



# Digital Paws:

## Revolutionizing Animal Welfare Through Social Media Marketing

The latest trends, technology,  
and best practices to turn  
intakes into positive outcomes



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Explore the dynamic landscape of social media marketing and learn how best to harness its ever-evolving capabilities in the animal welfare industry to build brand awareness and engagement, while turning noses in to noses out.

From foundational strategies to innovative tactics, discover how to leverage the latest trends, technology, and best practices to amplify your organization's impact and turn intakes into meaningful outcomes.

Each section is designed to equip you with the tools and insights needed to navigate the digital sphere effectively, build strong connections with your audience, and drive real-world results for the animals and community you serve.



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# Creating a Social Media Marketing Plan



Having a social media marketing plan is important because it provides a structured approach to achieving marketing goals, ensuring consistent and strategic content delivery that effectively engages your target audience and maximizes return on investment (ROI).

To create an effective social media marketing plan, set clear goals and understand your audience. Develop a content strategy with educational, inspirational, promotional, and informational data-driven posts about your organization and animal welfare in your community, using visuals and storytelling. Consider customizing your approach for each platform with hashtags, livestreams, and interactive features. Partner with influencers to expand your reach and engage by responding to comments and encouraging user-generated content.

Track performance with analytics and adjust your strategy based on data. Ensure your content aligns with your organizational values and maintain transparency. Finally, regularly update your strategy based on trends and feedback and stay informed about new social media features. Consider using any of these templates for your social media plan:

- [Backlinko's social media strategy template](#): This template is straightforward and available as a Word document, Google doc, or PDF.
- [Socialinsider's social media strategy template](#): This template is in a presentation format and goes more in depth. It is available as a Canva template.

## 10 tips for designing your social media marketing approach

- 1. Define goals and objectives:** Clearly define your organization's goals for social media marketing, whether it's increasing adoption rates, raising awareness about your organization and animals in your care, or fundraising to support an initiative or need.
- 2. Identify target audience:** Figure out whom you are talking to on each of your social media platforms. This means understanding things like their age, interests, and hobbies. Use this information to create posts that speak directly to them. Make sure your content and messages connect well with this specific group.
- 3. Create engaging content:** Develop a content strategy that includes a mix of educational, inspirational, promotional, and informative content related to your organization, the animals in your care, or an initiative that needs community support. Utilize visual content, such as photos and videos, to captivate your audience's attention. Incorporate storytelling techniques to evoke emotions and connect with your audience on a deeper level.
- 4. Utilize platform-specific strategies:** Customize your approach for each social media platform based on its [unique features and audience demographics](#). Use hashtags strategically to increase visibility and reach. Hashtags help to categorize content, making

it easier for users to find posts related to specific topics or trends by searching or clicking on the tagged words. Leverage livestreaming, stories, and interactive features to engage with your audience in real time.

**5. Implement influencer collaborations:**

Collaborate with influencers and advocates in the animal welfare community to amplify your message and reach a broader audience through influencer channels.

**6. Engage with your audience:** Foster two-way communication by responding to comments, messages, and inquiries promptly. Encourage user-generated content by running contests, challenges, or campaigns that encourage followers to share their experiences and stories related to animal welfare. User-generated content can help your organization increase broader reach on social media by leveraging the authenticity and engagement of users' posts, which are more likely to be shared and spread organically among diverse networks.

**7. Stay ethical and transparent:** Ensure that all content and messaging align with

your organization's values and mission. Be transparent about your initiatives, partnerships, and fundraising efforts to build trust and credibility with your audience.

**8. Monitor and analyze performance:**

Use social media analytics tools to track the performance of your content and campaigns. Analyze metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and conversion to measure the effectiveness of your social media efforts. Use insights gathered to optimize your strategy and make data-driven decisions for future campaigns.

**9. Continuously learn and adapt:** Stay agile and open to learning from both successes and failures. Regularly review and update your social media strategy based on changing trends, feedback from your audience, and performance metrics.

**10. Understand the landscape:** Conduct regular research on social media platforms to stay updated on emerging trends, changes in algorithms, and shifting consumer behaviors. Stay informed about new features and technologies that can enhance your organization's social media presence.



# 2 The Social Media Landscape



To remain relevant, it is important for organizations to keep abreast of the latest trends with social media to effectively engage their audience and maintain presence in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. Stay informed by following industry news, subscribing to newsletters from social media marketing experts, and attending webinars or conferences focused on digital marketing. This will help you anticipate changes in algorithms, new platform features, and emerging trends that can impact your organization's social media strategy.

Nonprofit Tech for Good offers the latest [2024 Social Media Statistics for Nonprofits](#) providing insight into recent trends. To learn more about trends, check out the [continuous education section](#) or the [resources section](#) in this guide.

## Some preeminent social media marketing trends of 2024

- **Video dominates:** Video content continues to dominate social media platforms. [Short-form videos](#), [livestreaming](#), and [interactive video features](#) have gained significant traction. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have become popular destinations for engaging video content.
- **Short-lived content:** Temporary posts or stories are only available for a short period, typically 24 hours, before disappearing. You'll sometimes hear this referred to as "[ephemeral content](#)." Some examples include Instagram Stories, Facebook Reels,
- and Snapchat that disappear after a short time. This type of content is designed to create a sense of urgency and immediacy and elicit feelings of FOMO (fear of missing out). It encourages quick engagement and frequent interactions from users.
- **Influencer collaborations:** [Influencer marketing](#) involves collaborating with influencers who align with your brand values (the values connected to your organization's core mission) and target audience. Influencers are people on social media platforms who maintain large numbers of followers and engagement because people are interested in them and their content, and they value what they have to say. Collaborating with influencers on social media is a powerful strategy for amplifying your message and reaching a broader audience.
- **Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR):** [AR and VR technologies](#) include features like filters, lenses, and immersive experiences that enrich post content. They are increasingly integrated into social media platforms and are used by over 70% of consumers today. They not only enhance user engagement and create interactive content opportunities, but they also make your content stand out.
- **Social listening and conversational marketing:** [Social listening tools](#) monitor conversations happening on social platforms that allow you to gather audience insights and feedback that can help you continually

improve your content and strategy. [Conversational marketing](#) techniques, such as new AI chatbots and messaging apps, allow you to engage in real-time conversations with your audience. They are also becoming more prevalent for customer service and engagement.

- **User-generated content (UGC):** [UGC](#) continues to be a valuable asset for brands — encouraging users to create and share content related to your brand or cause, such as when someone who engages with your agency in some way @tags your organization in social posts, uses #hashtags, or leaves reviews/ratings/testimonials about their experience. This is a great way to foster community engagement and authenticity and

make content related to your agency more likely to be shared and spread organically.

- **Privacy and data protection:** With increased awareness of privacy concerns, social media platforms are focusing on data protection measures and transparency. Users expect platforms to prioritize their privacy and security, influencing how brands approach data collection and advertising.
- **Niche communities and micro-content:** Platforms like Reddit, Discord, and Clubhouse cater to niche communities and interests. Micro-content, such as bite-sized posts and memes, resonates with audiences seeking quick, digestible content.
- **Purpose-driven:** Consumers are drawn to brands that demonstrate social responsibility and purpose-driven initiatives, such as helping pets! Advocating for pet-related causes resonates with a large audience on social media. Incorporating your agency's purpose into social content helps ensure your content resonates with your target audience.

## Shifting consumer behaviors

Monitor trends in how users interact with content, what types of content they prefer, and how they engage with brands and organizations. For example, the rise of short-form video content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels has influenced how brands communicate with their audiences. Also, there's the emergence of new platforms that are becoming popular with audiences, such as Nextdoor and Threads (Meta's new platform comparable to X/Twitter). Stay attuned to these shifts to tailor your social media platform presence, content, strategy, and messaging to align with consumer preferences.

Many resources are available to stay abreast of shifting consumer behaviors. A few of these include social media marketing topics on [LinkedIn Learning](#), [Hootsuite blog](#), [Gitnux market data for social media statistics](#), [HubSpot marketing blog](#), and [Social Media Examiner](#).



## Leverage new features and technologies

Social media platforms regularly introduce new features and technologies that can enhance your organization's social media marketing efforts. For example, Facebook and Instagram offer features like Shops for e-commerce, livestreaming for real-time engagement, and augmented reality filters for interactive experiences. Experiment with these features to create engaging content and connect with your audience in innovative ways.

- **Evolving platforms:** Social media platforms are constantly evolving, with Facebook and Instagram regularly introducing new features and technologies to enhance marketing efforts.
- **Livestreaming features:** These enable businesses and organizations to engage with their audience in real time, fostering authentic connections and interactions.
- **Augmented reality (AR):** Filters on platforms like Instagram provide opportunities for businesses and organizations to create interactive and immersive experiences, enhancing engagement and brand awareness.
- **Leveraging AI:** Tools such as [ChatGPT](#), other [AI marketing tools](#), and recommendation engines can further enhance marketing efforts by automating audience interactions, personalizing content delivery, and optimizing ad targeting.

Experimenting with these features and AI-driven tools can help you explore new ways of engaging with your audience and creating compelling content that resonates with users. Staying updated on the latest features and technologies introduced by social media platforms and incorporating AI-driven solutions can help you effectively enhance your social media marketing strategies.

## Learn from best practices and strategies

Study successful social media marketing campaigns and strategies implemented by other organizations, including those within the animal welfare industry. Analyze what tactics and techniques have worked well for them, such as storytelling, user-generated content, influencer collaborations, and viral marketing campaigns. Incorporate learning from these best practices into your own social media strategy to improve effectiveness and engagement.

The Best Friends Network Partner social media platforms share examples of exciting campaigns and practices from partners across the country and is a great place to start looking for examples and inspiration!

 **Instagram:**  
[@bestfriendsnetwork](#)

 **Facebook:**  
[facebook.com/BestFriendsLifesavingResourcesHub](https://facebook.com/BestFriendsLifesavingResourcesHub)

 **LinkedIn:**  
[linkedin.com/company/best-friends-animal-society](https://linkedin.com/company/best-friends-animal-society)



Best practices are always changing, but there are some evergreen strategies that remain constant.

- **Create a social media strategy and follow it.** Need a place to start? Check out Hootsuite's [free social media strategy template](#).
- **Know who your audience is; be inclusive and open-minded.** Think about people in your community beyond those who already engage with you. Seek to expand your reach to attract new pet adopters, foster caregivers, and volunteers from all demographics of the community.
- **Know what your call to action is.**
  - o Asking for donations? Convey urgency and utilize visual images.
  - o Need more foster and adoptive homes? Lead with the positive. Images that show pets interacting with people tend to do better because they highlight the joy and meaning that pets bring into our lives.
  - o Need more volunteers? Show why volunteering at your agency is something others want to be involved in. Use videos and testimonials of volunteers in action at your agency to show what they do to help pets and how there is a friendly, fun, and welcoming atmosphere for volunteers.
  - o For more evergreen ideas, see Hootsuite's 2024 social media [strategies and recommendations](#).



## Engage in continuous learning

Social media marketing is a dynamic and evolving field. Commit to continuous learning and professional development to stay ahead of trends and industry changes. Attend workshops, online courses, and networking events focused on social media marketing. Engage with industry experts and join online communities or forums to exchange insights, tips, and strategies with fellow marketers. By staying curious and proactive, you can adapt to the ever-changing landscape of social media marketing and drive positive results for your organization.

- **Best Friends Network Partners resources:** Best Friends Network Partners have access to abundant resources that support you and your organization's continuous learning about the most [effective social media marketing practices that advance lifesaving](#).
- **Maddie's Fund®:** Maddie's Fund® is also a great resource for ongoing learning on a diverse array of sheltering topics, including social media and marketing.
- **Nonprofit Tech for Good:** Nonprofit Tech for Good has certificate programs including the [2024 certificate in Social Media Marketing & Fundraising](#), [101 Digital Marketing & Fundraising Best Practices for Nonprofits](#), and many other relevant [webinars and resources](#).
- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn Learning offers a variety of courses related to social media marketing. LinkedIn Learning courses are free if you have a premium membership. Here are just a few to check out: [How to use ChatGPT for Content Creation](#), [Essential Skills for Social Media Managers](#), [Strategies for Creating Viral Short Form Content](#), [Content Marketing Foundations](#), [Learning Canva](#), [Crawl Inside the Mind of the Customer](#), and [Social Media Marketing Strategy: TikTok and Instagram Reels](#).



## Changing algorithms: The lowdown on the latest

Social media platforms frequently update their algorithms, affecting how content is prioritized and displayed to users. A social media algorithm is a set of rules and calculations used by social media platforms to determine which content to show users. Stay vigilant about algorithm changes on platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. Understand how these changes might impact your organization's reach, engagement, and visibility. Adjust your content strategy accordingly to adapt to algorithm updates and maintain a strong presence on social media.

[StoryChief's guide](#) includes tips for every platform and is updated throughout the year.

**Facebook feed algorithm (Meta):** Facebook's newsfeed algorithm mainly (but not exclusively) features relevant content from people, brands, and groups you're already connected to. Facebook (Meta) explains that this algorithm uses four steps to determine the order of the content users see in their feed:

- **Inventory:** This is all the content available from the people, pages, and groups you're connected with plus relevant ads and recommended content based on your Facebook activity.
- **Ranking signals:** These include time spent watching reels and viewing posts, the types of topics that get interest and engagement from viewers, and how viewers interact with posts.
- **Predictions:** The algorithm crunches the data from the ranking factors to make custom predictions about which content you'll value most based on engagement (i.e., likes, comments, shares, reactions) and time spent on a post. Facebook prioritizes posts that spark conversations and generate meaningful interactions among users. Posts that don't receive engagement may see a decrease in reach.
- **Relevance:** The algorithm calculates a relevance score for each post that indicates how relevant the content of the post is to the viewer. It uses this score to rank content in viewers' feeds. As of 2024, the Facebook algorithm determines which content is most relevant to a particular user based on whether the content is from sources users interact with, whether it's the type of content

they most often interact with (i.e., video, photos, etc.), how likely users and the people they are connected with are to engage with the post, how much engagement a post is getting, and how similar it is to other available content (multiple posts of the same type are likely to rank lower).

**Facebook reels algorithm (Meta):** This algorithm follows the same ranking system as the newsfeed described above. As described by Meta, those are: inventory, signals, predictions, and relevance. Recommendations from Meta include:

### What to do so content is seen with the algorithm:

- Be entertaining and engaging.
- Start a trend.
- Use built-in tools like text, filters, or other effects.
- Stick to vertical video.
- Add music.
- Experiment with different approaches.
- Use good lighting and camerawork to create a visually pleasing video.

### What to avoid:

- Blurry or low-resolution video
- Videos with watermarks from other apps (e.g., TikTok)
- Video with a border around it
- Horizontal video

**Instagram feed algorithm (Meta):** The Instagram algorithm looks at information about the content (reels, feed posts, and stories) and users (interests and behavior on the platform) to serve the right content to the right people. The three most important ranking factors of the Instagram algorithm are:

- Whether there is a relationship between the creator and viewer (i.e., follows, messages, comments, or interacts)
- User's interest in the type of content (the type of content a user typically interacts with)
- How relevant the content is to the user (i.e., trending topics, and timeliness of posts — more recent posts are more relevant than older ones)

**Instagram stories algorithm (Meta):**

- **User engagement:** The Instagram algorithm looks at how much you engage with a particular account's stories, such as sending likes or DMs.
- **Viewing history:** Next, it considers how often you view an account's stories to

prioritize those from accounts that it thinks you don't want to miss.

- **Closeness:** From there, it considers your overall relationship with the author and how likely you are to be connected as friends or family.

**Instagram reels algorithm (Meta):**

- **User activity:** First, the algorithm on Instagram looks at your past behavior, such as which reels you've liked, saved, shared, commented on, and engaged with recently.
- **Author interaction:** If you've interacted with the person who posted the reel before, that signals to the algorithm your level of interest in their content.
- **Reel information:** The algorithm then accounts for factors like audio track, video length, and caption text to determine how interesting the reel might be to you.
- **Poster information:** Similar to feed and stories, the algorithm considers your relationship with the poster to determine how relevant their content is to you.





**X (Twitter) algorithm:** Top tweets are chosen “based on accounts you interact with most, tweets you engage with, and much more,” according to X. Here’s what X has shared about its algorithm:

- **Recency:** Trends based on current popular topics are prioritized. Current trending events and topics may appear in a section at the top of the Home timeline called What’s Happening.
- **Relevance:** Posts that are relevant to the user’s interests; engagement metrics like likes, retweets, and replies; and the recency of the post are also prioritized.
- **Engagement:** Post popularity and how people in your network engage with it (in the general feed, your followed topics or trending) are prioritized.
- **Media content:** Posts with rich media content such as images, videos, and GIFs often receive higher engagement and visibility.

#### **General guidelines to follow on X:**

- Maintain an active presence.
- Get verified.
- Post at the optimum times (according to Hootsuite in 2024, the best time is 8 a.m. PT on Mondays and Thursdays). If you want to discover your best time to post, try retweeting your best content at different times throughout the day to see when you gain the most traction.
- Use tags (branded, trending, other users — but avoid spamming).
- Use photos, videos, and GIFs.
- Encourage followers to engage.
- Try using polls to increase engagement.
- Join relevant trends and topics.
- Repackage high-performing content and reshare what works.
- Use insights from your analytics to shape your strategy.

**TikTok algorithm:** Video and engagement are key on TikTok. Here's what TikTok has shared about its algorithm:

- **User engagement:** TikTok's algorithm is driven by user engagement metrics, including likes, shares, comments, and video completion rates. The algorithm learns from user behavior to recommend personalized content.
- **Video performance:** High-quality videos that capture viewers' attention within the first few seconds and encourage interaction to perform well on TikTok. Factors like video length, music choice, captions, and effects influence visibility. Tips to follow include:
  - o Use clear sound and visuals. Make sure that you've got clear audio, decent lighting. This shouldn't require any special equipment — just make sure videos are easy to understand and clear on the screen.
  - o Keep it short-ish. While TikTok videos can be up to 10 minutes long, you want viewers to watch the entire video because it will help it rank higher and be more likely to be seen by more users. The minimum length a TikTok video should be is 5 seconds, but TikTok suggests videos always be longer than 10 seconds to make the best impression.
  - o Stick to vertical orientation (9:16) for your filming. Though there have been rumors that TikTok is testing horizontal options, most viewers consume content vertically on their phones. Keep them happy with content that looks good in this format.
  - o Sound on! Don't forget to design your videos to be played with the sound on. 93% of TikTokers use the platform with sound on, and audio has become a huge part of TikTok culture. Sound clips can inspire trends and memes.
  - o Experiment with editing. A few fun edits or transitions help the content to be more dynamic. Play around with TikTok's built-in features like effects and text

treatments. According to TikTok: "These native features help keep your content feeling native to the platform, which can also help get it on more For You pages!"

- **Trending challenges keywords and hashtags:** Content that participates in trending challenges, uses popular hashtags and/ or keywords, or aligns with current trends is more likely to be featured on TikTok's "For You" page. TikTok captions can be a maximum length of 2,200 characters, so you have plenty of room to work with. Start looking for trending keywords by region and industry in the TikTok Creative Center. Your caption is not the only place to include keywords. TikTok can also pick them up from your voiceover or text overlay.
- **Diverse content:** TikTok's algorithm promotes a variety of content to provide a diverse and engaging experience for users. Creators can experiment with different content formats and themes to reach a wider audience.
- **TikTok won't recommend:** The platform won't recommend duplicated content, content you have already seen, content flagged as spam, or potentially upsetting content.
- **Connect with existing communities and subcultures:** Tap into an existing community or subculture, and you'll likely find your content amplified to that audience. TikTok subcultures tend to congregate around hashtags, so it's easy to tag your content appropriately to get in front of your ideal audience.



# 3 Channels & Platforms



Social media marketing has become a vital component to the market mix of many businesses and organizations, large and small. After all, there are 4.9 billion people who use social media platforms worldwide, so having a presence on social is a good way to connect with both current and potential audiences alike. Social media is an effective way to reach your

target audience, strengthen organizational awareness and brand, establish a loyal audience, and even fundraise. In this section, we detail everything you need to know about social media channels and platforms, including what they are, how they work, the best strategies, and how to implement them.

## Social media marketing platforms



**Facebook:** Facebook is by far the most widely used social network today. With more than 2.9 billion active monthly users, Facebook is where many brands go to advertise and display their messages. Compared to other social networks (Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram), Facebook contains the most mature audience. More than 77% of U.S. adults ages 30-49 say that they actively use the app. Although only 50% of U.S. adults ages 65 and older say they use Facebook, this number is the highest of any other social networking platform, proving that older generations engage and check in. Facebook users also tend to be very active. 70% of its users visit the site at least once per day, making it the most visited social network on the internet. A lot of users check the site an average of eight times per day. The frequency gives marketers a great opportunity to repeatedly push their content to viewers in a single day. Marketers wanting to use Facebook to advertise also need to be aware of the devices people use to open and load Facebook. An astounding 81.8% of users reportedly never access Facebook outside their mobile app. This illustrates the need to create mobile-centric creative ads and landing pages to attract and convert new qualified leads.



**YouTube:** In a category of its own, YouTube is a hybrid between a social media platform and a video content hub. Recent additions to the platform allow for channels to reach users beyond just videos. Through the community section, creators and brands can utilize blog posts, polls, and other announcements. Furthermore, adopting similar practices by Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, YouTube now allows users to place hashtags in video and playlist descriptions. Viewers can click on these hashtags and view related content across the site. This is all to diversify how consumers use YouTube social media and boost virality and engagement.



**Instagram:** Like Twitter, Instagram attracts younger audiences. A recent study found that 65% of all U.S. 18- to 29-year-olds currently have an Instagram account. You and your digital marketing agency can benefit from this information, knowing that this is where younger people like to spend their time online. Instagram also has very active and retentive users. More than 59% of its users check the site multiple times a day. More women tend to use the site than men, but this shouldn't stop you from advertising your brand on Instagram. In fact, 71% of U.S. businesses already have an Instagram account, proving that it's a credible marketplace for advertising.



**LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is also a little different from the other social platforms. A lot of people view this site as more professional than the other platforms and see it as a great networking tool. However, marketers can still take advantage of advertising on LinkedIn if they want to try and reach a more knowledgeable and higher-educated audience. Over 50% of Americans who have a college degree use LinkedIn, and it seems to resonate most strongly with 25- to 49-year-olds who are currently working or in the job market. LinkedIn can also be very efficient for businesses that are looking to market a brand or information to other businesses (B2B).



**X (Twitter):** If Facebook is busy capturing a more mature audience, then Twitter is busy gaining the attention of the younger generations. Approximately 42% of all 18- to 29-year-olds who live in the U.S. tweet and use Twitter relatively consistently. Younger demographics are much more active on Twitter, which makes it a great opportunity for you to target the younger demographic. It's also important to know that more than 77% of the active accounts on Twitter live and tweet outside the United States.



**TikTok:** Experiencing a meteoric rise, TikTok was released only four years ago and just celebrated its 1 billionth user in September 2021. Despite its relatively young age, TikTok is the fifth most popular social media app among 18- to 29-year-olds, clocking in with nearly 48% saturation. What does this mean for your organization? While many companies and digital marketing agencies are hesitant and unsure of the proper path to take with TikTok, one thing is clear: The next generation uses social media, and TikTok plays a massive role in its consumption. Exposing this emerging demographic to your organization by partnering with influencers prior to the generation reaching peak buying power is a viable long-term social media strategy.



**Nextdoor:** The social networking service designed for neighborhoods is emerging in popularity, with over 260,000 neighborhoods in the U.S. It is estimated that 3 out of every 10 people in the U.S. are using it regularly. The age of users is much more balanced than on other social platforms, which tend to skew younger, with about 32% millennials, 31% Gen Z adults, 28% Gen X, and 28% boomers. Nextdoor connects local residents to share information, recommendations, events, and updates. Users must verify their address to join, and posts are visible only to verified members of the neighborhood and nearby areas. The platform fosters discussions on topics like local news, events, safety concerns, and services, helping neighbors seek advice and organize activities. Local businesses and public agencies can also create profiles to communicate with residents, providing updates on safety, events, and promotions.



**Snapchat:** Similar to TikTok, Snapchat experienced a swift incline in users and has consistently conducted updates to the app to remain popular with Gen Z users. Unlike TikTok, Snapchat has made specific changes to make the platform friendly for advertisers. Many updates have allowed brands and products to integrate directly into the experience, allowing the target audience to view brand messaging as native to the channels it's viewing. Keep in mind that Snapchat is almost entirely experienced on mobile devices, with the app ranking second globally in mobile usage. If you embark on a digital marketing campaign on Snapchat, you must have properly optimized your landing pages and website for the mobile experience.



**Pinterest:** Pinterest is very different from other social networks because it strongly attracts a larger percentage of women. Research has found that U.S. women ages 25-54 comprise an astounding 30.4% of the platform's advertising audience. However, in recent years, Pinterest is growing in popularity among the male demographic, with the platform noting it is the fastest-growing audience segment in 2021. Marketing on Pinterest can be very beneficial for any brand. The company's 90% of weekly pinners use the platform to make purchasing decisions. This statistic shows that people are constantly taking in brand-related information and using it to convert.



## Define your target audience

The first step to growing your audience is to know whom you're trying to reach. Start by clearly defining your target audience based on demographics, psychographics, behaviors, and preferences. Consider factors such as age, gender, location, interests, values, and pain points.

- **Target audience:** A social media target audience is a group of people on social who are most likely to be interested in your product or service. Members of this group usually share common traits. A brand can have several target audiences segmented based on shared characteristics. For example, a target audience for a fitness brand might be women between the ages of 25 and 40 who are interested in health and wellness.
- **Demographics:** A lot of the demographic details can be found by looking at your analytics. Look at your social media numbers and track any current campaigns. This information should allow you to build on what you already know about your audience. Social media demographics vary by channel. For example, according to Statista, 18% of TikTok's global audience is women ages 18-24. The same group makes up only 8.9% of Facebook's worldwide users.
- **Psychographics:** Psychographics are used to group a target audience by belief systems, values, interests, and more. Often, these characteristics are what define your customers' motivations, challenges, and needs. Sprout's 2023 Social Index Report found that 21% of consumers follow brands on social media because their values or mission align with their beliefs. Tapping that connection is key to building ongoing brand loyalty.

**Do the research:** Conduct thorough market research to gain a deeper understanding of your target audience. Use surveys, focus groups, and online analytics tools — such as Google Analytics — to gather insights into their preferences, needs, and online behaviors. You can find [free market research survey templates](#) on platforms like Jotform.





**Build out several target audiences:** The goal of identifying and focusing on target audiences is to expand your engagement and reach within the community, bringing new supporters to your organization. Two important types of segments you'll want to focus on to accomplish this: audiences who are similar to your current customer base and engaged supporters and audiences based on communities who are not responding to your current messaging and services.

Whom might you be overlooking? Research shows us that younger generations are adopting pets at lower rates, indicating that this target audience is being overlooked by many organizations when building their messaging. Do you have a large population of non-English speakers in your community? Make sure that you're utilizing multilingual marketing efforts to ensure non-English speakers are aware of your services and feel welcome in your building.

Not sure how to determine what groups you're not currently serving? Here are a few approaches to gather more information:

- Take a look at your adoption, volunteer, foster, and donor records for clues. You can break down your lists based on ZIP codes and visit [census.gov](http://census.gov) for prevalent demographic factors in those ZIP codes.

- Add an electronic sign-in form for people who enter your building using a tablet or computer and a free service such as Google Forms. Keep the form short and simple and the questions optional. We suggest asking for their purpose in visiting, their ZIP code, their age range category, their preferred language, and how they heard about you. If you do email marketing, this is also a great opportunity to ask them to sign up for your email list!
- Review social media and Google Analytics to get information on who is engaging with you online.

**Use the right marketing channels:** Based on your target audience research, select the most effective marketing channels to reach them. This could include social media platforms, search engine advertising, content marketing, email campaigns, or traditional advertising channels — wherever they spend the most time.

## Find out where your audience is most active

Once you understand who your audience is, figure out where they're hanging out online. You have to identify whether your community is even on each separate social media platform. Figuring out where your audience is will help you prioritize which social media platforms you want to focus on.

- Older generations have increased their Facebook use in the past four years.
- On the other hand, Twitter appeals to younger audiences. In fact, 38% of Twitter users are between the ages of 18 and 29, and 26% of users are 30 to 49.
- Instagram also appeals to younger generations, with 35% of users being ages 25-34 and 30% being 18-24.
- This tool from [WordStream](#) can help you understand a bit more about audiences.



# 4 Effective Social Media: Organic and Paid



In today's fast-paced digital landscape, having a robust social media presence is crucial for any brand's success. While organic social media strategies are essential, they often yield slower growth and limited reach. To truly amplify your organization's visibility and engagement, paid social media advertising is indispensable. In this section, you'll learn when to boost your existing posts and when it's more advantageous to create targeted ad campaigns from scratch. We'll also provide insights into crafting a detailed plan, executing your strategy effectively, and obtaining the necessary budget to support your paid social media efforts. Whether you're a seasoned marketer or just starting, this section will equip you with the knowledge and tools to harness the power of paid social media advertising, ensuring broader and faster visibility for your brand.

## The difference between organic and paid social media

- **Organic social media:** Organic social media refers to all content posted on your social channels, such as photos, videos, and blog posts, without paid support. It is best used for building long-term relationships and trust with your audience, as many consumers view organic content as more trustworthy than paid posts. This makes it a great way to build credibility, strengthen your organization's reputation, and improve brand awareness. However, organic social media has slower growth and reach compared to paid social media, with organic posts reaching as little

as 2% of your audience on some platforms. The good news is that the more you engage with your customers on social media, the more likely the platform will show your organic posts in your followers' feeds. Encourage your audience to engage with your content by asking questions; running contests and promotions; and responding to comments, messages, and reviews promptly and personally.

- **Paid social media:** Paid social media involves displaying sponsored advertising content on third-party social networking platforms to target specific customers. Paid strategies typically offer broader and faster visibility compared to organic social media. They are ideal for quickly reaching a larger audience and targeting specific demographics, interests, and behaviors. Paid social media involves displaying sponsored advertising content on third-party social networking platforms with the goal of targeting specific customers. These paid strategies typically offer broader and faster visibility compared to organic social media. Paid social media is ideal for quickly reaching a larger audience and targeting specific demographics, interests, and behaviors.

## Identify your audience

- **Determine the goal of your campaign:** Identifying your audience begins with determining the goal of your campaign, whether it's to speak to existing followers,

reach new audiences, increase organizational awareness, promote an event, drive more traffic to your website, or facilitate fundraising efforts. Understanding these objectives guides your approach in selecting the most suitable social channels.

- **Demographics and the type of content can help determine which social channel to leverage:** Consider demographics and the type of content relevant to your campaign, as they play pivotal roles in determining which social channels to leverage. Tools like [WordStream's visual aids](#) can assist in this decision-making process. By aligning your campaign goals with the demographics and content preferences of your target audience, you can effectively optimize your social media strategy for maximum impact.

## Types of paid social media

- **Boosted posts:** Boosted posts are a fundamental tool in paid social media strategies, allowing you to enhance the visibility of your page's timeline posts by allocating funds to reach a selected audience. Within Meta's ecosystem, boosted posts offer a straightforward method to extend your content's reach across Facebook, Messenger, and Instagram. With customizable targeting options based on interests, age, and gender, you can effectively connect with individuals who are likely to engage with your business. These boosted post options across various social platforms provide accessible pathways to expand the reach and impact of your content, catering to diverse campaign objectives and budget constraints.
  - **Boosting posts on Meta (Facebook, Messenger, Instagram):** The process for boosting posts on Facebook and Instagram involves locating the desired post on your page, tapping the "Boost post" option, filling in the ad details, and then initiating the boost.
  - **Boosting posts on LinkedIn:** On LinkedIn, boosted posts require a

minimum investment of \$10 per day and follow a similar process of selecting the post, choosing an audience template, defining audience attributes, setting budget and duration, and finally initiating the boost.

- **Boosting posts on TikTok:** TikTok offers boosted posts at a cost of \$10 per approximately 1,000 views. To boost a post on TikTok, you select the desired video, click "Promote," choose a goal and create a custom audience, set budget and duration, and then commence the promotion.
- **Ad campaigns (Meta):** Meta ads, created through Meta Ads Manager, offer a comprehensive suite of advanced customization options designed to help you achieve a variety of marketing objectives. These ads can be optimized for specific goals such as app installs, website conversions, video views, and shop orders, providing a versatile approach to targeting your audience. Meta Ads Manager allows you to tailor your campaigns with detailed targeting parameters, including demographics, interests, behaviors, and custom audiences based on your data. This enables precise ad delivery to those most likely to engage with your content or take the desired action. Meta ads can be strategically placed across a range of platforms within the Meta ecosystem, including Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, and the Meta Audience Network. This multiplatform reach ensures your ads can be seen by a diverse and extensive audience, maximizing your visibility and impact. Depending on the type of ad and campaign objective, you can choose the optimal placements to enhance your campaign's effectiveness. For instance, video ads might perform well on Instagram stories, while carousel ads could be more engaging on Facebook's feed. Meta Ads Manager also offers robust analytics and reporting tools, enabling you to track the performance of your ads in real time.
  - **Choose different ad placements:** With

Meta ads, you gain the added benefit of selecting placements across a variety of platforms, including Facebook feed side ads, Messenger ads, Instagram stories, Facebook instant articles, and the Meta Audience Network. This flexibility allows you to strategically position your ads where they are most likely to be seen and engaged with, ensuring optimal visibility and effectiveness for your campaigns.

- o **Use specific ad objectives:** Choosing an ad objective early on is crucial for aligning your Meta ad campaign with your current business goals. While boosted posts are great for focusing on website clicks, page engagement, and local promotions, the full Ads Manager system offers a broader range of objectives, such as generating leads, promoting apps, and driving engagement. This comprehensive platform enables more precise targeting and advanced customization. Additionally, you can create and manage your ads conveniently through the Ads Manager mobile app, providing flexibility and control over your campaigns from anywhere.
- o **Maintain creative control:** With Meta ads created through Ads Manager, you can design an ad tailored to your specific goals. This platform allows you to create carousel ads, add detailed descriptions, and include a call-to-action button to encourage your audience to act. These are just a few of the many creative and formatting options available in Ads Manager that are not accessible when simply boosting a post from your page. This level of customization helps ensure that your ads are more engaging and effective in achieving your marketing objectives.
- o **Use advanced targeting capabilities:** With Meta ads, you can leverage advanced targeting capabilities to enhance your campaign's effectiveness. These tools allow you to create overlapping audience types and lookalike

audiences, among other sophisticated targeting options. By utilizing these features, you can reach a more precise and relevant audience, increasing the likelihood of engagement and achieving your marketing goals.

- o **Start your ad campaign with this link:** [Meta ad campaign](#)

- **Facebook Events:** Facebook Events is a powerful feature that allows users to create, share, and manage events within the Facebook platform. Whether you're organizing a small gathering, a large public event, or a virtual meeting, Facebook Events provides the tools to promote your event, invite guests, and keep attendees informed. With customizable options for event details, photos, and updates, as well as the ability to engage with your audience through comments and posts, Facebook Events helps you build excitement and drive attendance. This feature is invaluable for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to connect with their community and ensure their events are well-attended and successful.
- o **Create an event on Facebook:** To create an event on Facebook, log into your account and click your profile photo in the top right corner. Select "See all profiles" and choose the page you want to switch into. From your feed, click "Events" in the left menu (you might need to click "See more" first). Then, click "+ Create new event" on the left. Choose an event name, date, and time, and specify whether the event is in person or virtual. Enter the event details in the provided fields and then click "Create event" to finalize.
- o **Promote/boost your event on Facebook:** To promote or boost your event on Facebook, go to your Facebook page and click "Promote." Select "Boost an event." If this option does not appear, ensure that you have created the event from your Facebook page rather than

your personal profile. Choose the event you want to promote and click “Boost event.” Optionally, you can change the text of the ad by typing into the description box, which automatically populates with the event description. To change the ad creative, click “Edit options” and choose “Choose image,” “Choose video,” “Upload new,” or “Crop image” from the dropdown menu. Select your audience, duration, and budget, and add tracking conversions if needed. When finished, click “Boost event now” to run your ad on the Facebook feed. Ensure the image you use for your ad contains little to no text and is engaging and related to your event, rather than using a text-heavy event flyer.

of an ad, each differing in a single element such as the headline, image, call to action, or audience targeting. By running these variations simultaneously, you can compare their performance to determine which version resonates more with your audience. Key metrics to evaluate during A/B testing include engagement rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates. For instance, you might test different visuals to see which one garners more attention or experiment with various call-to-action phrases to find the most compelling. Through systematic A/B testing, you can gather actionable data on what elements drive better results, allowing you to make data-driven decisions and continually enhance the effectiveness of your social media campaigns.

## Measure and evaluate the results

- **Measurement:** To measure and evaluate the results of various paid social media campaigns, start by defining clear objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) such as engagement rates, click-through rates, conversions, and return on investment (ROI). Utilize analytics tools provided by social media platforms, such as Facebook Insights, Instagram Analytics, and Twitter Analytics, to track these metrics in real time. Compare the performance data against your initial goals to assess effectiveness. Additionally, conduct A/B testing by experimenting with different ad creatives, targeting options, and budget allocations to determine what works best. Regularly review and analyze the collected data to identify trends, strengths, and areas for improvement. By continuously monitoring and adjusting your campaigns based on these insights, you can optimize your strategy and ensure better outcomes for future paid social media efforts.
- **A/B testing:** A/B testing, also known as split testing, is a powerful method to refine your paid social media campaigns. This involves creating two or more variations
- **Optimizing your campaign:** Optimizing your social media campaign based on results involves a continuous cycle of analysis and adjustment. Start by reviewing the data collected from your campaign metrics and A/B testing to identify what’s working well and what isn’t. Focus on the ads and strategies that yield the highest engagement, click-through rates, and conversions. Use these insights to tweak various elements of your campaign, such as refining your target audience, adjusting your budget allocation, and enhancing your ad creatives. Additionally, consider the timing of your posts and the frequency of your ads to maximize reach and impact. Implementing these changes incrementally allows you to monitor their effects and make further adjustments as needed. By regularly fine-tuning your campaign based on performance data, you can improve its overall effectiveness, ensuring that your marketing efforts are always aligned with your goals and audience preferences.

## Getting a budget to support a paid social media campaign

- **Include in your annual budget planning:** To secure funding for a paid social media campaign, an animal shelter can adopt several strategies. Begin by allocating small amounts for marketing in your annual budget. Running modest campaigns initially allows you to measure and share positive results with stakeholders, making a compelling case for increased funding over time. Target specific donors who might be interested in supporting marketing efforts and build these advertising needs into your budget requests. Incrementally increase the budget each year to keep the process lowkey and manageable.
- **Apply for grants:** Explore and apply for grants specifically aimed at nonprofits and animal welfare organizations. Many foundations and government programs offer grants that can help cover marketing expenses, including social media advertising.
- **Donor funding:** Another effective approach is to invite donors to sponsor the marketing and social media promotion of specific animals. For example, the [Adoption Angel program in Williamson County, Texas](#), allows donors to fund the promotion of individual animals, integrating this into their annual budget for paid marketing and social media. This targeted marketing has also increased the visibility of other posts, further benefiting the shelter.

By combining these strategies, your shelter can gradually build a sustainable budget to support effective paid social media campaigns.



# 5 Identifying & Leveraging Influencer Partnerships



Influencer marketing is a popular strategy for businesses to reach target audiences on social media. Social media influencers and content creators can be influential in the decision-making and opinions of others due to their authority, knowledge, position, and/or relationship with their audience on social platforms. Influencers have loyal followings and can help increase organizational brand awareness, enhance your social media following, and amplify your message.

Influencers with an engaged and active audience can introduce your organization or initiative to new people in a genuine and relatable way. Choose influencers whose values align with your organization and collaborate on content that naturally highlights your services or animals within their storytelling.

## Types of influencers

- **Nano-influencers:** Social media users with less than 1,000 followers. While these accounts are small, they usually have a highly engaged audience and influence within their local community.
- **Micro-influencers:** Social media users with between 1,000 and 100,000 followers. Micro-influencers tend to focus on a specific topic, such as fitness, beauty, or travel, and have a loyal and engaged fan base.
- **Macro-influencers:** Social media users with 100,000 to 1 million followers. They can help you reach a broad demographic but are more accessible than a mega-influencer.
- **Mega-influencers:** Social media users with over 1 million followers. They're often celebrities, athletes, or media personalities who have a wider and more diverse reach but less personal connection and engagement with their followers.

## Identifying influencers and reaching out to them

**Identify influencers:** The first step is to identify influencers who are relevant, authentic, and aligned with your organizational goals. You can use tools like [BuzzSumo](#), [Upfluence](#), [Klear](#), or [Aspire](#) to search for influencers based on keywords, topics, niches, or locations. You can also look at hashtags, comments, or mentions related to animal welfare on social media and see who is generating the most engagement and conversation.

Don't be afraid to look outside the world of animal welfare creators and pursue partnerships with beauty creators, travel bloggers, comics, and more. If you **ONLY** work with people in the animal welfare space, you likely won't reach a new audience.

Once you have a list of potential influencers, you need to evaluate their quality, reach, and whether there is alignment with the topic. Look at their content, audience, tone, values, and reputation. You want to work with influencers who have a genuine interest and passion for animal welfare, who have a loyal and active fan base, and who can represent your organizational brand and message in a positive and credible way.

**Reach out to influencers:** Contact the influencers you want to work with and pitch your collaboration idea to them. You can use email, direct message, or other channels to reach out to them, but make sure you personalize your message and show that you have done your research and know who they are. Explain who you are, what your animal welfare mission is, why you think they are a good fit, and what you can offer them in return.

If you offer them anything of value (free event tickets, merchandise, etc.) in exchange for them posting content, then you **MUST** have a contract per FTC guidelines. However, you can offer them experiences you do not charge for (e.g., bottle-feeding kittens, puppy playtime, a tour of your facility). You can also gift things, such as swag, to influencers, but there cannot be any expectation that they will post about it.

When we reach out to influencer prospects, we typically invite them into our program, give them an overview of who we are and what our program entails, and make it clear that we do not pay partners. You can see below that we offer them merchandise for joining our program, but do not hint or indicate that they should post about it to stay within the FTC guidelines.

### Sample pitch:

*Hello,*

*We are growing our influencer program and are looking for animal lovers like you to help Save Them All! We ask our influencer partners to donate their platform/ posts/stories a few times a year to share campaigns to encourage adoption, donations, and other efforts to end the killing of cats and dogs in America's shelters.*

*If you are interested in joining this program, please email your mailing address, full name, and shirt size to me at [email address], so I can send you a little thank-you gift for joining! ❤️*

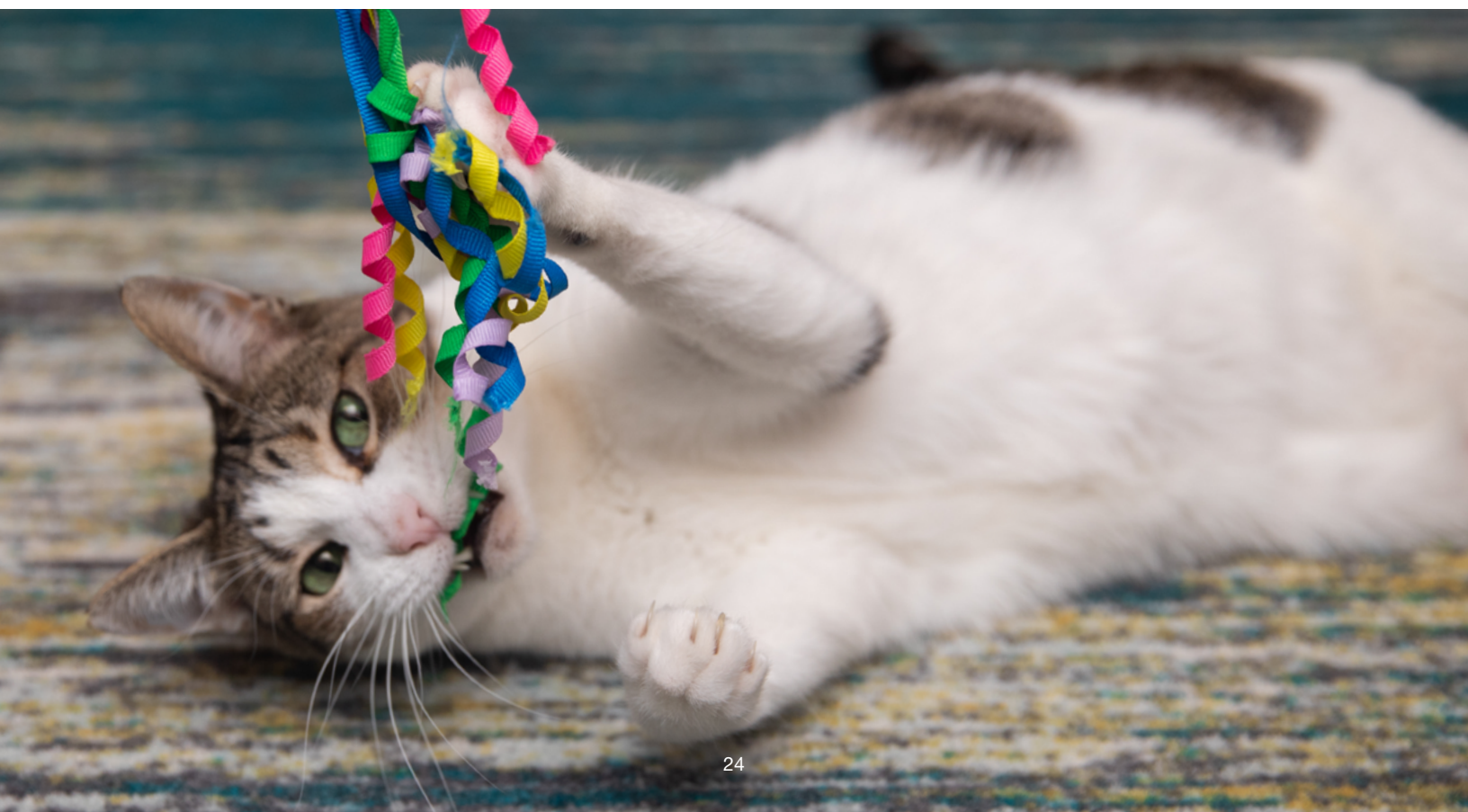
*Please let me know if you have any questions, and thank you so much for all you do for the animals!*

Name

Title

Organization

Email





**Co-create content with influencers:** You should collaborate with your influencer partner to create content that showcases your animal welfare cause **and** resonates with their audience. You can work with influencers to create different types of content — such as stories, posts, videos, livestreams, podcasts, or blogs — depending on the platform and format they prefer. You can also invite them to participate in events, campaigns, challenges, or contests related to animal welfare.

The key is to give them creative freedom and input, while also ensuring that your brand and message are consistent and aligned. You can provide them with guidelines, briefs, or templates but also allow them to add their own personality and style. You can also review and approve the content before it goes live, but be flexible and respectful of their voice and vision. The content will resonate better with their audience if it is in their voice and similar style, so don't be afraid to let them make it their own, even if that is a little outside of your brand voice.

**Promote and amplify the content:** If your goal of your influencer partnership is to reach a new audience, it is best to have the influencer post the content on their channels. You can then engage with and amplify it by sharing, liking, responding to comments, or doing something platform specific, such as having the post be a collaboration post between your two accounts or stitching their video on TikTok.

You could also leverage other strategies, such as paid ads, email marketing, or press releases, to boost the visibility and reach of the content (as long as the creator has approved their content for this usage). The goal is to maximize the exposure and impact of the content — and to drive traffic, conversions, and awareness to your mission.

**Measure and evaluate the results:** At the end of your collab, you should measure and evaluate the results of your influencer activation. You can use tools like [Google Analytics](#), [Facebook Insights](#), [Hootsuite](#), [Loomly](#), or [Sprout Social](#) to track and analyze the performance of the content on social media. You can look at metrics

such as impressions, views, engagements, likes, comments, shares, saves, link clicks, leads, or donations, depending on your goals and objectives.

You should thank and collect feedback from the influencers and see how their audience perceived and responded to the content and the cause. You want to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of your collaboration and identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. You can also use the results to improve your future collaborations and to maintain and nurture your relationship with the influencers.

**Influencer collaboration examples:** Here are a few examples of influencer activations:

- **Home event activation:** [Christian Divyne](#) is a TikTok creator in New York City. Even though he does not have any pets or create animal content, we liked his overall vibe and knew he would reach a young millennial/Gen Z audience, so we reached out to him and invited him to a free event in Times Square. He attended the event and made [this recap video](#) that reached 44,000 people.
- **Giving Tuesday:** [Sara](#), a Latina micro-influencer who creates content with her two rescued dogs, was one of 16 influencers who shared our Giving Tuesday campaign on a [post on Instagram](#). We received nine donations due to influencer partnerships.
- **One-off collaboration:** We partnered with [Cheap Old Houses](#) for a four-part series to highlight senior dogs and old houses. They photoshopped our senior dogs into the old houses they were highlighting and posted them as collaborator posts on Instagram, getting them in front of both audiences and reaching over a million accounts throughout the campaign. [See one post here](#).

# 6 Strategic Content Creation



Creating engaging and impactful content for social media involves a blend of art and science. There are essential strategies for crafting compelling visuals and narratives, optimizing content for different formats and platforms, and using practical tools to build brand awareness and foster community engagement.

Content creation requires using storytelling techniques to evoke emotion and drive action, along with visuals such as data graphics, static images, and videos. There are new tools available including AI-powered post generators, Canva for design, and video editing tools like Slice and Cap Cut. These insights will help you effectively achieve your social media strategic content creation goals.

## Tools for content creation

Crafting engaging and impactful content for social media involves leveraging various tools to optimize content for different formats and platforms. Here are some essential tools to consider integrating into your content creation process:

- **Canva:** [Canva](#) is a versatile design platform that offers a wide range of templates and design elements for creating visually appealing graphics, presentations, social media posts, and more. Its user-friendly interface makes it accessible for users with varying design skills.
- **Video editing software:** Video content is increasingly popular on social media platforms. Utilize video editing software like [Splice](#), [CapCut](#), [Videoleap](#), [Adobe Premiere Pro](#), or [Final Cut Pro](#) to edit and enhance your video content with effects, transitions, and captions.
- **Photo editing software:** Alongside videos, captivating static imagery plays a crucial role in content creation. [Adobe Photoshop](#), [Lightroom](#), [Photoleap](#), or free alternatives like [GIMP](#) can be used to edit and enhance photos for social media posts.
- **Social media schedulers:** Tools like [Buffer](#) allow you to schedule posts across multiple social media platforms in advance, ensuring consistent and timely content delivery. Some of these tools have free plans, and many social media channels offer free scheduling options within their platforms too. Learn more about free scheduling on Meta ([Facebook and Instagram](#)) and [LinkedIn](#).
- **Analytics tools:** Platforms like [Google Analytics](#), [Facebook Insights](#), [Hootsuite](#), or [Twitter Analytics](#) provide valuable insights into audience demographics, engagement metrics, and content performance. Use these insights to refine your content strategy and optimize future content.
- **Content calendar tools:** Maintain organization and streamline collaboration with content calendar tools like [Trello](#), [Asana](#), [Brandwatch](#), [Loomly](#), [Sprout Social](#), or [CoSchedule](#). These tools enable you to plan, schedule, and track content creation efforts across teams effectively.

- **Keyword research tools:** Incorporate keyword research tools like [SEMrush](#), [Ahrefs](#), or [Google Keyword Planner](#) to identify relevant keywords and topics for your content. Optimizing content around targeted keywords can improve visibility and search engine rankings.
- **Social media listening tools:** Monitor conversations and trends relevant to your brand with social media listening tools such as [Mention](#), [Brandwatch](#), or [Sprout Social](#). Stay informed about audience sentiment, industry trends, and competitor activity to inform your content strategy.
- **AI/posts generator:** AI-powered tools can assist in generating content ideas, headlines, and even full-length posts. [Rescue Writer](#) can be helpful in creating pet bios for social media posts. These tools utilize natural language processing to analyze data and produce compelling content tailored to your needs. Many of the tools listed above already utilize AI to help you create meaningful and impactful content. NOTE: Do not include any sensitive, personal, or confidential information when using AI tools like [ChatGPT](#).

By incorporating these tools into your content creation process, you can optimize your content for different formats and platforms, foster community engagement, and achieve your social media marketing goals effectively.

## A comprehensive guide to content creation strategy

- **Creating a marketing strategy:** Developing a comprehensive marketing strategy involves defining who, what, when, where, why, and how you approach content marketing. This framework helps set purposeful decisions and business goals, making it easier to prioritize and plan content campaigns thoughtfully while collaborating with others. For example, an animal shelter might decide to focus on highlighting adoptable pets (who) using daily social media posts (what) on

Instagram and Facebook (where) to increase adoptions (why) by posting each morning (when) with heartwarming stories and pictures (how). Here's an example from Best Friends' Facebook page:



- **Setting strategic goals:** Strategic goals are essential for measuring success. Ongoing goals track regular results, while campaign goals measure the effectiveness of time-sensitive activities.
- **Identifying your audience:** Understand their demographics, motivations, challenges, and mindset, and develop two to five personas to reflect specific audience groups.

Below is an example of one audience segment to demonstrate the type of demographics information that is helpful to consider.

## SAMPLE AUDIENCE SEGMENT

### ◇ Demographics:

- Age: 25-45 years old
- Gender: Predominantly female (70%)
- Income Level: Middle to upper-middle class (\$50,000 - \$100,000+)
- Occupation: Mix of professionals (teachers, healthcare, IT)
- Education Level: College-educated or higher

### ◇ Motivations:

- Love for Animals: Desire to care for animals in need.
- Social Impact: Belief in making a positive difference through volunteering or donations.
- Family Companionship: Seeking pets for family enrichment.
- Mental Health Benefits: Recognize pets reduce stress and increase happiness.

### ◇ Challenges:

- Time Constraints: Balancing work, family, and other commitments.
- Financial Concerns: Worry about the costs of pet ownership.
- Housing Restrictions: Rental properties that limit pet ownership.
- Knowledge Gaps: Lack of information about adoption and animal care.

### ◇ Mindset:

- Empathetic and Caring: Compassionate towards animals.
- Community-Oriented: Value community engagement.
- Responsible and Conscientious: Desire to make responsible choices.
- Open to Education: Willing to learn about animal care and adoption.
- Socially Connected: Active on social media, sharing experiences.

### • Finding the right topics for content:

Selecting the right topics involves referencing personas, identifying patterns from customer feedback, and reviewing existing content. Limiting topics to select categories and consistently publishing useful, category-aligned content aids search engines and enhances audience engagement.

### • Embracing storytelling and consistent topics:

Effective storytelling starts with identifying the core message and purpose behind each topic. Define a beginning, middle, and end that makes sense and showcases human and animal experiences, making your content more relatable and memorable. Promoting your programs through storytelling makes them even more engaging. For example, the [Doggy Day Out](#) initiative shares heartwarming stories of dogs enjoying a day out with volunteers. Consistent topics provide structure and anticipation for your posts. Choose specific days and times to post recurring content, such as a Pet of the Week every Monday, [Wishlist Wednesday](#), or Foster Feature Fridays. This consistency gives your audience something to look forward to and a reason to check in, as seen with the [Pet of the Week posts](#). Remember to stay positive in your storytelling to foster a sense of connection and community.

• **Crafting your message:** The best way to craft a message for a social media post involves understanding your audience and tailoring your content to their interests and preferences. Start with a catchy headline or opening sentence to grab attention, and ensure the message is clear, concise, and compelling. Incorporate a call to action to encourage interaction, whether it is liking, sharing, commenting, or clicking a link. Additionally, use relevant hashtags to increase visibility and reach. Finally, maintain a consistent tone that reflects your organizational brand's voice, making sure the content resonates emotionally with your audience.

- **Leveraging audio and video content:** Audio and video content generally outperform other types. Choose valuable topics, use compelling visuals, add captions, and select engaging thumbnails. Repurpose and publish video content effectively to maximize reach and engagement. Steps to follow when filming video and recording audio for social media include choosing a topic that viewers will value, showing the most interesting content at the start, and adding captions for those who mute by default. Selecting a thumbnail for videos is also crucial.
- **Capitalizing on trending topics:** Trending local or national topics, such as rainy weather or holidays, can be leveraged to enhance your message. By aligning your shelter's messaging with what's already captivating the community or nation, you introduce your shelter to a wider audience. Examples include a [fun video promoting adoptions](#) during rainy weather and a [themed post celebrating May the 4th](#).
- **Fostering transparency in communication:** Transparency in communication fosters connections. Transparent and trustworthy content helps build stronger relationships with community members and provides clear directions on how they can assist. For example, check out the posts on [preventing euthanasia](#) and the shelter's efforts in fostering animals: [Daisy Dukes video](#).
- **Engaging with the community:** Engaging with the community on social media is essential for building support and advocacy. Beyond simply sharing content, it's crucial to actively interact with followers, responding promptly and warmly to their comments, messages, and shares. When members of the community engage with your posts, expressing gratitude can deepen their connection to your cause. By [thanking them](#) for their involvement and feedback, you not only recognize their support but also foster a sense of belonging and significance within the animal welfare community. This appreciation reinforces their commitment to animal welfare and encourages further

engagement. Moreover, engaging with the community provides invaluable insights, feedback, and ideas directly from supporters, enabling the organization to better tailor its efforts and messaging to meet the needs of animals and their advocates. Remember, social media serves as a powerful tool for driving positive change in animal welfare, so active engagement and appreciation are vital for building a strong online presence.



# 7 Measuring Your Effectiveness



Having a well-rounded understanding of social media measurement is the final piece in optimizing your social media marketing and engagement. In today's digital landscape, measuring the effectiveness of social media efforts is crucial for any organization. Social media measurement involves tracking, analyzing, and interpreting data from various platforms to understand the impact of your content, campaigns, and overall strategy.

By leveraging social media analytics, your organization can gain valuable insights into audience behavior, content performance, and ROI, enabling data-driven decisions that enhance marketing efforts and achieve organizational goals. Accurate measurement is essential for optimizing campaigns, as it allows you to identify what works, refine your approach, and allocate resources more effectively. With the right tools and metrics, you can transform your social media strategy from a guessing game into a precise science, ensuring every post, tweet, and story maximizes your campaign's success.



## Using analytics platforms

Measuring, optimizing, testing, and learning are critical components of an effective social media strategy. By leveraging tools like Google Analytics, Hootsuite Analytics, and Sprout Social, organizations can track key performance indicators and gain valuable insights into audience behavior and content performance. This data-driven approach allows for continuous optimization, ensuring that campaigns are always improving and adapting to meet the audience's needs.

Testing different strategies and content types with platforms like [Buffer](#) and [CoSchedule](#) helps identify what resonates most with your audience, enabling you to refine your approach and achieve better results. Additionally, many of these tools, such as [Later](#) and [Sprout Social](#), also offer features for content calendar management and scheduling, making it easier to plan and execute your social media strategy efficiently. Learning from these insights fosters a culture of continuous improvement, driving more effective and impactful social media campaigns. Accurate measurement and analysis not only enhance current efforts but also provide a solid foundation for future strategies, ensuring sustained growth and engagement across social media platforms.

As each tool offers a unique set of features, it's important to research and select the one that best meets your specific needs. Often you can save resources by picking one tool that provides multiple resources.

Here are some popular social media analytics platforms:

- **Hootsuite Analytics:** Offers comprehensive analytics and reporting features for multiple social media platforms
- **Sprout Social:** Provides in-depth social media analytics, engagement insights, and performance metrics
- **Buffer Analyze:** Focuses on key performance metrics and reporting for social media campaigns
- **Google Analytics:** While not solely a social media tool, it tracks social media traffic and engagement on your website
- **Keyhole:** Specializes in hashtag tracking, keyword monitoring, and social media analytics
- **Brandwatch:** Offers powerful social media listening and analytics capabilities
- **Klear:** Focuses on influencer analytics and social media performance tracking
- **Mention:** Combines social media monitoring with analytics to track brand mentions and performance
- **BuzzSumo:** Analyzes social media content performance and helps identify popular trends and influencers
- **X (Twitter) Analytics:** Native Twitter tool providing insights into tweet performance and audience engagement
- **CoSchedule Analytics:** Provides comprehensive insights into your marketing performance, allowing you to track, analyze, and optimize your campaigns with ease and empowering you to make data-driven decisions that drive results

These platforms offer a range of features to help organizations track their social media performance, understand audience behavior, and optimize their content strategies.



# 8 Resources/ Sources



- [Social Media Marketing Advice From Experts | Hootsuite Blog](#)
- [Newsroom | Meta \(fb.com\)](#)
- [Instagram Blog | About Instagram](#)
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