

Social Media for Greenhouse Growers and Garden Centers

76% of U.S. adults use the internet
and 65% use social media

Source: Pew Research Center
<http://pewrsr.ch/1Zgn7F7>

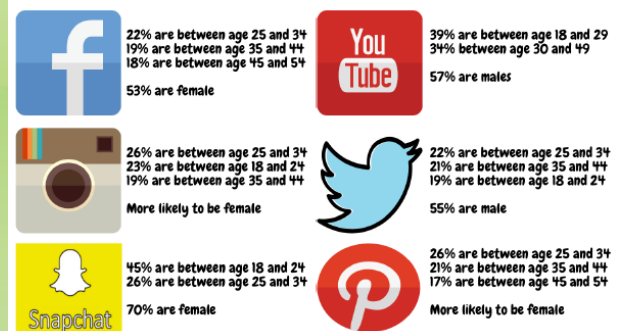
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How do you decide which social media outlets to use?

- Step one: "Who" are you targeting?



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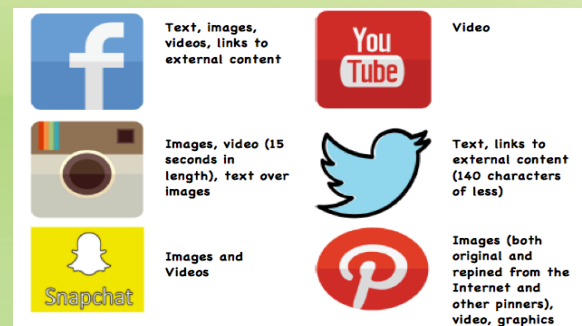
- Step two: What is your goal?



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How do you decide which social media outlets to use?

- Step three: What are you sharing?



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Should you post to Facebook, Twitter, or both?

One study suggests:

- Use Facebook to drive traffic to your website
- Consumers tend to engage and interact more on Twitter

Source: Mashable,
<http://on.mash.to/1JTUNrF>

"Strength" of Facebook posts

Images and video are the "strongest"

Next, posts with links to external content

Text only posts rank third

Source: American Express Open Forum, <http://amex.co/1U8b0bb>

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What should you post?

- Your achievements, business milestones, anniversaries, and events
- New products and services (e.g. event space, wedding venue)
- Job announcements
- Links to other businesses – one way to develop partnerships and cross promote

Use a tool like Google Alerts to receive notifications about items that you can repost, retweet, etc.

<https://www.google.com/alerts>

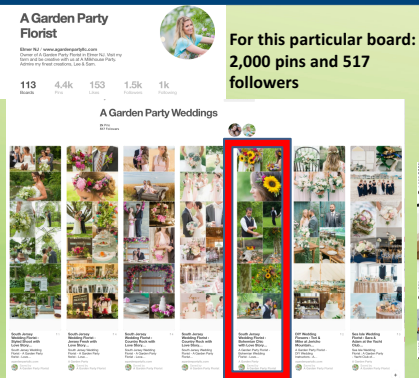
Two monitoring tools that search blogs and social media:

- Social mention (free)
- Mention (free trial)

Pinterest: The power of images

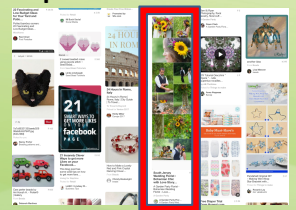
- Of the existing social media sites – it is the “2nd largest driver of traffic”
- “An estimated 47% of US online shoppers have made a purchase based on a recommendation from Pinterest”
- “Pinterest buyers spend more money, more often, and on more items than Facebook, LinkedIn, and Tumblr”

Source: Visualistan, <http://bit.ly/2euuMiz>



For this particular board: 2,000 pins and 517 followers

A section of my Pinterest feed with A Garden Party Florist's pin



If I repin or like this pin – my followers will see the pin in their feed

Search Pinterest to learn about products or consumer interests

- Search “garden,” “garden products,” “cool gardening products,” “gardening trends”
- Be sure to add important information about the pic and redirect pinners to your website

Edit Pin

Board: Products we love

Description: This is where you can add a description, "to include the price of the product, call to action, etc. You are limited to 500 characters."

Source: Redirect Pinterest visitors to your website

Delete Pin

What type of Instagram image gets the most likes?

According to research conducted by Dan Zarrella

- Photos with faces
- “Busier photos”
- Cool colors
- Brighter photos
- Desaturated photos
- No filter

<http://danzarrella.com/infographic-the-science-of-instagram.html>

When to post, how often, and whether or not to use a #hashtag

Suggested posting times, number of posts, and hashtag use for select social networks

Social network	Suggested posting times	Suggested number of posts	Using hashtags
Facebook	Weekdays: 1 to 4 p.m. ¹	Two times a day ²	Engagement and reach are lower when used ³
YouTube	Monday - Wednesday: 2 to 4 p.m., Thursday and Friday: noon to 3 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday: 9 to 11 a.m. ²	Minimum of one video per week. Post on a schedule (same day/time) ³	Recommended. Often used in the video's description ¹ and can be used in the comment section ¹
Instagram	9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ¹	At least 1.5 a day ¹	Recommended. Engagement based on number of hashtags per post varies greatly ¹
Twitter	Weekdays: 1 to 3 p.m. ¹	Three times per day. Engagement then “decreases slightly” ⁵	Recommended. Engagement is 21% higher with one or two hashtags, engagement drops when more than two are used in a post ¹²
Snapchat	After 10 p.m. ³	“In moderation” and based on follower response ⁷	Snapchat does not currently use hashtags ^{1,3,14}
Pinterest	2 to 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. ¹	At least five times a day ³	Mixed reviews. Only clickable in a pin's description, not helpful when searching for posts with hashtags ¹¹ – a search for #wine pulls up all pins that contain the word (pins with wine in the descriptions, pinner name, board name, name of website, etc.)

1. Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/help/topic/1016662885285285. 2. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/help/when-to-post. 3. Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/help/when-to-post. 4. Twitter: https://www.twitter.com/help/when-to-post. 5. Snapchat: https://www.snapchat.com/help/when-to-post. 6. Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/help/when-to-post. 7. Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/help/topic/1016662885285285. 8. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/help/when-to-post. 9. Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/help/when-to-post. 10. Twitter: https://www.twitter.com/help/when-to-post. 11. Snapchat: https://www.snapchat.com/help/when-to-post. 12. Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/help/when-to-post.

What hashtags could you use?

Hashtagify.me

Check that your hashtag is appropriate



- This step can help prevent your business being associated with anything negative
- Search on Instagram, Twitter, and other social media sites for the hashtag
- Use a tool like hashtagdictionary.com to learn possible meanings

Periscope (periscope.tv)

The intent of the tool, according to the blog, is to “let people discover the world through someone else’s eyes” (<http://bit.ly/1CcAkkl>) by allowing them to witness live events and experiences – anywhere in the world.

Uses for Periscope

- Tradeshows: Document setup, periodically showcase a new item, show live giveaways, interview customers who attend about their success with your products
- Air “how to” segments
- “Show” a customer the tree/shrub/etc. that you want to select for their landscape - and get their immediate response
- Broadcast during events

After the event: Upload the video to YouTube, the “third most visited website in the world”

- YouTube:
- 8 out of 10 consumers age 18 to 49 watch YouTube during an average month
- 6 out of 10 consumers “prefer online video platforms to live TV”
- 2015: 18 to 49 year olds “spent 4% less time watching TV, while time on YouTube went up 74%”

Source: <http://bit.ly/1MKNHDs>

Recognize your customers

- Ask users to post images, tweet, broadcast etc. enjoying their garden or visiting your garden center. Then....
- Use their images as your Facebook page cover photo
- Be your customers’ preferred source for relevant information
 - Post, comment, forward other complementary businesses’ and/or customers postings
 - Be proactive - ask readers to reply to your posts
 - Use Periscope to answer questions live
- Host a Pin it to win it contest

Surprise and Delight

- Give “customers unanticipated perks to renew interest in their products and services and to amplify messaging.” CrowdTwist, Surprise White Paper 020415
- Reward your most engaged fan(s) with a newly published book

What is your strategy and is it working?

- Increase foot traffic online and in the store
- Increase garden club membership
- Promote awareness of event facility rental
- Use tools such as Facebook Insights, SumAll (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), YouTube stats, etc. to learn where traffic originates
- Document: clicks, likes, retweets, coupon use, garden center visits, etc.
- Adjust your strategy if necessary

Questions to ask customers

- What social media networks do you actively use?
- Which ones do you use to connect with businesses?
- What activities and events would encourage you to visit the garden center?
- How would you prefer to learn about activities, events, and new products?
- Wholesalers: Ask retail customers which “how to” videos would be the most helpful to them