

5 Skills Your Social Media Manager Must Have



Jayson DeMers Subscriber ⓘ

I demystify SEO and online marketing for business owners.

Social media management isn't just about posting content to a business's social media channels. It isn't (or shouldn't be) a position you hire for as an afterthought ("We have an Instagram account. Now who are we going to get to run it?").

Social media management has become a complex, multi-faceted role that operates to help a business achieve its highest-level goals. It isn't a job that functions independently or in isolation within the company.

In fact, some argue [it isn't even a job at all anymore](#); that social media tasks and responsibilities should be everyone's responsibility. According to Amy Crow, [Indeed's](#) communication director, social media skills are increasingly required across *all* roles: "We are seeing an increased demand for social savvy candidates across the business – from human resources to product to customer service. In addition, we're seeing this demand span many levels, from executive assistants to senior vice presidents."

Whether you're in the market for a dedicated social media manager or just a socially-savvy team member, these are the 5 skills you should be looking for in a candidate.

1. Graphics production

According to [Jeff Bullas](#), articles with images receive 94% more views than those without. Buffer says tweets with images receive [18% more clicks](#) than those

without, and research from [Wishpond](#) shows photo posts on Facebook [get 120% more engagement](#) than other types of posts.

For businesses targeting women, millennials or teens, images are even more important. Visual-centric platforms targeting these demographics - like Pinterest and Instagram - require a near-constant influx of high-quality, original images.

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For these reasons, it's more important than ever that your social media manager has the skills necessary to conceptualize and create eye-catching images for your social media and blog posts. While it's not necessary to have advanced Photoshop skills, a good eye for design and the ability to source and edit images is a must-have.

According to [Jay Baer](#), the ability to think graphically is more important than technical design skills: "There are a number of software packages that help create simple, disposable social media images, so this shift in job skills is less about producing graphics than it is about thinking graphically."

2. An aptitude for writing

As with graphics production, advanced writing skills aren't necessary. However, a social media manager should have a good command of the language and the ability to express him or herself in writing. While your social media manager may not be writing blog posts, he or she will be communicating with customers on a daily basis - and 99% of this communication will be in writing.

Can he/she clearly convey an idea in writing? Is he/she able to maintain a consistent voice when writing on behalf of the company? Can he/she convey passion and excitement for the business or products(s) through his/her writing?

Can he/she maintain top-notch professionalism and avoid embarrassing grammatical or spelling errors?

3. A customer-service mindset

With more customers than ever using social media to get assistance from brands, your social media manager **must be customer-service minded**. Posting pithy or clever sayings, captivating images and inspirational content will only get you so far if you're not responding appropriately to customer-service queries.

A quick response to questions and complaints, a “customer first” mindset, and the ability to move difficult questions offline are all important aspects of social customer service. A successful social media manager knows that your social media presence is your brand's face online; that everything they say or do on social media is a representation of the brand – for good or for bad.

4. A solid understanding of SEO and content marketing

As a person involved in the day-to-day management, promotion and distribution of blog content, an understanding of SEO and content marketing is a must. He or she should have a big picture understanding of how **blog** and **social media content** fit into search rankings, and how all content operates within the business's marketing funnel.

While **social signals may not have a direct impact on search rankings**, the indirect effects **are undeniable**. Your social media manager should understand how reach and engagement on social media impact not only referral traffic and revenue, but SEO as well. *Content is the cornerstone of your SEO strategy, and your social media manager is the gatekeeper and promoter of much of this content.*

How will he/she promote your blog content on social media? Does he/she understand the connection between exposure on social media and increased search rankings? Does he/she know how driving traffic to the company's website impacts the bottom line? For more on this, see **“The Top 10 Benefits of Social Media Marketing.”**

5. Social advertising experience

Assuming you don't have a dedicated advertising role, your social media manager will need to have experience with paid social ads (or the willingness and passion to learn). According to the Salesforce [2015 State of Marketing report](#), social media advertising is one of the top two priorities for marketers this year. In fact, 70% of marketers say they plan to increase spending in this area in 2015.

Social ads may look like traditional ads, but come with their own unique challenges and opportunities. Unlike traditional magazine, TV or newspaper ads, social ads are competing directly with content created specifically for the user – from friends and family members. Despite this challenge, social ads also offer the ability for unprecedented targeting and the ability to take advantage of online word-of-mouth marketing. A social media manager must understand how to utilize social ads to take advantage of these opportunities and to scale their organic social media effects.

What you need in a social media manager in 2015 is a bit different than what you may have needed in 2013; particularly when it comes to graphics creation and social advertising. As you scope out the perfect candidate to fill this important role within your company, or to outsource the role to a contractor or agency, look for someone not only with experience in the field, but with the drive and passion to keep their skills current in this ever-changing industry. If you're looking to brush up on your social media skills, grab my eBook, [*The Definitive Guide to Social Media Marketing*](#).

What would you add to this list? What skills do you think are the most important in a social media manager? Share below!



Jayson DeMers Subscriber

Founder & CEO of AudienceBloom, a Seattle-based content marketing firm, as well as EmailAnalytics, an email productivity app, and Kwippy, an iOS/Android app in which users receive themed photo challenges randomly throughout the day. I'm on a mission to demystify and sim... **Read More**

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Kevin H. Johnson is an e-commerce veteran with a passion for digital marketing and education. Before joining Udemy, Kevin served as CEO of Ebates Inc., a leading e-commerce marketplace ranked as a top-15 U.S. e-commerce brand by eMarketer. Prior to that Kevin held leadershi... **Read More**
