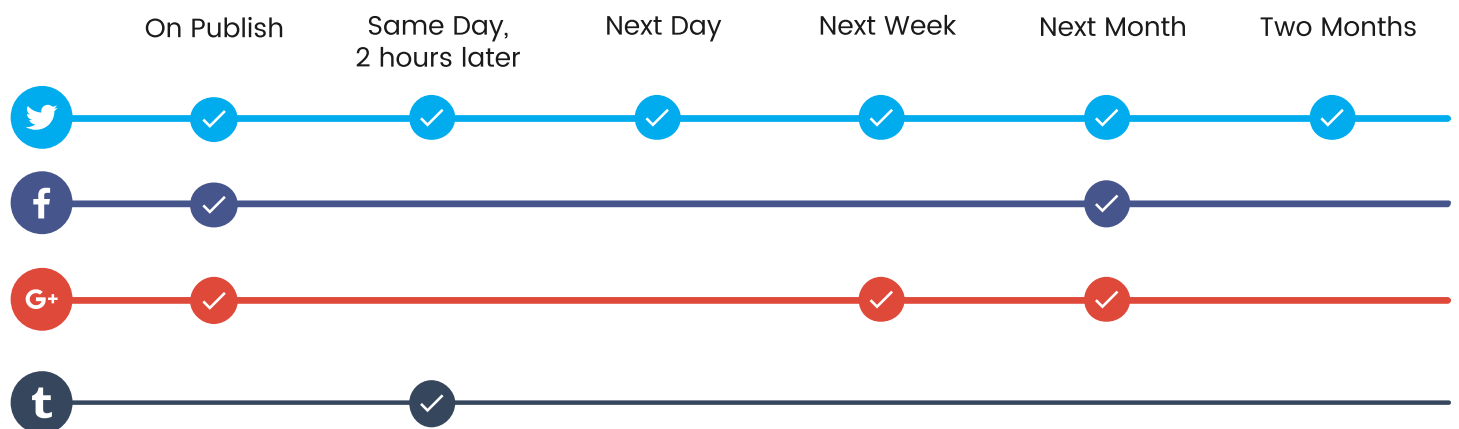
Remember, if you treat each social media platform as an individual effort, your success will be limited. Your social networks should work together to help you achieve your goals serving your vision and the mission.



## #3: Create Your Activity Plan

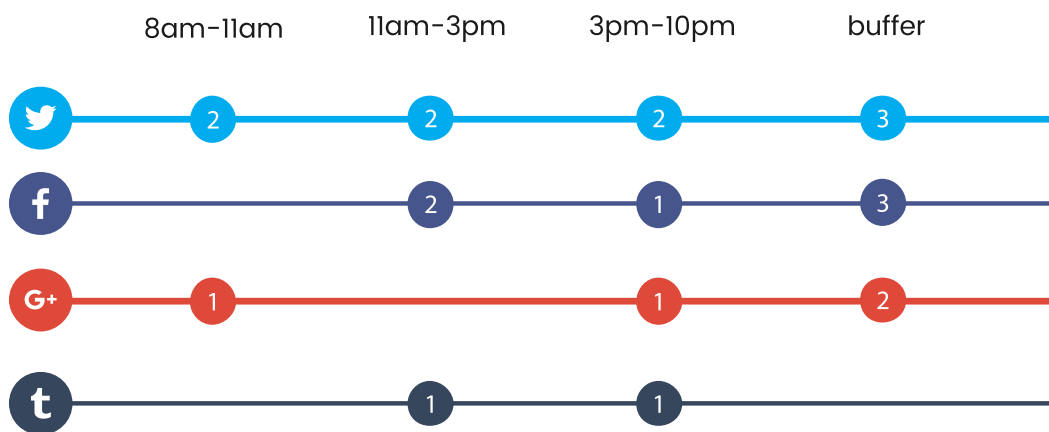
Content is the crux of social marketing and at times, sharing good content over the internet can be slow and time-consuming. So, it is always better to set up a process for organizing and aggregating the quality content that provides value to your audience or else you might just bog down and leave up everything in the middle or might just miss out on the planned strategy. Add the content to your monthly editorial calendar because it takes time to build an audience of thousands. Hence, by the time you are all set to go, you are ready with a steady stream of content in the pipeline and you can share it as per your plan and engage your audience by may be creating a chain of posts too.

### A Social Sharing Schedule Timeline



Make a list of the activities you plan to do and prepare a scheduled timeline to set frequency across all your social media channels. The best way to guarantee consistency is to incorporate social media into your daily routine. Decide a specific time and mark it down on your calendar, turn off all distractions and dedicate time to managing your social media accounts as per timeline. Do this in one or two different time slots every day. Say you decide to comment on and/or link content on five different Facebook pages or groups and tweet and re-tweet 3-5 times per day on Twitter then you need to schedule this entire activity plan well in advance. If you're using Pinterest, pin and re-pin 3-5 images per day. If LinkedIn is the best platform for your particular audience then share a link and like other people's links or you can even engage liked minded people over different groups.

## Daily Social Frequency



Once you've defined your target audience, you know where to reach them and you've optimized your other marketing touch points. It's time to get social. Share as much informative content as you can but above all, be intentional about your social activities. Success isn't about chance; it's about strategy and tactics.

## #4: Get Started

Social media takes time and energy. So set yourself up for success by starting with a manageable load. It is always better to choose one or two platforms to start with. In the first few months, expect to spend a minimum of 30 minutes to an hour a day on these social activities. You can increase the time as it fits in your schedule. Then comes the time when you can use those audience profiles and sample messages to determine what original and curated content you'll share and can create an editorial calendar to keep track of that content.

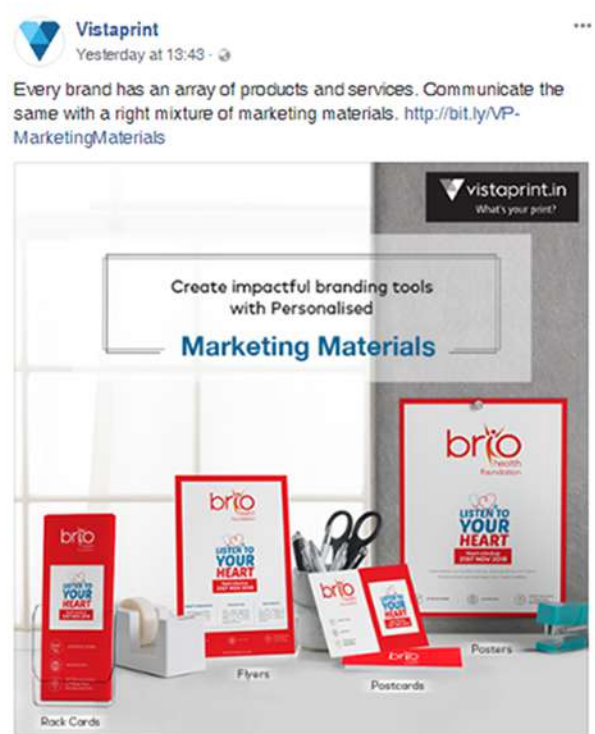


Once you're in the flow, to target specific demographics, you gradually need to start participating in more groups and initiate conversations by asking questions and posting comments on the updates by others. Continue to personalize your brand by welcoming new followers and thanking them for sharing your content or offering a compliment and, if needed, even share their related post as a gesture of returning the favour. But make sure that it is in tune with your audience. Your main aim is to help your readers, so share information that helps them solve a problem so give them a tip they can use.



Broadly, we're looking to engage with three audience types. The first is local: we want to raise awareness in our immediate geographic area. Secondly, we want to reach specialist markets. And finally, we have friends, suppliers and VIPs – the unquantifiable set of die-hard fans.

Keep the messaging for each group simple. You don't have much time to make an impact, so don't try to force too much through in one go. If you're running a specific promotion, make it clear what it is and how the client can take advantage. Be very clear about the end point: what action do you want the customer to take? Finally, don't be afraid to ask people to re-tweet or share – it's 17 times more likely to happen if you do.



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## #5: Make It Work & Analyse

Social media conversations are happening all around in real time. It's an age-old strategy: plan, execute, observe, amend and repeat. Social listening is an excellent tactic to monitor what people are saying about your brand. Respond to comments, mentions and feedback even if they're negative. You want to turn that negative into a positive! Remember, though, that your objectives don't all have to be numerical: a highly engaged but smaller audience may be more effective than a larger but looser one, so share actions and engagements are a better yardstick than sheer volume.

Patience and tenacity are two of the vital ingredients of social media. Don't give up after two weeks, and don't set unrealistic expectations for yourself. Be consistent, effusive, and demonstrate who you are and what you do in a positive way, and the followers will come.

## Total Media Shares Summary

<http://www.reddit.com/>

TOTAL SHARES: 1,412,176

PAGES SCANNED: 300

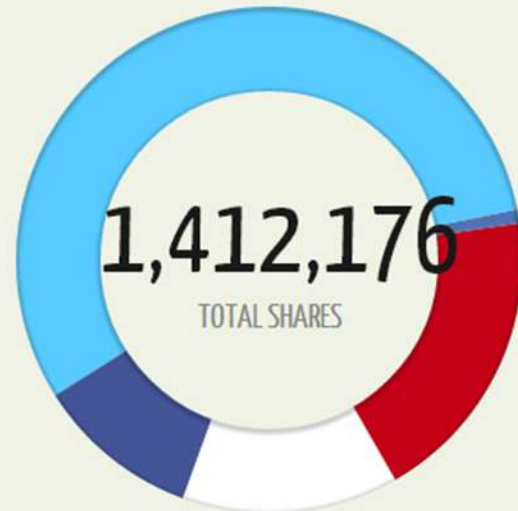
**f** FACEBOOK: 147,810 (10.5%)

**t** TWITTER: 787,498 (55.8%)

**in** LINKEDIN: 12,380 (0.9%)

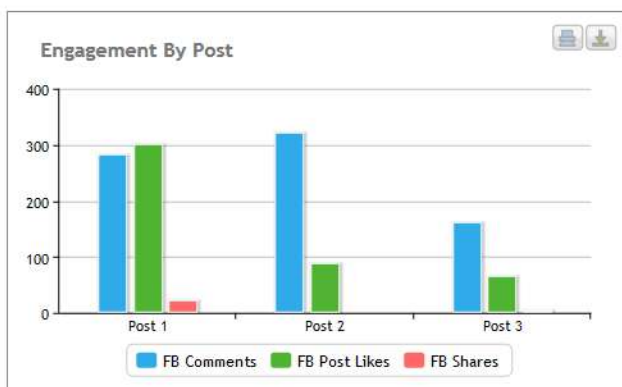
**p** PINTEREST: 268,858 (19.0%)

**g+** GOOGLE+: 195,630 (13.9%)



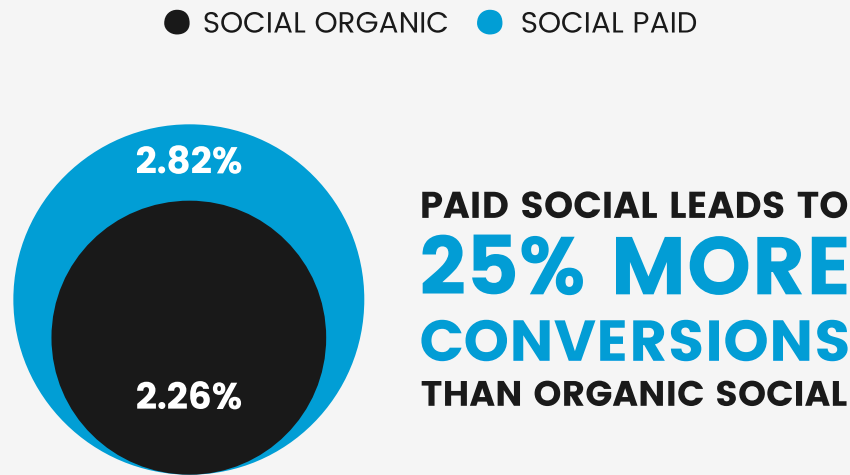
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Once you get the start, you can look for further options to accelerate your social media performance by exploring the paid advertising options. Facebook offers quite a number of advertising options to increase the number of sales, your website traffic, gives the brand a better exposure and even looks into audience engagement.



While for the Twitter, you have two advertising solutions: promoted content and promoted accounts. Where the former helps you cut through the noise and serve your content to tailored audiences, the later helps in increasing the size of your Twitter followers. LinkedIn also offers opportunities to reach specific audiences through paid advertising or using the sponsored updates feature to increase your brand's visibility.

## Organic vs. Paid Social Media: Comparative Impact on Conversion Rates



The key here is that even if you have a minimal marketing budget, don't dismiss social advertising as using it strategically can produce great results.

The last step is the most critical: **Measure and analyze your results.** Tracking performance data is the best way to **identify which tactics are working and which aren't.** A few things to watch are growth, engagement and sharing.

Most social media networks have tools you can use to track and measure your performance. Google Analytics is a popular and easy-to-use option for monitoring the website or blog traffic and interactions. Keep a track of which social media channels are driving the most traffic to your site.

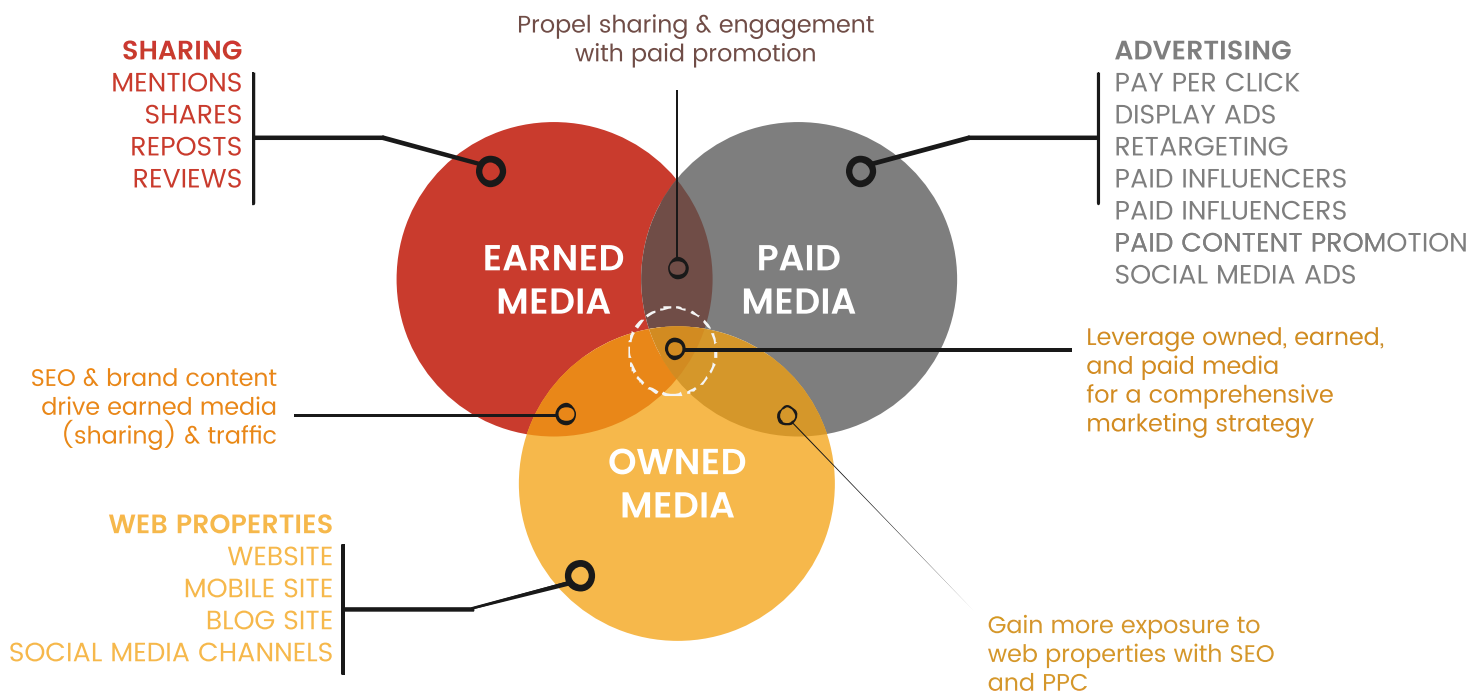
To stay on top of your social media plan, review your metric reports regularly (at least once a week). Step back and evaluate after every 2 or 3 months with the mission and the vision of the business and make the necessary adjustments for anything not working.

## Take Away

While using the social media marketing tactics for your print business, the most important thing to remember is that social media is not a sprint, it is a marathon. You need to go steady.

### DIGITAL MARKETING TRIFECTA

EARNED, OWNED & PAID MEDIA

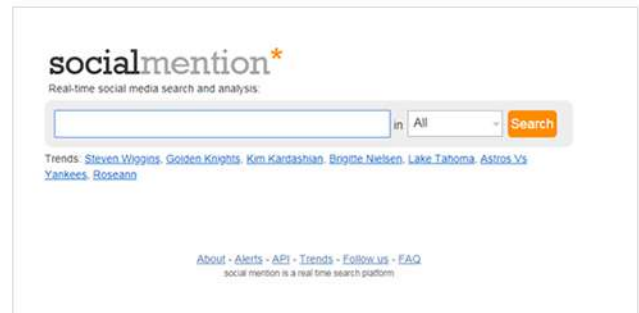


- ✓ **Keep your brand consistent.** There are some great templates available online that can help you design profile pictures and cover photos. Use these formats to create a unified brand presence across all your channels.
- ✓ **Use an app to stay organised.** Social can really suck the time out of someone's day, so packages like Buffer make it easier to consolidate the week's activity.
- ✓ **Joined-up thinking is the key.** Advertise your channels on your business cards, at the bottom of your emails and on your website.
- ✓ **Stay positive.** We're human beings and, from time to time, we become grumpy, but social isn't the place to vent. If you need to make a complaint then stay calm, and if a customer complains, remember that by dealing with it positively you're demonstrating how great your customer service is.

Use this social media guide to start your social marketing efforts. Do your homework by defining your audiences and choose the best platforms to reach each of them. Do your research, create your plan, integrate your social media icons and links, share your and others' content and keep track of all the activities to keep them aligned with the objectives. Follow those steps and you'll be positioned for success!

## Some of the **free tools** to enhance your social media campaign:

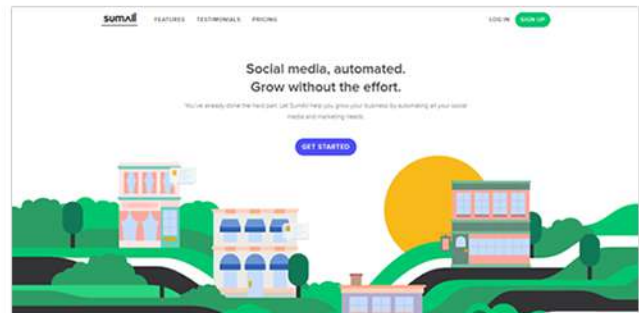
**Social Mention:** A free, web-based app that can track brand mentions across blogs, microblogs, your bookmarks, social media, and more



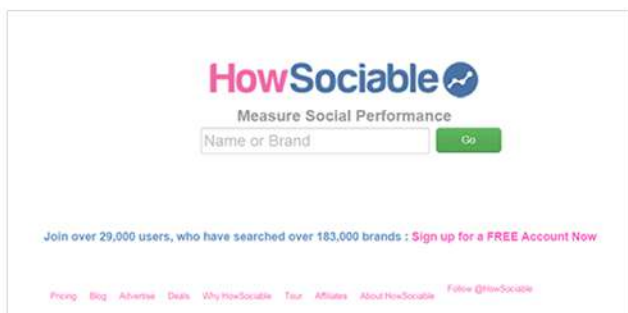
**Hootsuite:** One of the best social media automation tools on the market. It also allows you to customize streams to monitor and search for brand mentions across channels.



**SumAll:** One of the most comprehensive cross-platform reporting tools. The amount of data reporting available is astounding, and you'll receive regular email digests that track trends automatically.



**HowSociable:** Has the ability to see, at a glance, how you're doing on each social network. It shows mentions across 12 sites, including Tumblr, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Reddit, WordPress, Blogger, and Foursquare.



**SocialPilot:** One of the top social media automation tools around. The free version lets you connect up to 5 social media profiles. From each of these, you can post up to 10 times per day.



## Know More

Now that you have gained insights about starting up with social media, you can learn about the SEO and Promotions of the storefront through our other ebooks.

You can even learn about taking your print business online from the links below:

- ✓ *6 Successful Online Printing Companies*
- ✓ *Printing Photobooks? Mobile enabled Web-to-Print is the answer to serve all of your customers*
- ✓ *Taking short run jobs? Web-to-Print can help you bring more business.*
- ✓ *Is Web-to-Print adoptable for large format printers to grow their business online?*
- ✓ *Web-to-Print Solutions for 20 Unique Product Personalization Businesses*
- ✓ *How to increase average order value on your print storefront? (Webinar)*

## Questions?

Your print storefront deserves all the queries related to success of your web-to-print business be addressed. We've got a team of friendly e-commerce experts ready to answer them! We love to help you grow your business. Happy to be a resource.

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[inquiry@designnbuy.com](mailto:inquiry@designnbuy.com)

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[www.designnbuy.com](http://www.designnbuy.com)

### ☎ Contact

+1-347-647-9799