

THE
BIG
SOCIAL
MEDIA
GUIDE —
FOR
NONPROFITS

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INTRODUCTION

By now, social media marketing has become a no-brainer. With a third of the world's population surfing the web at any given moment, the desire to stay virtually connected has now made social channels the #1 online activity.¹

Here are some quick stats to put things into perspective:²

- **27% of total US Internet time** is spent on social networking sites
- **15% of total US mobile time** is spent on social channels
- Conversion rates for social media leads are **13% higher than the average lead conversion rate**
- Approximately **46% of online users rely on social media** when making a purchasing decision

Nonprofit marketers have long known that social media is key to improving engagement and communication with donors. A study by Georgetown University and Waggener Edstrom revealed that 56% of survey respondents said they were inspired to take further action for a cause after reading a story on social media.³ Because social networks are naturally optimized for visual storytelling, nonprofits can demonstrate their impact and engage their communities through a variety of media.

While these networks serve the overarching purposes of storytelling and conversation, not all social platforms are created equal. Each has its own unique function, and understanding each platform's distinct purpose and value will enable you to harness its full potential. At the end of the day, familiarizing yourself with each network's strengths will help you build a marketing strategy that is best suited for your nonprofit organization.

¹ Reuters. "Porn Passed Over as Web Users Become Social." <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/09/16/us-internet-book-life-idUSSP31943720080916>

² HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats About the Current State of Social Media Marketing." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

³ Waggener Endstrom. "Digital Persuasion: How Social Media Motivates Action and Drives Support for Causes." <http://waggenerendstrom.com/downloads/DSCA-Summary.pdf>

How to Read this Guide

Every social network has its own dedicated chapter. Every chapter covers:

Who is the Social Network Best Set Up for?

- Stats and Trends

The Value of the Social Network

- Best Practices
- Engagement

Let's get started!

FACEBOOK

Facebook is the largest social network on the Internet, with 1.23 billion users worldwide.⁴ 74% of all marketers say their lead generation strategies are heavily influenced by Facebook, indicating it has become an indispensable resource for most brands.⁵ In 2013 alone, 52% of marketers say they found a customer through Facebook.

When it comes to expanding a brand's reach and driving traffic to its website, the numbers speak for themselves:⁶

- Companies that have more than 1,000 Facebook likes also **receive nearly 1,400 website visits a day**
- **85% of fans of brands** on Facebook recommend brands to others
- **70% of Facebook users** follow links posted by family and friends⁷
- Half of all Internet users who **don't** have a Facebook account live with someone who does⁸

Facebook also dominates in the increasingly important mobile market, with **78% of all US Facebook users accessing the platform on their smartphones.**⁹ One study showed that Facebook accounts for **over 60% of all mobile social sharing,**¹⁰ making it the most highly engaged social channel on mobile devices.



⁴ HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

⁵ The Guardian. "Facebook: 10 years of social networking, in numbers." <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/feb/04/facebook-in-numbers-statistics>

⁶ HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

⁷ HubSpot. "47 Handy Facebook Stats and Charts." http://cdn1.hubspot.com/hub/53/47_Facebook_Handy_Stats_and_Charts.pdf

⁸ Pew Research Center. "6 New Facts About Facebook." <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/03/6-new-facts-about-facebook/>

⁹ Tech Crunch. "Facebook Reveals 78% Of US Users Are Mobile As It Starts Sharing User Counts By Country." <http://techcrunch.com/2013/08/13/facebook-mobile-user-count/>

¹⁰ Digital Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 50 Amazing Facebook Mobile & App Statistics." http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/facebook-mobile-app-statistics/#.VEgN34vF_y0



Who is it Best Set Up for?

Considering the sheer size of the network, *not* having a Facebook page is more of a gamble than learning how to manage one. 95% of users follow a brand, company, or organization on Facebook, and 47% support causes through the platform.¹¹ If leveraged effectively, your Facebook page can help influence giving and engagement.

However, the increasing amount of content available to users – from political viewpoints to lunch menus – has made it more difficult for brands' to stand out on users' timelines.

Since its inception, brands' marketing strategies on Facebook relied on likes; the more likes you had, the great visibility and engagement you earned.

However, recent — and consistent subsequent — changes to the algorithm that determines what content is shown on timelines have caused Pages' organic reach to drop by as much as 88 percent.¹² As Facebook has explicitly revealed, the changes reflect a new era in Facebook marketing. Today it seems that, if you want your brand to reach supporters, you have to pay.

Don't be too alarmed, however, these changes haven't altogether diminished the importance of Facebook. In fact, one way to interpret these algorithm changes is as an *opportunity* to gain a deeper understanding of your audience and to ultimately become a smarter marketer. Why's that? Because Facebook is encouraging brands to deliver more meaningful content to their audience by rewarding *high-quality* posts with better timeline visibility. This puts the onus on the marketer to understand what the audience wants and to deliver with high quality content.

¹¹ Waggener Edstrom. "Digital Persuasion: How Social Media Motivates Action and Drives Support for Causes." <http://waggeneredstrom.com/downloads/DSCA-Summary.pdf>

¹² Ignite Social Media. "Facebook Brand Pages Suffer 44% Decline in Reach Since December 1." <http://www.ignitesocialmedia.com/facebook-marketing/facebook-brand-pages-suffer-44-decline-reach-since-december-1/>

The Mysterious Algorithm: Smarter Marketing, not Harder Marketing

Facebook changes its algorithm all the time but the more recent updates established a new paradigm that emphasizes quality over quantity. Marketers now need to deliver what the company defines as “high-quality content” to individual users. Critically assess what types of posts matter most to your followers, and modify your posting strategy accordingly.

- **What is “high-quality”?** Facebook’s News Feed manager Lars Backstrom has revealed that the company is paying attention to whether or not the links you share are coming from particularly authoritative sources. Identify a few sources that Facebook would consider “high-quality” and incorporate them into your weekly posts.
- **Use your insights analytics dashboard.** The updated Insights dashboard on your brand page breaks down each post’s performance in both reach and engagement. Note the types of posts that have done well with your audience, and weed out those that have not received much engagement.
- **Be valuable.** With each post, determine whether you are offering a valuable piece of content that encourages a long-lasting, meaningful relationship with your followers. Are you presenting media that is timely and relevant? Are you proactively engaging your fans? Are they excited about sharing your cause and message?



By marketing smarter, rather than harder, you may be able to improve your organization’s reach!

The Value of Facebook

1. Visual Storytelling

Visual content drives engagement, period. According to KISSmetrics, Facebook photos get 53% more likes, 104% more comments, and 84% more click-throughs on links than posts containing only text.¹³ Nonprofits have some incredibly compelling stories to share, and visual storytelling

¹³ Buffer Social. “7 Powerful Facebook Statistics You Should Know for a More Engaging Facebook Page.” <http://blog.bufferapp.com/7-facebook-stats-you-should-know-for-a-more-engaging-page>

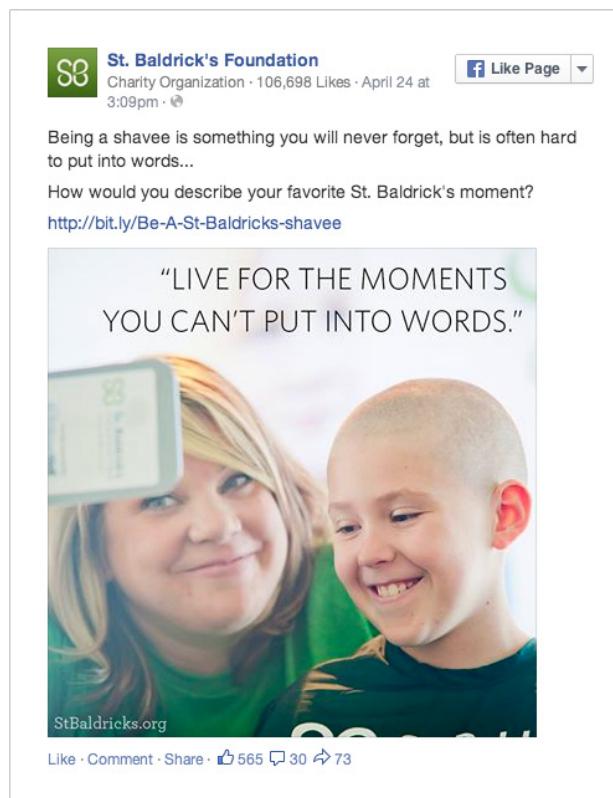
enables your organization to bring supporters face-to-face with the heart and impact of your mission.

Explore what various forms of content — whether they are photos of beneficiaries or behind the scenes clips at the office — drive the most discussion on your page. Remember that Facebook both informs and activates, so try to post a mix of content that engages people directly on the platform, as well as sends them to your site (like a donation page or your blog), where they might feel compelled to more actively engage with your cause.

2. Community Building

Communication on Facebook tends to be organic and conversational, and this fluid exchange offers a unique opportunity for nonprofits to directly nurture an involved community of followers. By asking questions and replying to comments and feedback, you can build more personal relationships with supporters that will generate social advocates for your cause.

Take this example from St. Baldrick's Foundation. They posted a photo



and posed a question, expressing an interest in their fans' stories. In doing so, they communicated to their followers that they're all about building genuine community.



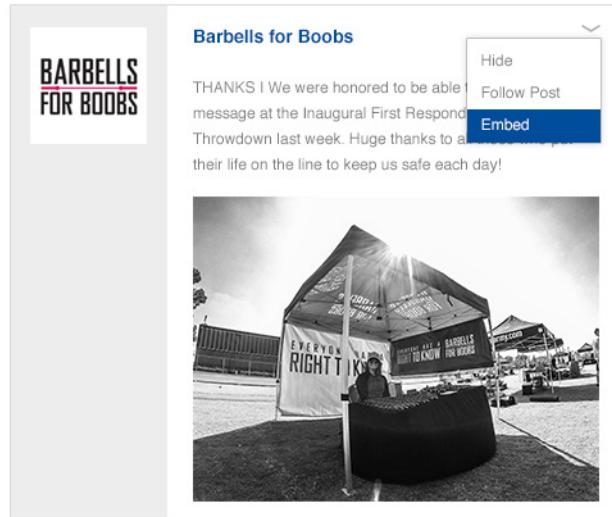
Some Other Ways you Might Consider Using Facebook

GROW YOUR E-MAIL LIST

To ensure your supporters don't miss a beat about your cause, encourage your Facebook fans to subscribe to your newsletter. Also, make sure to add social media sharing buttons to your e-mails and blog posts, so subscribers can easily share your content with their personal networks.

EMBED YOUR ORGANIZATION'S FACEBOOK POSTS

This is exciting because it allows supporters to **engage with your Facebook page or posts directly on your website or blog**. Try replacing static images in your blogs with a Facebook post that contains photo or video to encourage readers to immediately interact with your Facebook page and increase your posts' engagement level.



With some good storytelling, adaptation to Facebook's constantly evolving features, and an eye on metrics, you may find your Facebook page to be a key resource in improving your organization's overall reach.



TWITTER

Since its launch in 2006, Twitter remains one of the ten most-visited websites, boasting 232 million active users worldwide.^{14,15} With users sending over 400 million tweets per day, the micro-blogging network has evolved into a platform that allows people to consume news, exchange ideas, and connect with a global community in real time.

- **36% of all marketers found a customer through Twitter** in 2013¹⁶
- **47% of users** who follow a brand on Twitter are more likely to visit that brand's website¹⁷
- **72% of Twitter followers of a brand** are more likely to purchase something from that brand¹⁹

Although tweets are brief, the platform is built specifically to facilitate timely conversation, connect with unlikely contacts, and discover chatter around particular topics. Cause-specific organization are well-served by Twitter because it allows them to easily uncover and connect with their audience, engage with like-minded organizations and leverage current events to drive campaigns.

Who is it Best Set Up for?

According to the Pew Research Center, the largest portion of Twitter users is made up of 18-29 year-olds that have at least some college education.¹⁹

¹⁴ Business Insider. "Twitter is Surprisingly Small Compared to a Bunch of Other Apps and Online Companies." <http://www.businessinsider.com/twitter-user-base-compared-to-other-apps-and-online-companies-2013-11>

¹⁵ Washington Post. "Twitter turns 7: Users send over 400 million tweets per day." http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/technology/twitter-turns-7-users-send-over-400-million-tweets-per-day/2013/03/21/2925ef60-9222-11e2-bdea-e32ad90da239_story.html

¹⁶ HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

¹⁷ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 220 Amazing Twitter Statistics." http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/march-2013-by-the-numbers-a-few-amazing-twitter-stats/2/#.VD71govF_xZ

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Pew Research Internet Project. "72% of Online Adults are Social Networking Site Users." <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/social-networking-sites/Findings/Twitter.aspx>



The Millennial generation should be of great interest to any brand or organization, because they account for \$200 billion in direct purchasing power and will inherit a \$41 trillion transfer of wealth from older generations.²⁰ As this generation transitions into its peak earning years, nonprofit organizations would do well to focus on how to engage these future donors. And with Millennials making up more than half of its users in the US, Twitter is a great place to initiate engagement with this cohort of supporters.²¹

In addition to its popularity with Millennials, Twitter is also experiencing solid user growth across other age groups.²² Countering the popular belief that social media is only for the younger generation, the fastest growing demographic of Twitter users is 55-65 years old.

Regardless of where your audience falls demographically, having a voice in the mobile-optimized Twitterverse can help you expand your visibility and engagement with your supporters.

The Value of Twitter

1. Tracking Trends

Twitter is an excellent way to keep an ear to the ground to discover what's happening and being talked about, both locally and globally. By utilizing the platform as a micro-news aggregator, you'll be providing your organization with ample opportunities to leverage real-time events to engage with



²⁰ Foundation Center. "Bridging the Generational Gap: Increasing Millennial Giving." <http://newyorkblog.foundationcenter.org/2013/07/bridging-the-generational-gap-increasing-millennial-giving.html>

²¹ FutureCast. "How do Millennials behave on social, mobile and the web?" <http://millennialmarketing.com/2013/04/how-do-millennials-behave-on-social-mobile-and-the-web/>

²² Buffer Social. "10 Surprising Social Media Statistics that might make you Rethink your Social Strategy." <http://blog.bufferapp.com/10-surprising-social-media-statistics-that-will-make-you-rethink-your-strategy>



like-minded individuals or thought-leaders, campaign for your cause, or curate content most relevant to your audience.

To find out what's trending on Twitter, utilize the "trending" widget directly under your profile picture. You can set the widget to display local or global trends. You can also use the search widget to looking for conversations about other trends or topics (using either a specific hashtag or a normal search query).

The screenshot shows the Twitter homepage with a search bar at the top containing the query "nonprofit marketing trends". On the left, there are navigation menus for "Home", "Notifications", "#Discover", and "Me". Below these are filters: "Everything" (selected), "All people", and "Everywhere". A modal window titled "Trends" is open in the center, prompting the user to "Search locations". It also says, "If you want to stop seeing tailored Trends, choose a new location now." Below this is a "Nearby Locations" section with a grid of city names: Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Diego; Tijuana, Mexicali, Fresno; Las Vegas, San Jose, San Francisco; and Sacramento. At the bottom of the modal are buttons for "Get tailored Trends" and "Done". To the right of the modal, there is a sidebar titled "Who to follow" listing accounts like "China US Focus", "Joan Walsh", and "SDCityBeat". At the bottom right, there is a small image of a group of people.

2. Building Influence and Community

Hashtags make it possible to stream tweets relating to a particular topic or event, enabling you to create, join or follow conversations. This is an incredibly powerful tool to find relevant audiences and communities, and then build a presence or influence within them.

To understand what hashtags your community uses and who the key players are, start with a simple search query. You'll be able to identify influencers by selecting "top tweets" on the search filter.



Additionally, if you're really starting from scratch, try using a web application like BuzzSumo to find out who the key influencers are in your sector.



Begin strengthening your presence on Twitter by following key influencers, the users who are engaging with them (for example, favoriting or retweeting their tweets), and joining in on the conversation.

Adding value to these conversations, rather than sending out links directly to your site or constantly

shouting out your cause, is the best mode of engagement on Twitter.

Examples of How and What to Post on Twitter

SHOUT-OUTS TO YOUR FUNDRAISERS

If you've collected Twitter handles through your fundraising registration process, take the time to give your supporters a personal shout out. Not only will this broadcasted thank-you make your donors feel special, but it can also increase the visibility of your organization. You can also include a link to the individual's peer-2-peer fundraising page as a way of appreciating and supporting their efforts.

 **charity: water** @charitywater · Dec 30
Today the @3326ride crew finishes their 6 day, 1300km ride for clean water.
They've raised \$58K for Cambodia! 33-26.com

[Collapse](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

RETWEETS 12	FAVORITES 14
-----------------------	------------------------


8:55 PM - 30 Dec 2013 · Details



RETWEETS AND REPLIES

Spreading great tweets and relevant content from other Twitter feeds is a valuable way to share information with your network. Retweet others' tweets that are relevant, supportive or that you think your audience would find interesting. People do notice and appreciate your RTs!

Maintaining a conversation on Twitter also means responding to your followers when they tweet at you.²³ According to HubSpot, **25% of consumers who complain about products on Twitter expect a response within 1 hour.**²⁴ Reply to tweets in a timely and helpful fashion, and the rest of your network will also see that you value your supporters' feedback and perspectives.

LINKS AND VISUAL MEDIA

Tweets that include links are 86% more likely to get retweeted — a link can increase RTs and drive traffic back to your website.²⁵

Photos and videos attached to posts automatically

preview on users' feeds on mobile and web streams. This allows your posts to be more visible on a user's crowded feed. **Tweets with a photo now garner 5 times the engagement as text-based tweets.**²⁶ The value of visual storytelling applies to Twitter now more than ever before.

The image shows a tweet from the official UNICEF Twitter account (@UNICEF). The tweet is dated February 6 and discusses the impact of vaccination efforts, specifically mentioning a 78% decrease in measles deaths between 2000 and 2012, which resulted in approximately 13.8 million lives saved. A link to the source is provided. Below the tweet is a photograph of a young boy in a red and blue shirt getting a vaccine injection from a medical professional wearing a white coat and a blue cap. Other people are visible in the background under a yellow tent, suggesting a mobile vaccination clinic.

²³ HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Buffer Social. "10 Surprising New Twitter Stats to Help You Reach More Followers." <http://blog.bufferapp.com/10-new-twitter-stats-twitter-statistics-to-help-you-reach-your-followers>

²⁶ Shift. "Twitter Engagement Study: Photo vs. Text Tweets." <http://blog.shift.com/blog/2014/1/17/twitter-engagement-study-photo-vs-text-tweets.html>



3. Powering Global Campaigns

Twitter is based on the premise that anyone can reach you and you can reach anyone else. It's a great platform to join global movements or start them.

#GivingTuesday is a great example of a campaign that relied on Twitter for momentum and growth.

The #GivingTuesday campaign is the charitable counterpart to shopping mega-events Black Friday and Cyber Monday. It was launched in 2012 around a simple hashtag and grew 90% year over year.

In 2013, the nationally trending #GivingTuesday was tweeted an average of 11,208 times per hour.²⁷

Useful Statistics About Twitter Engagement

Buffer recently recounted some statistics indicating that certain kinds of tweets can generate higher engagement levels.²⁸ With these stats in mind, here are a couple more tips to help your organization find its tweeting sweet spot:

- Tweet with **less than 100 characters** (120-130 if you include a link)
- Include one or two hashtags, **as opposed to three or more**
- Ask for a retweet (**and spell out the word “retweet”!**)

According to social media scientist Dan Zarrella, the timing of your tweets can also influence their exposure and engagement:²⁹

- Tweets posted in the afternoon tend to have higher click-through rates
- The highest percentage of retweets occur around 5 PM
- Click-through rates spike midweek and on the weekends

²⁷ Giving Tuesday. "#GivingTuesday: December 3, 2013." <http://givingtuesday.co.nz/uploads/sites/giving/files/Toolkit%20Items/2013%20Results%20Infographic.pdf>

²⁸ Buffer Social. "10 Surprising New Twitter Stats." <http://blog.bufferapp.com/10-new-twitter-stats-twitter-statistics-to-help-you-reach-your-followers>

²⁹ KISSmetrics. "The Science of Social Timing Part 1: Social Networks." <http://blog.kissmetrics.com/science-of-social-timing-1/>



Conclusion

If leveraged effectively and creatively, Twitter can be an incredible tool for connecting your organization with a wide audience. You can increase your exposure and engagement with just a few tweets a day, and following news and other influential voices in the nonprofit sector will enable you to add value to your followers' feeds while also keeping pace with current trends.



VINE

Vine is a free video-sharing app owned by Twitter. It allows users to film a 6-second micro-video on their smartphones. It was the most downloaded app on Apple's App stores, only twelve weeks after its release. Since then, Vine has grown 403% between the first and third quarters of 2013, making it the **world's fastest growing app.**³⁰

Researchers speculate that video will comprise **two-thirds of the world's mobile data traffic by 2017.** Vine can be a powerful visual storytelling tool to expand your organization's reach into the mobile market.³¹

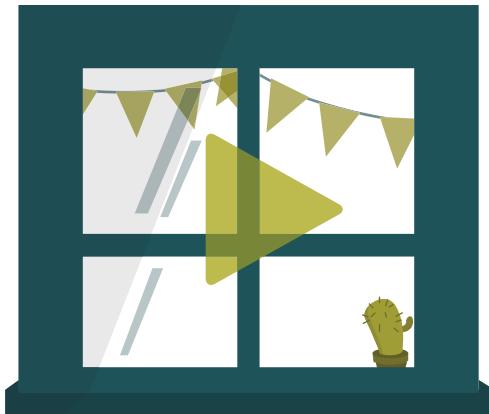
Who is it Best Set Up for?

The application is an affordable way for both small and large organizations to create engaging, beautifully shot and edited video content that can quickly generate social media buzz.

The Value of Vine

Vine describes its posts as “little windows into the people, settings, ideas, and objects that make up your life. They’re quirky, and we think that’s part of what makes them so special.”³²

These micro-videos help humanize your brand and express its personality, and their brevity forces you to



³⁰ Mashable. "The 10 Fastest Growing Apps This Year." <http://mashable.com/2013/10/21/fastest-growing-apps/>

³¹ Digiday. "15 Stats You Need to Know About Vine and Instagram Video." <http://digiday.com/brands/15-stats-vine-and-instagram-video/>

³² Vine. "Introducing Vine." <https://vine.co/blog/introducing-vine>



get creative and present only the best content to your followers. Their “snackable” format is especially effective for engaging younger supporters, who are used to breezing through content.

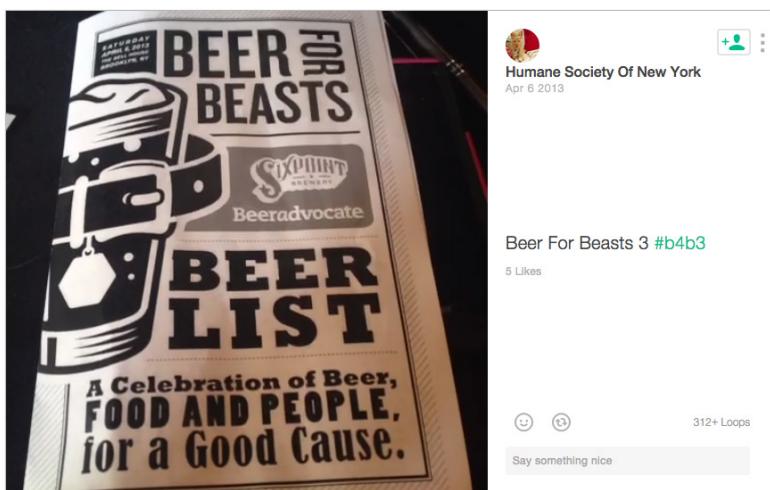
Vines are embeddable, so you can display them on your own blog or website and you can tweet them or post them on Facebook to help your organization stand out across your followers’ feeds.

Just a Few of the Many Creative Ways to Shoot your Vines

You can film your micro-videos in either a continuous stream or in individual clips that can create a stop-motion effect. Whichever filming technique you implement, there are tons of ways to shoot fun, engaging Vines for your organization:

GIVE A SNEAK PEEK

Tweet about an upcoming fundraising event and attach a Vine preview. Document volunteers getting ready, participants strapping on their gear, or intriguing shots of the venue. This 6-second teaser can build both anticipation and a sense of urgency to get involved. You can also give a sneak peek into an upcoming development within your organization, such as a website redesign or new project.



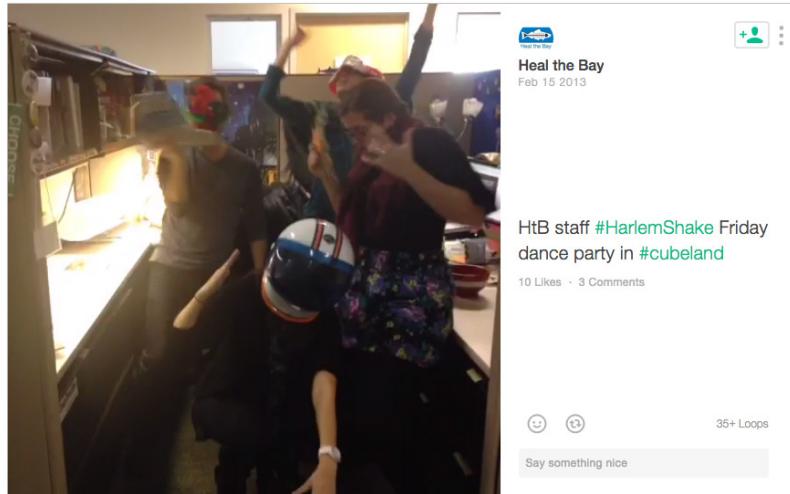
⌚ See the Vine

The New York Humane Society filmed a behind the scenes Vine of a fundraiser to get participants pumped!



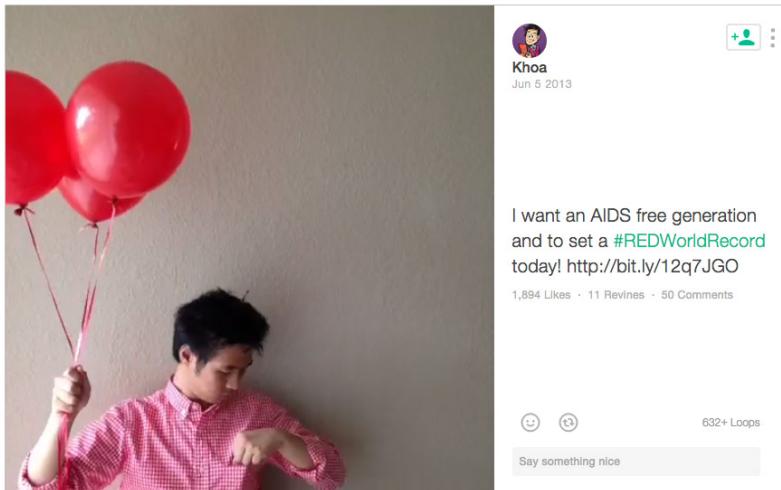
HUMANIZE YOUR BRAND

Show followers what happens behind the scenes of your organization. Try filming a short “day in the life” to give supporters a window into what happens inside the office or in the field. Doing this will enhance their sense of access and humanize your brand.



⌚ See the Vine

Heal the Bay invites supporters into an office dance party that shows off their staff's playful side.



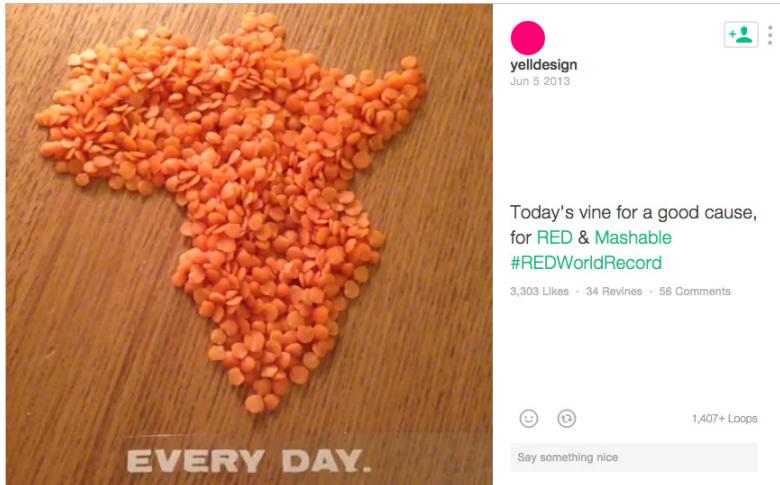
⌚ See the Vine

To raise awareness for the fight against AIDS, Mashable and (RED) mobilized followers to help set the first ever Vine world record for the most videos submitted for a single cause.³³

INVOLVE YOUR SUPPORTERS

You can launch a Vine campaign on Twitter by asking supporters to tweet their own Vines with a campaign hashtag. Encouraging supporters to participate and share their videos will also help your organization gain visibility across their individual networks.

³³ Mashable. "These 20 Vine Videos Helped Set a World Record." <http://mashable.com/2013/06/07/red-vine-world-record/>



[See the Vine](#)

SHARE A FACT ABOUT YOUR CAUSE

Visually presenting a statistic or fact can be a powerful way to raise awareness for your cause. Take advantage of Vine's stop-motion features to create a post that'll bring numbers into perspective for followers.

SAY THANK YOU

Giving a personalized shout out with a Vine can immediately showcase your genuine appreciation for your donors. Thanking someone face-to-face is more personal than typing them a message, and this public display will also allow others to see that you truly value your supporters.



[See the Vine](#)

Diabetes UK implements this approach to make a fundraiser feel special.



Conclusion

The free Twitter-centric app can help you reach a vast online audience, and with some creativity and skill, you can craft visual productions that will delight supporters and deepen engagement.

INSTAGRAM



There are now 200 million people in the worldwide Instagram community.³⁴ 55 million photos are posted each day, and **8,500 likes happen per second**. Launched in 2010 and later acquired by Facebook in 2012, the app is still one of the fastest growing social networks on the market. Over the past year, the mobile app saw a 66% growth in terms of new users.³⁵

After rolling out a video component in June 2013, Instagram became a single platform for two forms of visual storytelling: image-sharing and short-form video.

Targeted towards mobile social sharing, Instagram allows users to capture photos or 15-second videos with their smartphones and apply filters to their content. On top of its visual storytelling faculties, Instagram's capability of being shared across multiple networks, including Facebook, Twitter, Email, Foursquare, and Flickr, makes it a malleable marketing tool for nonprofit organizations.

Who is it Best Set Up for?

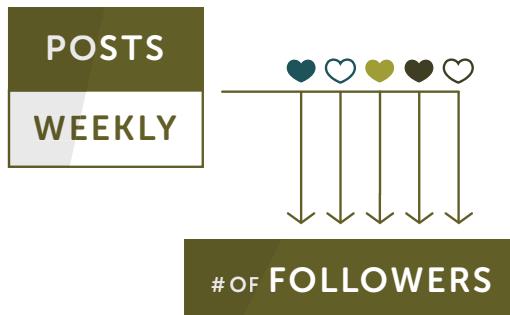
Because the mobile app is free, easily shareable, and iPhone and Android-user friendly, every organization has the budget to use Instagram as a visual storytelling platform. In fact, 65% of the world's top 100 brands have an Instagram account.



Percentage
of world's
top 100
brands that
have an
Instagram

³⁴ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 100+ Interesting Instagram Statistics." http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/important-instagram-stats/#.VEGDCYvF_xZ

³⁵ ClickZ. "Facebook and YouTube Lead Mobile Online Activity." <http://www.clickz.com/clickz/news/2319940/facebook-and-youtube-lead-mobile-online-activity-study>



A recent Simply Measured study on brands' Instagram accounts indicates a direct correlation between posting more on a weekly basis and an increased number of followers.³⁶ This implies that by being active on the network and posting compelling visual content, nonprofit organizations of any scope can engage followers and increase their reach.

The Value of Instagram

An Instagram is worth a thousand words. Instagram is effective for marketing purposes because it caters to our affinity for the visual.³⁷ According to HubSpot, **40% of people respond better to visuals than plain text.** And because the brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than text, nonprofit organizations can use photos to transcend lingual boundaries and instantly connect supporters with their story.³⁸

A recent Buffer report studied how the Fortune 500 use Instagram and found that certain types of posts have been optimizing engagement on the platform.³⁹ Here are some pieces of data to keep in mind when creating content that will resonate with your Instagram audience:

- **Instagram photos are more popular than videos.** Brands are seeing more engagement with photos than with video. However, Unruly released data saying 40% of the 1,000 most shared Instagram videos come from brands. Don't be afraid to test out what works best for you. Diversifying your photo and video content can help you deduce which content gets the most engagement with your audience.⁴⁰

³⁶ Marketing Charts. "Top Brands Paying More Attention to Instagram." <http://www.marketingcharts.com/online-top-brands-paying-more-attention-to-instagram-29457/>

³⁷ HubSpot. "19 Reasons You Should Include Visual Content in Your Marketing." <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog-tabid/6307/bid/33423/19-Reasons-You-Should-Include-Visual-Content-in-Your-Marketing-Data.aspx>

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Buffer Social. "10 Surprising New Instagram Statistics to Get the Most out of the Picture Social Network." <http://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-stats-instagram-tips>

⁴⁰ Search Engine Watch. "Brands Account for 40% of Top 1,000 Most Shared Instagram Videos." <http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2302585/Brands-Account-for-40-of-Top-1000-Most-Shared-Instagram-Videos>

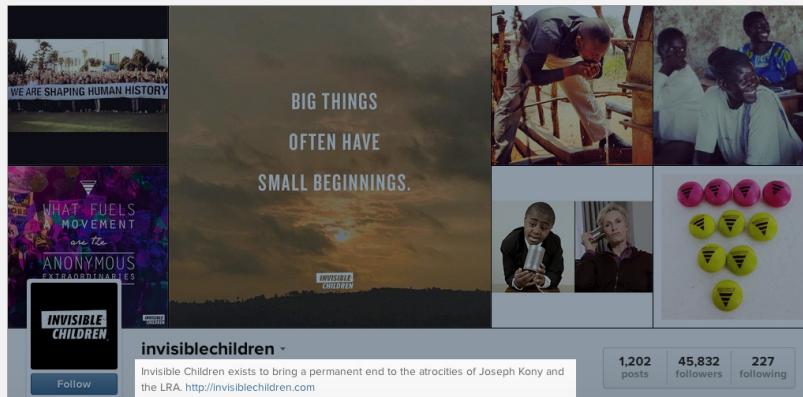


- **Hashtags help for content discovery and curation.** Hashtags (#) allow users to search for images using certain keywords or trending topics. Users want to share, curate, and discover other images that interest them, so adding relevant hashtags to your content can make them more discoverable to users with the same interests.
- **Normal (or No Filter) is the most popular filter, but not the most engaging.** Normal is used the most, but Mayfair seems to garner the highest number of likes and comments. When choosing your filters, consider whether that filter will both make your photo stick out and also generate the right kind of attention from your audience.

Best Practices

Before you dive into the platform, make sure to complete a few steps:

- Connect your Instagram account to your Facebook and Twitter to easily share your content
- Let your supporters know that you're on Instagram by email, your Facebook page, or your website using a follow icon



- Complete your profile and include a link to your website in your description



Once you've completed the logistics, here are 8 ways you can kickoff your visual storytelling on Instagram:

DEMONSTRATE YOUR IMPACT

Photos from the field are powerful ways to connect to supporters on a deeper emotional level, and they can help invoke action from potential donors as they come face-to-face with your work and its impact.



Notice how **@pencilsofpromise** captures a shot of beneficiaries holding pencils to represent the organization's impact in the community.

HIGHLIGHT VOLUNTEERS

Showcase the direct influence your supporters are having on the ground. Taking photos or videos of your volunteers alongside beneficiaries can help build trust with donors as they see your organization's impact in motion.



@oxfamamerica does a great job of highlighting their volunteers in action.



SHOWCASE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Take photos or a video of your achievements to tangibly show current and prospective donors how their gifts are making a difference. This will enhance their feeling of impact and can encourage them to remain long-time donors.

This is what the @mercycorps upgrade looks like. Pulleys that minimize the time and labor women must spend fetching water, a cover to keep the water source clean, and troughs around the outer edges to catch runoff for livestock to drink. It's revolutionary out here in #Niger. Photo: Liz Hummer/Mercy Corps

alannashaikh_datthao_busyzubee and 67 others like this.

stephaniexo_myers Inspiring!!! ❤️

Leave a comment... ...

@mercycorps showcases the new pulley system that donors have helped make possible.

ANNOUNCE EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

Visuals and large text are attention grabbers, so inform your followers about your organization's upcoming events or news with an Instagram photo.

Include additional details in your caption.

invisiblechildren

4 months ago

Tomorrow at 3 PM PST, we'll be announcing the next winner of our #zeroLRA Uganda trip giveaway during a live webcast from our San Diego headquarters. Save the date (and time).

_n1kk1_julia_barreira_can32 and 1,320 others like this.

jedidiahjenkins I love this

meganne11 @invisiblechildren I want to go!!!!

c_dawgggg How do you apply?

cremedelacreme I wanna go!

abbybabil HOW DOES ONE APPLY

mitchfrancis more info?

matsphotoplace I want it!

Leave a comment... ...

Not only does @invisiblechildren's post build hype for their bi-weekly Uganda trip giveaway to top fundraisers, it also excites supporters about mobilizing their own fundraising efforts.



malalafund 3 months ago
#Malala filming with #CBSThisMorning discussing her next big project!

Ikassiech_gypsymantony, eifagazibaba and 1,013 others like this.

malalafund interviewed by @norahodonnell

xandra_x3 I think it's great what you do. :) nice greetings from Austria @malalafund

kellypkayani Your amazing

susan_cletus Great

just_sinead Malala your words moved me to tears and I am old enough to be your mother! So many girls in this country don't understand that education is a privilege. I will be ordering your book for one of them.

marthaasmiles @just_sinead do you know who is?

Report inappropriate Embed

Leave a comment...

@malalafund gives followers a sneak peek into the young activist's filming session and builds excitement for her next big project.

GO BEHIND THE SCENES

Take followers beyond the curtains for a more intimate, behind-the-scenes look at your organization.

Document ideation sessions taking place, staffers prepping an event, or a website rebranding in the making.

SAY THANK-YOU

Thank supporters while documenting your fundraising campaign in action, whether it involves biking cross-country or shaving someone's hair.

invisiblechildren 2 months ago
A MASSIVE thank you to Julianne Ashcraft for donating \$1,000 for Joey, Shaun and Chris to shave their heads on our #zeroLRA broadcast from Chandler, Arizona. They're trying to raise \$2,500 for our programs in central Africa. Watch the locks fall ==> livestream.com/invisiblechildren

nicolowolly3, nickstersmiles, jessmaier and 533 others like this.

nightcraw13r @invisiblechildren WE RAISED \$3,000!!!! THANK U!!! #nohairontcare

yeahahuh22 Great job Shaun!!!!

nightcraw13r @nickt044 @chrissennell32

jasonradical Legends! *

Leave a comment...

For a few @invisiblechildren fundraisers, it was the latter.

TIP: Drive traffic to your website by posting a photo of the activity on Instagram (mid-process can be most exciting) and then directing followers to your website in your caption to watch the full footage.



RUN A CONTEST OR PHOTO SERIES

Expand your visibility and get supporters involved by asking them to submit their own entries for a photo challenge or a monthly series. To enter, ask them to use a customized hashtag and to tag your

A screenshot of an Instagram post from @unicef. The post shows a close-up of a hand writing the hashtag #ENDVIOLENCE in chalk on a dark, textured ground. The Instagram interface shows 7 months ago, 1,337 likes, and a comment section with several users sharing their own chalk drawings.

unicef
7 months ago
Here's @dementia's entry to our #ENDviolence - Stamp It Out photo contest. What's yours? Share tagging #ENDviolence and @UNICEF!

leoniedxxd_j_abudargham authenticstar and 737 others like this.

zoubidadebbagh
My photo doesn't appear in the hastag category, you can see it in my profile.

zessan
Did u see mine? I tagged you!

mariethaa
You can see mine too on my profile. Hope u like it :)

inesp27
I have one!!!

bighatta
Cool

shayan_aghzadeh
@armanaghzadeh

Leave a comment...

@unicef asked followers to join the global movement against child violence by uploading their own pictures, hashtagging #EndViolence and mentioning the organization.

organization (by adding "@username"). Not only will the tag directly mention your organization to all of your supporter's Instagram followers, but it will also link to your profile and notify you when someone submits an entry.

INSPIRE

Inspirational quotes can motivate followers, fundraisers and supporters to take action. Also use hashtags related to the image itself to expand your reach and attract new followers.

A screenshot of an Instagram post from @invisiblechildren. The post features a photo of a panel discussion on stage with several people seated. Overlaid text on the image reads: "WE HAVE ENOUGH PEOPLE WHO TELL IT LIKE IT IS - NOW WE COULD USE A FEW WHO TELL IT LIKE IT CAN BE." The Instagram interface shows 4 months ago, 1,337 likes, and a comment section with users reacting to the quote.

invisiblechildren
4 months ago
kelseyan3029, haus____ ladybrooke143 and 1,337 others like this.

katysn
@missalexisjones @yael @sophiabush

ebis77
@prettyjoeyboy

benniakka
Wooo!

tifst
Truth!!

micaelastevens
This was my favorite part of the whole thing! @sophiabush @missalexisjones @yael @prettyjoeyboy

aeguzman67
My favorite panel!

jaerae144
Who rules the world? GUUUUURLS!

djmorgan
Get it @mitsmitsmits.

care_b3ar

Leave a comment...



Instagram Video vs. Vine

When it comes to video production, it can be difficult to know when to choose Instagram's 15-second video option or Vine's 6-second one. There have also been recent updates to the networks that are important to consider. Let's take a look at the current key differences between the two platforms:⁴¹

	 INSTAGRAM	 VINE
User base	200 million	40 million
Length	15 seconds	6 seconds
Clip editability	Delete last clip	Delete, reorganize, or replace any shot ⁴²
Drafts	✗	✓
Custom still frame	✓	✗
Filters	✓	✗
Video importability	✓	✓
Looping	✗	✓
Image straightening	✓	✗

⁴¹ Tech Crunch. "Instagram Video Vs. Vine: What's The Difference?" <http://techcrunch.com/2013/06/20/instagram-video-vs-vine-whats-the-difference/>

⁴² Tech Crunch. "Vine Update Lets Users Edit Videos, Save Multiple Drafts." <http://techcrunch.com/2013/10/24/vine-update-finally-lets-users-edit-videos-save-multiple-drafts/>



Content Better Suited for Instagram Video

The main structural difference between the platforms is that Instagram gives you 9 more seconds for your visual story. While you can apply our Vine suggestions to Instagram videos too, there are a few ideas that can be better communicated with Instagram's longer format. Some of these larger ideas can include:

- **Promotional Campaigns.** Using Instagram Video to launch a new campaign will give you extra time to demonstrate the campaign's purpose and explain how supporters should participate.
- **Volunteer Storytelling.** Ask your supporters and volunteers to take a video and share why they are personally connected to your cause. Remind them to caption their post with a designated hashtag and to share their post on Instagram.



⌚ See the Instagram video

@twloha (To Write Love On Her Arms) asked supporters to share their personal experiences as a part of their "The Story of..." series, which they reposted from their other social sites onto their Instagram account, instantly expanding their audience.



- **Achievements Reel.** As a thank-you to your donors after an end of the year campaign, create a montage of video clips showcasing your organization's different achievements.

charitywater
2 months ago

We made a video to celebrate the highlights of 2013 and thank you, our amazing supporters, for making it all happen. Go see the full version on our blog: charitywater.org/blog

hteharun, ervinkurti13, sweeterlikehoney89 and 3,113 others like this.

@farahalhindi such a great year. ps you're good, @tito385.

ecleenie Great stuff!

chrangstu Great stuff!

jarelroxas @matthewswope this video doe...

ab_misbah This is so beautiful

ab_misbah Thankyou for spreading happiness

cynthiarodriguz AMAZING! ☺

magnifique_mari Waaat is IIFE!!!!!! burde mnn

Leave a comment... ▾

⌚ See the Instagram video

@charitywater posted a video celebrating their 2013 highlights, and they directed followers to their blog in the caption for additional footage.

At the end of the day, the question isn't which is the better platform. It comes down to a matter of content and how to harness either channel's distinct strengths. Ask yourself, who is my audience? What content will engage them? Where will they discover that content? Hopefully this will help you create the right video content that will be most engaging on either network.



PINTEREST

Pinterest, the 3-year-old social network that allows users to visually share, collect, and discover new interests, now has over **70 million users and 500,000 business accounts.**⁴³ From 2012 to 2013, it grew 66.52% in website traffic referrals, and conversion rates for Pinterest traffic are 50% higher than those from other traffic sites.^{44,45} In other words, Pinterest is a powerful referring site and can help you gain brand recognition.

The social network allows users to post, or “pin”, photos or videos to their own collections of pins (known as “pinboards”). **80% of total Pinterest pins are repins**, which means your visual content has a high chance of being shared and can direct traffic to your website.⁴⁶ Posts can also be shared on Facebook, Twitter, and email to increase your reach across other social channels.

Who is it Best Set Up for?

Nonprofits can leverage Pinterest to drive traffic to their websites and blogs. On top of uploading and pinning images directly onto a Pinterest account, any organization can make their visual content pinnable by creating a Pinterest business account and adding a Pin It Button to its website pages. This enables website visitors to pin your visual content on Pinterest and helps expand your reach. In other words, Pinterest generates website traffic for all.

⁴³ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 140 Amazing Pinterest Statistics." <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/pinterest-stats/#.Uug3UmTTn-k>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

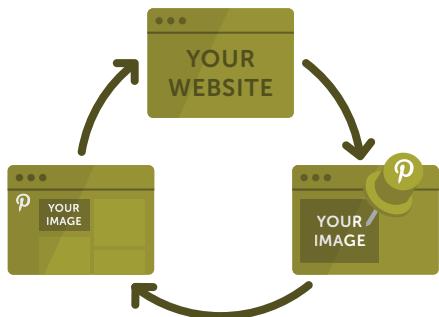
⁴⁵ Social Media Today. "5 Pinterest Stats to Consider." <http://socialmediatoday.com/gillpolard/1839431/5-pinterest-stats-consider>

⁴⁶ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers." <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/pinterest-stats/#.Uug3UmTTn-k>



Help your Website Visitors Help you

Pinterest launched business accounts in November 2012, making it easier for organizations to connect their profiles to Twitter and Facebook accounts, monitor account activity with free analytics, and add Pinterest buttons and widgets to their websites or blogs. These buttons and widgets allow you to



make your website images “pinnable”, creating a closed-loop process where website visitors can help you distribute your visual content more easily on the social network, expose your brand to new audiences, and drive traffic back to your site.

Pinterest can generate the embed codes for these buttons for you, so make sure to include them on your website pages to display the value of your Pinterest account and grow your Pinterest following:

- **Pin It Button.** This button allows people to pin an item from your website to Pinterest, and every pin will include a link back to the original source. Although these are no-follow links (links that don't boost your page's ranking with search engines) and cannot directly impact your SEO strategy, they still allow pinners to find your content and land on your website in just one click.
- **Follow Button.** Embed this button to allow site visitors to follow your Pinterest account.
- **Profile Widget.** This widget displays up to 30 of your latest pins anywhere on your website, which can help you demonstrate the value of your Pinterest account to potential followers.
- **Board Widget.** You can show up to 30 of your favorite board's latest pins. Using this widget on particular pages or sections of your website can help you target content from specific pinboards.



The Value of Pinterest

The vision of Pinterest is to “connect everyone in the world through the ‘things’ they find interesting.”

You can increase brand awareness on the network by showcasing the *lifestyle* your organization encourages. Create great pinboards that relate to the everyday needs and concerns of your target audience to build trust with your prospective donors and show that you hold similar values.

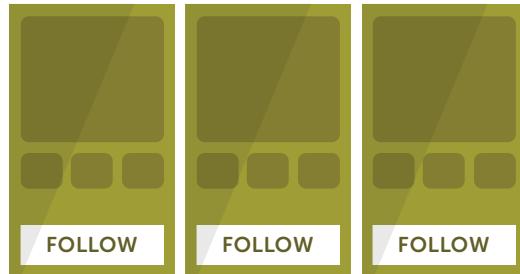
Best Practices

MAKE AWESOME, TOPIC-SPECIFIC PINBOARDS

Pinterest allows users two “follow” options when they encounter content they enjoy: they can either follow a specific board by a Pinterest user, or a user’s account. This means that one of your boards can have more followers than your overall account.

Therefore, making boards on specific topics is not only critical to getting found amongst all the content on Pinterest, but it can attract followers who are passionate about a particular subject. Make sure to create unique and keyword-conscious board names as well.

FOLLOW ALL



PUT EFFORT INTO YOUR DESCRIPTIONS

The 500-character description for each pin is the largest text-based section on Pinterest, so make sure to include any SEO-relevant keywords or contextual info for your pins. HubSpot Social Media Scientist Dan Zarrella researched 11,000 pins and found the content with the most engagement (re-pins and comments) had descriptions ranging from 200-310 words.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Dan Zarrella. “[Infographic] How to Get More Pins and Repins on Pinterest.” <http://danzarrella.com/infographic-how-to-get-more-pins-and-repins-on-pinterest.html#>



INCLUDE LINKS IN PIN DESCRIPTIONS

Always add a link back to your website, blog, or landing pages in the descriptions of your pins. Not only will this highlight the image's association with your organization, but it can lead interested followers back to your website to learn more about your organization.

BE AUTHENTIC AND STRAIGHTFORWARD

Rather than being direct calls-to-action zones, your Pinterest boards should be designed around your prospective donors' lifestyle, interests, and everyday needs. Use terminology in your "About" section and board names that your target audience is actually using in their everyday lives.

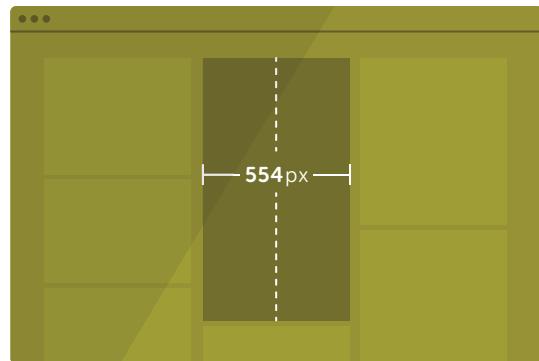
The screenshot shows the Pinterest profile for Pencils of Promise. At the top, there is a profile picture of a young girl, the organization's name, and a brief description: "Pencils of Promise believes every child should have access to quality education. We create schools, programs, and global communities around the common goal of education." Below the description are links to "New York City · www.pencilsofpromise.org" and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. To the right, there is a sidebar titled "Pins from:" with logos for Water.org, TODAY, and Half the Sky Movement. Below the profile information, there are stats: 12 Boards, 229 Pins, 64 Likes, a red "Follow All" button, a "Send Profile" button, 1,342 Followers, and 55 Following. The main feed displays several boards: "PoP on the Ground" (46 Pins), "Pencil Art" (24 Pins), "Creative Fundraising" (27 Pins), "Words We Live By" (38 Pins), "PoP Videos" (with a video thumbnail), "Info that Inspires" (with an infographic about the ripple effect), "PoP Shop" (with a call to order a creative recreation shoe), and "Tech that PoPs!" (with a yellow placeholder box). Each board has a "Follow" button.

For instance, Pencils of Promise, an organization creating schools, programs, and global communities that encourages quality education for all children, has boards titled "Pencil Art" and "Books that Inspire Us". These kinds of boards relate directly to the organization's educational mission while still including everyday words relevant to donors' lifestyles.



USE TALL IMAGES

Images on Pinterest have no height restriction, but their width is limited to 554 pixels. A HubSpot study showed that the greater the image height, the more often it was repinned.⁴⁸ Focus on posting taller images to allow easy repinning. Infographics are a great option.



PIN BLOG CONTENT

Pinterest recently enlarged its set of “rich pins” (certain types of pins that can include more details) to include pinned articles. Previously, stories or articles pinned on Pinterest only contained photos from the article with a link at the bottom. Now, the pin will also include additional information like the author’s name, the article title, a brief description and a larger link.⁴⁹

Currently, this update applies only to a few select publications, but Pinterest plans to make the feature available to all article pins. Until then, continue to pin your articles and newsletters to expand your reach and direct traffic back to your blog.

CHECK WHO PINS YOUR IMAGES

KISSmetrics points out that you can find any pinned content from your website by going to the URL:

[http://pinterest.com/source/\[yourdomain.com\]](http://pinterest.com/source/[yourdomain.com]), replacing [yourdomain.com] with your name. Regularly checking this will show you the most popular images on your website, and it will also inform you who to contact to help strengthen supporter relationships.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ HubSpot. “20 Data-Backed Ways to Upgrade Your Social Media Marketing [SlideShare].” <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/data-backed-social-media-marketing-tips>

⁴⁹ Mashable. “Pinterest Update Expands Your Article Pins.” <http://mashable.com/2013/09/24/pinterest-articles/>

⁵⁰ KISSMetrics. “Pinterest Marketing Tips for SEO, Traffic, and Online Reputation Management.” <http://blog.kissmetrics.com/pinterest-marketing-tips/>



Other Pinboard Ideas

In addition to the boards specific to the nature of your organization, here are several ideas for other pinboarding materials:

#dayofthegirl
EVERY GIRL'S RIGHT.
1
6 Pins

The pinboard features a large photo of a young girl in a red headscarf, followed by four smaller photos of children. A "Follow" button is at the bottom.

- **Document specific campaigns.** Unicef has a board dedicated to their "#dayofthegirl" campaign, which features photos inscribed with inspirational quotes to raise awareness. You can also create boards of photos or videos of any offline fundraising event.

Birthdays for Clean Water
10 Pins

The pinboard features a large photo of a man holding a yellow water container, followed by four smaller photos of people. A "Follow" button is at the bottom.

- **Feature ambassadors, supporters, and fundraisers.** You can create a board featuring supporters for a specific campaign, or separate boards for power fundraisers or influential advocates. Charity:water dedicates a board to fundraisers titled "Birthdays for Clean Water".



- **Create a user-generated board.** Involve supporters and evangelists in your marketing by enabling them to contribute to your pinboards. Create a board dedicated to pins from your cause champions. This can both strengthen your relationships with your followers and enhance your pin collection.

charity: water Gear



30 Pins



Follow

- **Show off your swag.** Pinterest users spend more money, more often, and on more items than any of the other top five social media sites.⁵¹ If your organization has merchandise, create a board that displays your swag and clarify where the profits will go in the board description. Charity: water's "charity: water Gear" board displays different gift options that go towards bringing clean water to vulnerable communities.

#SeaStyle Contest



12 Pins



Follow

- **Host a pinning contest.** Launch a contest asking users to create a pinboard on their own accounts to display what they love most about your organization and services. Ask them to send you a link to their pinboards so you can evaluate entries and designate a winner. Heal the Bay hosted one such contest that sent the winner to a special benefit party for the organization.

⁵¹ Saurage Marketing Research. "Social Studies: Pinterest." <http://www.saurageresearch.com/social-studies-pinterest/>

GOOGLE+



Google+ is now the second most popular social network on the web, with 540 million monthly active users.⁵² 80% of users login to the social network at least once a week, and 60% of users login everyday. The +1 button (the platform's equivalent of a "like") is served more than **5 billion times per day**.

Google+ has one thing that separates it from the rest of the social media pack: Google. The social network also functions as an influencer of search.

According to Senior Vice President, Social for Google Vic Gundotra, Google+ is part of the company's goal of creating "one beautiful, simple and seamless experience" across its various products. By



integrating the network with its numerous services and technologies — such as Google Search, YouTube, and Gmail — the world's most popular search engine incentivizes people to use the Google+ platform.⁵³

Who is it Best Set Up for?

Every organization can benefit from setting up a Google+ business page. Having a Google+ page can affect whether your organization will pop up in a Google search, so taking the time to create and optimize your page will make your content more discoverable online.

⁵² Marketing Land. "Google+ Hits 300 Million Active Monthly 'In-Stream' Users, 540 Million Across Google ." <http://marketingland.com/google-hits-300-million-active-monthly-in-stream-users-540-million-across-google-63354>

⁵³ Time. "Google is Far From Losing the War Over Social." <http://business.time.com/2013/10/03/google-is-far-from-losing-the-war-over-social/>



The Value of Google+

How it Affects your Performance on Search

Setting up a Google+ business page for your organization can make you eligible for more real estate on search engines results pages. For instance, if a user searches your brand's name, a large area on the right-hand side of the Google results can display information pulled from your Google+ business page:

Habitat For Humanity – Habitat.org
Ad www.habitat.org/ ▾
Habitat For Humanity Is Changing Lives With Homes. Donate To Help!
Habitat for Humanity has 134,569 followers on Google+
[Find Local Habitat](#) [Donate Now](#)
[Learn About Volunteering](#) [Become a Monthly Giver](#)

Habitat for Humanity Int'l
www.habitat.org/ ▾
ReStores offer quality used and surplus building materials at a fraction of normal prices, while helping to fund Habitat for Humanity house construction.
[Apply for a Habitat - Volunteer Programs - Career and job opportunities - ReStore](#)

San Diego Habitat for Humanity > Home
www.sdfhh.org/ ▾
Habitat for Humanity International, generally referred to as Habitat for Humanity or simply Habitat, is an international, non-governmental, and non-profit ...
[Volunteer Opportunities - Shop ReStore - Make a Personal Donation - Women Build](#)

Shop ReStore - San Diego Habitat for Humanity > Home
www.sdfhh.org/ShopReStore.aspx ▾
Habitat for Humanity International, generally referred to as Habitat for Humanity or simply Habitat, is an international, non-governmental, and non-profit ...

ReStore by Habitat For Humanity - San Diego, CA | Yelp
www.yelp.com ▾ Home Services ▾ Building Supplies ▾ Yelp, Inc. ▾
★★★★★ Rating: 4 - 17 reviews
17 Reviews of ReStore by Habitat For Humanity "Great place to find odds and ends for a home project. You never know what is there before you go, so if you ..."

Habitat For Humanity Los Angeles Accepts Used Building ...
www.habitatla.org/ ▾

Habitat for Humanity International
120,582 followers on Google+

Habitat for Humanity International, generally referred to as Habitat for Humanity or simply Habitat, is an international, non-governmental, and non-profit organization, which was founded in 1976. [Wikipedia](#)

CEO: Jonathan Reckford
Founders: Millard Fuller, Linda Fuller
Awards: Telly Award for Non-Broadcast Productions Film/Video - Charitable/Not-for-profit, [More](#)

Recent posts

National Women Build Week kicks off next week. Learn more and share: [#WomenBuild](http://bit.ly/Qvz8aE) Apr 25, 2014

People also search for
 American Red Cross  Architecture for humanity  VolunteerMatch  HabiJax  AmeriCorps VISTA

This special section quickly gives information like number of Google+ followers, brand logo, short profile description, and recent posts. Not only does it expand your visibility to searchers, but it can also help increase your reach quickly by allowing users to follow your organization directly from the search results page. Setting up and verifying your Google+ business page, posting quality content and garnering engagement on your page can activate the appearance of your page profile on the right side of Google search results.

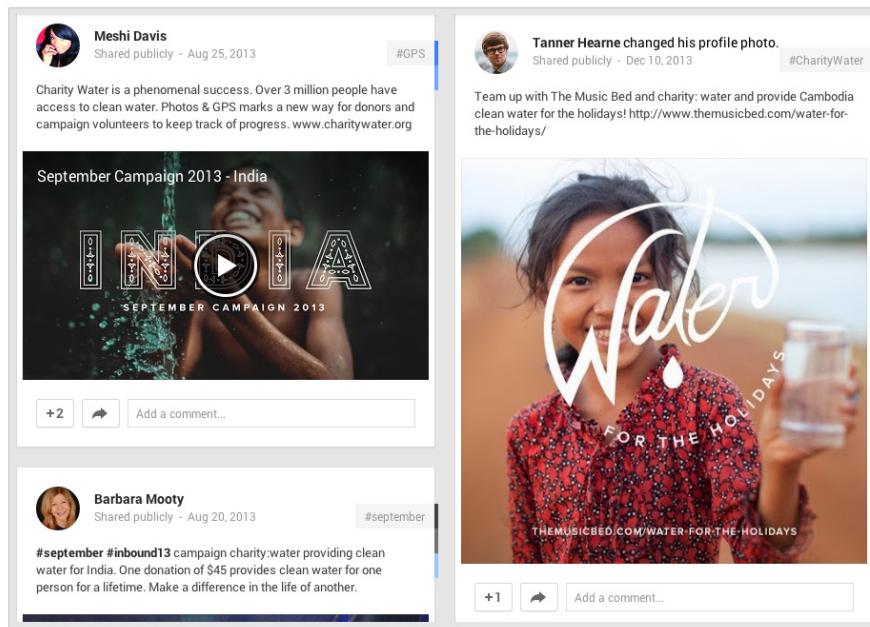


Your organization's performance on search is also affected by Google's focus on personalizing search results.⁵⁴ When users do a Google search while logged into a Google account, the results from their Google+ network top their search results. If someone in a user's network +1's an article, that article will rank higher in the user's search. Content that you share with followers also appears in their relevant Google searches. Therefore, as Google continues to update its search algorithm to promote its social platform, actively posting engaging content on your Google+ business page may wind up increasing your chances of rising to the top of users' search results and those of their Circles.

Content Management

EMPLOY VISUAL CONTENT TO GET SEEN

Last year, Google+ implemented a complete redesign of the platform, including a multi-columned (one, two, or three) appearance whose format is based on screen size and orientation. Visual media displays noticeably larger across these columns.



⁵⁴ Google Blog. "Search, Plus Your World." <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2012/01/search-plus-your-world.html>



Certain photos or videos will sometimes even extend across the width of an entire Google+ stream:

The screenshot shows a Google+ stream with a large, horizontal image of an Acorn Woodpecker as the central focus. To the right of the image is a post by Juan Carlos Vindas sharing a photo of the bird. The post includes a caption, a link to his Facebook page, and some engagement metrics. Below the main post are three smaller cards from other users: Elizabeth Chung, Cristel Yi, and Elizabeth Chung again.

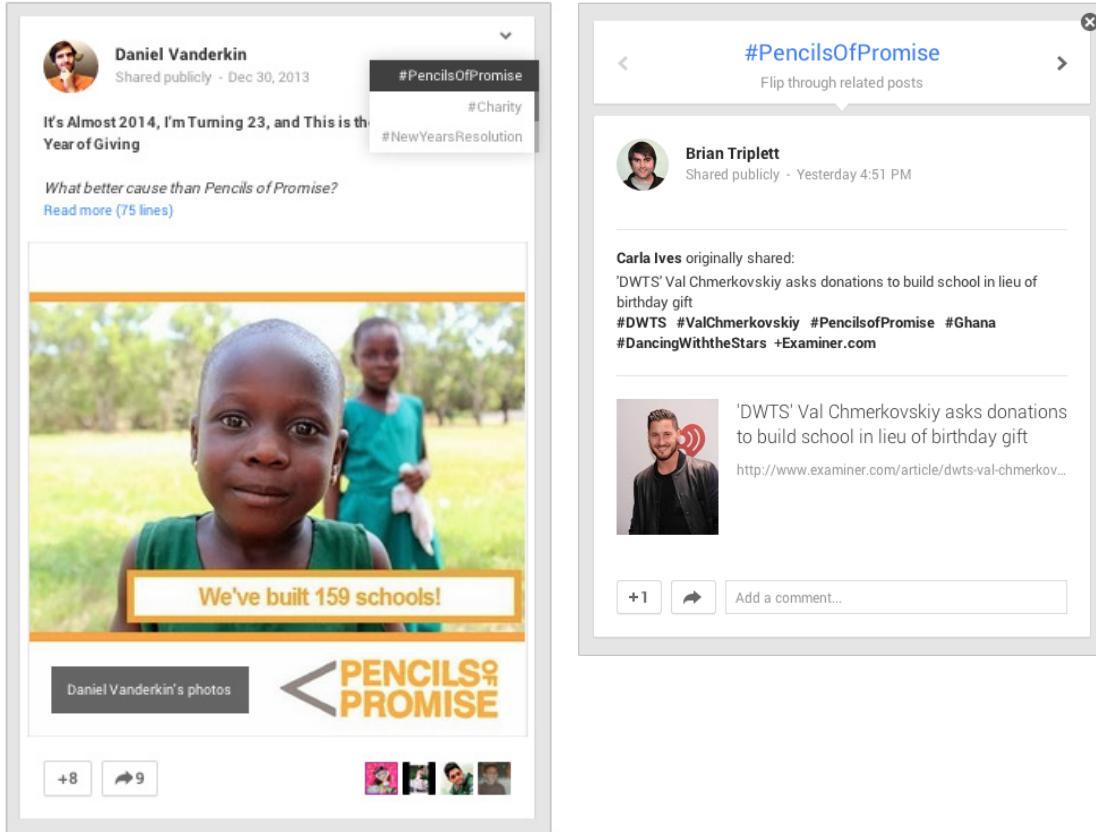
The takeaway is clear: post visual content. Employing visual content will not only engage your followers, but it also affects your chances of being discovered because your photos and videos may get featured more prominently by the platform than your text-based posts. Unfortunately, it's not yet clear how the platform's algorithm determines which posts (or "cards") it will expand, so make sure to use quality visual content at all times.



USE HASHTAGS TO GET DISCOVERED

Google+ implemented Related Hashtags to help bring more contextual and relevant information to users.

The platform automatically adds hashtags to the content you share, and users can click a hashtag to flip the “card” and discover related conversations happening across the network.



You can remove or add to these automatic hashtags any time, but remember to tag your Google+ posts with relevant hashtags regardless to make your content more discoverable on the network.

EMBED CONTENT TO GET FOLLOWERS

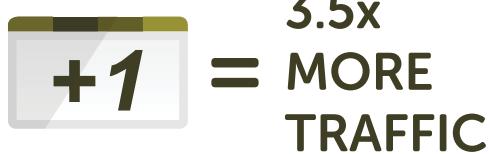
Google+ posts – whether text, photo, or media – are embeddable, so you can share your content on your website or blog. The embedded post is fully interactive, allowing viewers to +1, comment, and follow you directly on the network. Embed posts across different platforms to increase your following on Google+ and enhance your performance on search.



Account Management

ADD THE +1 BUTTON TO YOUR WEBSITE AND BLOG

In the same way that shares work on other social networks, the +1 button is Google's indicator of trending and popular content. Notifications at the top of the results page show whether anyone in your Google+ network has +1'ed an article, and Google's results page will also indicate which articles have been +1'ed the most.



According to HubSpot, websites with the +1 button generate 3.5x more traffic from Google+ than websites without the button.⁵⁵ Adding the +1 button will allow users to share your content with their networks and increase your visibility across the platform and Google search.

CONVERSE WITH YOUR COMMUNITIES

Communities are spaces where people can participate in discussions, give advice, and ask questions. On top of sharing content and demonstrating your expertise to target audiences, you can also video-chat using the Hangouts feature to establish an even more dynamic discussion space.

Individual posts in public Google+ Communities, categories inside Communities, and the Communities themselves are indexed by Google (unless the group administrators choose otherwise). By remaining engaged in your Communities and providing beneficial information, you can increase your chances of people finding your group through Google search.

HANGOUT FACE TO FACE WITH YOUR SUPPORTERS

Hangouts, the platform's messaging, photo-sharing, and live video-calling application, comes in handy with a free video chat service that allows group chats with up to 10 people. This can be a free alternative

⁵⁵ HubSpot. "Websites Using Google's +1 Button Get 3.5x the Google+ Visits [Data]." <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/22293/Websites-Using-Google-s-1-Button-Get-3-5x-the-Google-Visits-Data.aspx>



to webinar or video-conferencing software for your organization. The app is downloadable from Google Play, the App Store, and the Chrome Web Store, or you can access it through Gmail or Google+.

Here are a few suggestions of different kinds of Hangouts you can host:

- **Donor Q&A.** Invite donors to a Hangout with your organization's board members, beneficiaries, or constituents to ask and understand how their donations are impacting your overall mission. This can also be an opportunity express thanks face-to-face.
- **Volunteer Updates.** Hangout with volunteers to get an update on what's happening in the field and to exchange ideas for further advancement.
- **Online Interviews.** Host interviews with other nonprofit experts to share ideas, build new fundraising strategies, and ultimately become a thought leader in your sector.
- **Focus Groups.** You can use Hangouts to conduct informal focus groups on topics like your website experience, donor communications, or program services. Getting real time feedback from your supporters or beneficiaries can be very valuable.

BE ACTIVE ON THE NETWORK

Posting quality content often, interacting and sharing with followers, and remaining active on Google+ are not only important for engagement levels on the network, but they make your page more effective for SEO. A critical element of SEO is authority, which refers to Google's PageRank system of determining which links rank higher on its organic search results pages.⁵⁶ By posting valuable and beneficial content that users will actually want to link back to, you can build authority and increase your chances of ranking well on Google search page results.

⁵⁶ HubSpot. "An Introduction to Google+ for Business." <http://goo.gl/nlwJhi>

LINKEDIN

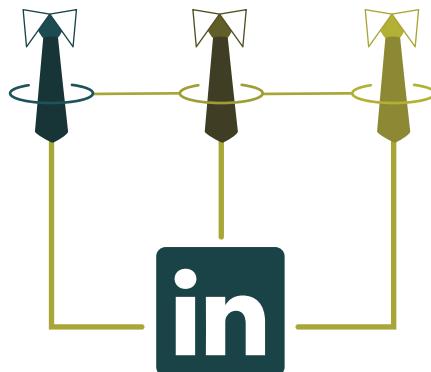
LinkedIn is the world's largest social network for professionals. With 300 million users in over 200 countries and territories, the network is home to over 3 million LinkedIn business pages.⁵⁷

43% of all marketers found a customer through LinkedIn in 2013.⁵⁸ The network is also known for driving the most customers for B2B organizations. A recent HubSpot study of over 5,000 businesses found that traffic from LinkedIn generated the highest visitor-to-lead conversion rate, almost 3 times higher than both Twitter and Facebook.⁵⁹

Unlike other social media channels, a LinkedIn presence can be critical for any nonprofit looking to establish and expand its web presence as a professional organization. A LinkedIn company page can play a valuable role in your nonprofit organization's social media marketing strategy by growing your professional network and connecting you with others in your sector.

Who is it Best Set Up for?

Because the network opens you up to a valuable audience that's already grouped by users' employment histories, professional skills, and now even volunteer interests, both growing and well-established organizations can leverage LinkedIn to find professional partners who want to donate their talents and resources.



⁵⁷ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 100 Amazing LinkedIn Statistics." http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/by-the-numbers-a-few-important-linkedin-stats/#.Uw9s__RdXy0

⁵⁸ HubSpot. "18 Fresh Stats." <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/18-fresh-stats-about-social-media-marketing>

⁵⁹ HubSpot. "LinkedIn 277% More Effective for Lead Generation Than Facebook & Twitter [New Data]." <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/30030/LinkedIn-277-More-Effective-for-Lead-Generation-Than-Facebook-Twitter-New-Data.aspx>



The Value of LinkedIn

Your organization's company page gives you the opportunity to increase your visibility and engage your audience by sharing updates and news, communicating your story, and building brand awareness.

Here are a few ways to optimize your Company Page content in order to strengthen and expand your professional network:

EXPAND REACH WITH YOUR OWN TEAM

Chances are your staff, current supporters, board members, and volunteers are updating their own LinkedIn pages and employment histories. Having a company page enables people in your network to directly link to you on their own profiles, instantly expanding your visibility to their individual networks and potentially driving traffic to your page.

POST UPDATES TO ENGAGE FOLLOWERS

You can also post your new blog posts, ebooks, or articles on your status updates to engage followers. Share relevant facts or helpful content you've found to remain a knowledgeable resource in your field, or ask a question to prompt followers to interact with your posts.

Habitat for Humanity International Habitat homes open doors to new opportunities. Read how a manageable Habitat mortgage changed the lives of the Foster family. <http://bit.ly/1mbSHjW>

 [Skip to main content](#)

bit.ly • When opportunity knocks, the door at which it stands matters. Joyce Foster was a single mom of six, working two part-time jobs. She had a door, but it came with limits. Her rental house was a 40-minute drive from the town where she worked and her...

Like (35) • Comment (2) • Share • 2 days ago

 Lynn Zucker, Nanci Flores, RN, BSN, BSW +33

 Craig Hubley A small efficient housing unit is the best infrastructure investment any society can make.
2 days ago

 Kerri McZeal-Joseph Amazing story has a happy ending!!!!
1 day ago

Add a comment...

As a general rule of thumb, keep in mind that quality trumps quantity. Be careful not to post too much.

Your posts should only present content that your followers will actually consider valuable.

BUILD THOUGHT LEADERSHIP WITH GROUPS

LinkedIn's "Group" pages are the network's most powerful way to connect users with similar interests.

These are the thousands of unique discussion pages dedicated to almost every topic under the sun.

- **8,000 new groups** are created weekly⁶⁰
- 200 conversations happen **per minute** in groups⁶¹
- LinkedIn members join an average of **7 groups**⁶²
- **81% of members join at least one group**, and 52% of those users participate in group discussions

You can add Feature Groups to your company page to show up to 3 groups that you manage or are a member of.

This can be a great way to highlight your community ties and build credibility as an organization.

Featured Groups



How to add Feature Groups:

1. Click "Edit" at the top of the Home tab of your company page
2. Start typing the name of the group you want to add
3. Click "Publish" in the top right corner

⁶⁰ Digital Marketing Ramblings. "By the Numbers: 100 Amazing LinkedIn Statistics." http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/by-the-numbers-a-few-important-linkedin-stats/#.Uw9s__RdXy0

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Not only will participating in Groups help you locate and build connections with other users who can help advance your cause, but it can also establish you as a thought leader among your target audience. Here are a few tips to optimize your activity on groups:

1. Choose the right groups

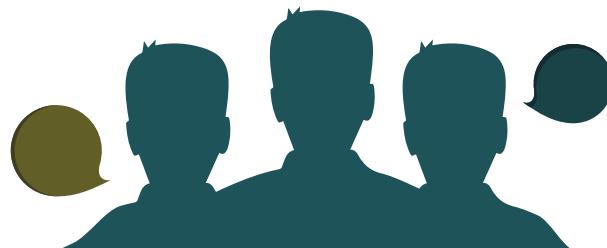
Choose active groups without too large of a membership. Many groups are very “spammy,” so participating in a well-moderated group of a few hundred members can often provide more value than a several thousand-member group.

Browse the group’s content and activity

to see if members are engaged.

Proactively visit and participate in your top groups at least 2-3 times a week.

It's generally more valuable to seriously invest in a few groups rather than dabble in many.



**SMALL, MAINTAINED
& ENGAGED**

2. Build credibility first

Auto-posting your own content as soon as you join a group can quickly put off group members and moderators. Instead, focus your initial efforts on building a reputation as someone who will add value to the discussion. Make a good first impression by commenting on existing threads, asking questions and providing valuable insights. Users who find your input helpful may go on to check out your company page or even your website. Demonstrate first that you want to learn and network; this can help build a more solid foundation for sharing your own content later on.

3. Participate in discussions

Actively participating in groups can help build authority and trust with your networks. Respond to existing comments, ask thought-provoking questions, provide helpful insights, and offer sound opinions to demonstrate the thought leadership of your organization.

LinkedIn highlights the most “Popular” threads at the top of the group discussion page, so participating in these featured conversations can help your comments gain more visibility. Browsing the associated comments can also give you a better feel for what kind of content gets the most engagement on that particular group page.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn group discussion page. At the top, there are two tabs: "Popular" (which is selected) and "Recent". Below the tabs, a post from user Aileen Cole is displayed. The post title is "What's the best, most positive social interaction you've experienced with a brand?". Aileen Cole is identified as the Director of Social Media at Insightpool and a Top Contributor. The post has 3 likes, 13 comments, and was posted 13 days ago. Below the post, three comments are visible:

- Paula Hare (@JasonLyvers Warby Parker is amazing. An online brand with an emerging retail presence. I have ordered online in the past, and recently went ... 2 days ago)
- Tejasvita Rao (Hubspot and Moz are both great. 8 hours ago)
- Steve Fisher (I've been having a great conversation with Eric Quanstrom over at Nimble CRM. ... 8 hours ago)

At the bottom of the comment section, there is a text input field labeled "Add a Comment...".

4. Engage with other posts

LinkedIn groups are meant to help you build and expand your network, so don't be afraid to promote and engage with other users' posts to help build connections. Like and comment on other group members' posts, and consider sharing valuable ones as a status update on your company page. Promoting others' content will help strengthen individual relationships and help others recognize you as a social influencer and sharer.



FIND OUT WHAT'S WORKING WITH PAGE ANALYTICS

LinkedIn's revamped analytics section for Company Pages provides details on each post's performance, including total number of clicks, likes, comments and shares.



The new Analytics section also displays follower demographics and how users landed on your Company Page. This feature can help you understand who your audience is on the network, what content is engaging them, and ways to increase your page's visibility through other social channels.

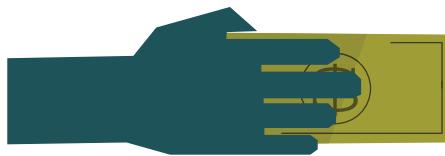
LOCATE AND RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

This year, LinkedIn partnered with VolunteerMatch, BoardSource, Catchafire, and The Taproot Foundation to launch its new LinkedIn Volunteer Marketplace. Designed to help nonprofit organizations and volunteers find each other, the Volunteer Marketplace allows nonprofits to post volunteer opportunities in the same way they can post job openings.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn Volunteer Marketplace homepage. The top features a large blue banner with the text "Use your skills to make a positive impact" and "Volunteering is good for your career and your community. Find opportunities on LinkedIn." Below the banner is a button labeled "Explore opportunities". The main area is titled "Featured volunteer opportunities" and includes three cards: "Child Advocates of Silicon Valley" (Volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Child Advocates of Silicon Valley), "Volunteer WordPress Web Developer" (Hire Our Heroes), and "Volunteer Brand Strategist" (Taproot Foundation). Each card has a "Go to volunteer opportunity" button.

Nonprofits do have to pay to list their opportunities, although this comes at a 90% discount to normal job posting fees.

**IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD
VOLUNTEERS DONATED
10x MORE THAN
NON-VOLUNTEERS**



The cost of this feature may be worth considering. The 2012 estimated value of volunteer service was \$22.14 per hour, and the specialized skills of some volunteers can be invaluable to your organization.⁶³ Volunteers are also more likely to remain engaged with your organization and make donations. A 2009 survey by the Fidelity Charitable Gift fund found

that within a 12-month period, volunteers donated ten times as much money as those who had not volunteered.⁶⁴ Two thirds had donated to the same charity for which they volunteered.

It's important to factor the value of these volunteers into your organization's financial statements, fundraising efforts, and hands-on advancement in the field. This can help you gauge whether the Volunteer Marketplace will be a worthwhile investment for your nonprofit organization.

⁶³ Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund. "Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund Volunteerism and Charitable Giving in 2009 Executive Summary." <http://www.fidelitycharitable.org/docs/Volunteerism-Charitable-Giving-2009-Executive-Summary.pdf>

⁶⁴ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

No matter their size or mission, nonprofits can benefit from investing in their social media presence.

Identifying each platform's distinct value can help you optimize the way your organization communicates and engages with its supporters. It will also enable you to determine where to focus your efforts in engaging your unique audience. With an understanding of each network's purpose, along with an arsenal of great content, your nonprofit organization can tap into the value of social media and maximize its online presence!

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