



100 Social Media Mistakes You Do Not Want to Make

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BEST PRACTICES GUIDE | SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING



Mistakes happen. That’s a fact of life.

Can they be frustrating? Sure.

But mistakes also offer a valuable opportunity to learn something new and make necessary improvements so you don’t make the same mistakes again.

That’s true in life, and that’s certainly true when it comes to your social media marketing.

In this guide, we will outline 100 common mistakes that could stand in the way of your social media success.

You can read all 100 or pick the social network that’s right for you to get the help you need.

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For many small businesses, Facebook is their primary social network.

If that's the case for you, then Facebook is where the majority of your online interactions are taking place.

Don't let mistakes like these hurt your chances of turning online engagement into new opportunities for your business:

1. Talking at your customers, not with your customers.

Pushing out a bunch of blah blah blah press releases or links to stuff you do on your website is not engagement. Focus on providing relevant content instead.

2. Not responding to comments or questions.

A business or organization that doesn't address concerns or doesn't interact with customers is not making a great first impression.

3. Not monitoring your page.

When someone visits your page, are they going to find it full of links from Facebook spammers inviting your fans to college night at the local bar or to click to win a free iPad? Make sure to stay on top of the content on your page.


4. Twitter to Facebook overflow.

Don't just cross-post from Twitter. It signals that you don't care enough about your Facebook fans to create updates just for them.

5. Writing long posts that get cut off.

It's okay to write longer status updates on Facebook (you have a limit of 60,000 characters), but you still need to keep them clear and concise.

6. Liking your own post.

[Liking your own posts can look desperate. Instead, like your fans' comments when they post something nice.](#) 

7. Talking smack about your competition.

Keep it civil. There's no need to bad mouth your competition.

8. Not having a custom URL for your Facebook Page.

What's the first rule of Facebook Pages? Get yourself a custom URL.

9. Posting one thing right after another.

Your fans may love you, but post after post after post in the newsfeed can be a bit much. Be sure to space out your updates so there's a better chance people engage with them rather than pass them by.

10. Responding negatively to a negative comment.

The outcome of a negative comment truly depends on how you react to it. Being negative in return is not a good idea. Say thank you for the feedback and respond professionally to resolve the issue.

11. Not filling out necessary information

Facebook gives you the opportunity to add detailed information about your business or organization. Be sure to fill it out fully.

12. Not using Facebook Insights.

If you're not paying attention and evolving based on the information you learn from your page's Insights you may find yourself with a poorly performing page.

13. Only promoting yourself.

It's called social networking for a reason. If you're not engaging and showing personality, why bother?

14. Spelling errors.

As small as they might be, spelling errors can really hurt your page's credibility. A typo here and there is okay, but lots of typos are not. (Watch for some common misspellings, like There/Their/They're/Your/You're).

15. USING TOO MANY CAPS OR EXCLAMATION POINTS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Shhhh. Stop yelling. Use capital letters and exclamation points sparingly for maximum impact.


16. Responding with the same answer from multiple admins.

It's good to respond to people's comments, but if multiple people are running your page, be sure they're communicating internally so that they never post the same response multiple times.

17. Not having any posts or comments from customers.

When all the posts and comments on a page's wall are between friends and family of the business owner and not customers, that's not really a good sign. Be sure to get your customers engaged.

18. Not getting any feedback on questions.

Posting questions to your fans is a great idea, but when you see a business doing it every day and no one is answering ... that looks bad. 

19. Having a blurry avatar.

If people can't make out your page's avatar, what good is it? Or, if you have an avatar that looks silly when it is minimized, it's not much help either. Be sure to use the appropriate sizes to look your best.

20. Relying on user-generated content.

All content created by your fans is gravy. Don't demand that people get involved, or expect that it will make your page a success. You still need to create your own engaging content.

21. Trying to make every post for everyone.

Not every post needs to be for everyone. It's okay to post something that only a segment of your fans may find engaging. It's better than watering something down to make it appropriate for everyone.

22. Leaving the shared link in your status.

Once you paste a link in your status, the link preview pops up. Once that's there, you can erase the original link from your status and write what you want.

23. Not customizing the headline and abstract when you share a link.

In the link preview, you can actually click on the headline and abstract to customize the text for your audience.

24. Leaving a random image in the link preview.

There are little arrows below the image that let you choose what image displays when you share a blog post or article. This is especially important if Facebook pulls something random like a Twitter badge or sign-up form image.

25. Leaving up a post with a typo.

If you notice a typo in your update immediately after you post it, you can delete it and repost a corrected version before people start liking, commenting on, and sharing it.

If you can, block of time in your schedule to review your Facebook Page. Look for areas where improvements can be made and put a plan in place to fix these mistakes. Your fans will be happy you did.

Up next...Twitter!



Twitter is often compared to a cocktail party, where friends gather to share information and connect through common interests.

But if you're new to the party, there's a good chance you're going to make some mistakes.

These aren't those Twitter mistakes that you read about in the paper or see on TMZ. These are simple mistakes that are both easy-to-fix and easy-to-avoid. Let's take a look:

26. Not leaving enough space to retweet.

Just because you have 140 characters doesn't mean you need to use them all. It's usually a good idea to keep posts at about 120 characters to allow people to retweet.

27. Not shortening links in your Tweets.

Twitter will do some of the work for you, but you should also check out link shorteners like bit.ly or ow.ly. You can also track the number of clicks the links you're sharing get with these tools.

28. Looooong Twitter handles.

If your handle is longer than the first half of your tweet, you're losing valuable space. Keep handles as short as possible so you have enough room to actually write something.

29. Too much self promotion.

A little self promotion is good for any business, but if your timeline is riddled with "I's or We's" and your only retweets are about you, then you're doing too much. Follow the 80/20 rule. Post 80 percent helpful or entertaining content and save 20 percent for the self-promotional stuff.

30. #HashtagAbuse.

Don't abuse the hashtag, save it for when you need it.

31. Not responding to Tweets.


You won't be able to respond to everything, but do your best to answer questions and address any negative feedback. Don't forget to say thanks when it's positive.

32. Automatic direct messages.

Too many people send automatic direct messages to new

followers. Don't do this. You don't want the first impression that you make on your customers to be from a robot.

33. Too much negativity.

No one wants to follow an angry tweeter. Keep your tweets positive and your followers will act accordingly. 

34. QR code avatar.

Nowadays, you see QR codes in crazy places. Don't let your Twitter account be one of them. Make your avatar something that reflects you or your brand.

35. Too much abbreviation.

Sometimes you're going to have to abbreviate but try not to abandon grammar to the point of being unreadable.

36. Spelling errors.

Spelling errors are going to happen, but try to keep them to a minimum. Review before you hit send.

37. Tweeting without a strategy.

Never tweet just for the sake of tweeting. Take some time to decide why you're on Twitter and what you want to get from it. Let that guide your content.

38. Too much dialogue, not enough content.

You want to engage with followers, but you also want to give them content that makes them engage with you.

39. Not sharing the love.

If people are promoting you on Twitter, show them some love back. A retweet can go a long way on Twitter. So can mentioning someone when you share their article or post.



40. Too much content, not enough dialogue.

Unless you're a news outlet, then I'm looking for more than just news. Use your content to engage your followers and start a discussion.

41. Only tweeting 9-5.

No one expects your Twitter to be a 24/7 operation, but your followers don't log off when you go home for the day. Hootsuite is a great option for managing and scheduling tweets.

42. Tweeting without the facts.

This is the number one way to hurt your credibility and tick your followers off. Be a helpful source of information in your industry, not a rumor mill.

43. Tweeting too often.

There's no set formula for how much you should be tweeting. But unless you're the most interesting person in the world, if you're clogging up their timeline, they'll get turned off in a hurry.

44. USING TOO MANY CAPS AND EXCLAMATION POINTS!!!!

You wouldn't yell at your customers in person, so don't do it on Twitter. Use sparingly for maximum impact.

45. Bad mouthing competition.

If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all. Building connections is a great way to build your following and many of your competitors' followers would likely be happy to follow you too.

46. Not connecting your business website to your Twitter account.

80.5 percent of small businesses DO NOT link their sites to their social networks. Don't let your business be part of that group. They're missing potential followers and most importantly customers.


47. Outdated Twitter profile.

Your profile says a lot about who you are. Tell people what you're all about and give them a reason to follow you. Make sure everything is up-to-date.

48. Having more than one voice

It's good to respond to people's tweets, but if multiple people are tweeting from your handle, get on the same page and agree on the right voice for your brand.

49. Facebook/Twitter overflow.

[Connecting your Facebook and Twitter feeds might seem like a good idea, but if your Twitter is just a feed for your Facebook, then it defeats the purpose of being on Twitter in the first place.](#) 

50. Asking too many questions.

A question can be a great way to get feedback or start a conversation, but if you're constantly asking "How's everyone doing?!" and no one is answering, then it's not adding to the conversation.

Everyone is going to make some mistakes when they're starting off. The best you can do is keep this list in mind and try not to let a couple missteps ruin the party.

Up next...LinkedIn!

LinkedIn is recognized as the professional social network. It's a place where people of all industries can go to build relationships with their colleagues and demonstrate their experience and expertise. It's also a place where businesses and organizations can show off their work to prospective clients, customers, and even future employees.

The last thing you want to do is look like you don't know what you're doing! Here are common LinkedIn mistakes to avoid.

51. Not understanding the difference between a LinkedIn Company Page and a LinkedIn Profile.

There are two ways for you to demonstrate your expertise on LinkedIn. With a Company Page, you'll be communicating as your business. This is similar to a Facebook Business Page where prospective clients learn more about your business. However, it is much more focused on informing your audience rather than building a community like you would on Facebook.

With your LinkedIn Profile, you'll be communicating as an individual rather than a business. Here you'll connect with clients, colleagues, and other members of your professional network. Mixing this up is a guaranteed way to look foolish when starting out.

52. Not having a profile photo.

This might seem like a no-brainer, but not having a photo can have a big impact on the overall appearance of your profile.

53. Using an unprofessional profile photo.

Quirky photos that might fly on Facebook are not a good choice on LinkedIn. Keep your headshot professional.

54. Uploading a poorly-cropped profile photo.

People upload profile photos all the time that are not sized correctly for LinkedIn. This often results in the "half-head" syndrome. Don't be the person without a forehead in your profile photo!


55. Not updating your contact information.

It's important to keep all of your information up-to-date. Why? You want people to be able to easily connect with you.

56. Not completing your entire profile.

Having an incomplete profile not only looks lazy, but it also doesn't portray all of the amazing credentials and experience you have. Show them off!

57. Not including a personalized message.

With every invitation you send to connect, you should always include a personal message. A personalized note goes a long way because it makes your invitation feel genuine. 

58. Not posting appropriate content.

The type of content you'd post on Facebook might not be appropriate on LinkedIn. Keep content professional and relevant.

59. Not proofreading your posts.

An extra comma here and a misspelled word there may not seem like a big deal, but it does make you look less professional. Keep posts as grammatically sound as possible.

60. Not contributing to the conversation.

Adding to the conversation is a great way to make meaningful connections. Get talking!

61. Not being selective about the connections you accept.

The people you choose to connect with are a representation of who you are. Don't accept just anyone. Make sure you know who they are and their credentials.

62. Not endorsing someone back.

Don't expect to keep getting love if you don't share some love.

63. Sending too many requests.

Don't bombard people with request after request. It gets annoying. You also want to be choosy about the people you request to connect with.

64. Embellishing your responsibilities and accomplishments.

Plain and simple, it's just better not to embellish. You have plenty of experience to show off. Tell people about it all!

65. Not managing your visibility.

Choosing who is able to see your profile is important. Make sure your visibility setting is to your liking. [Here's how.](#)

66. Not asking for endorsements or recommendations.

These are the things that can greatly boost your LinkedIn reputation. A good recommendation tells people that you are a trust-worthy expert.

67. Not sharing rich media (i.e. links, videos, infographics, slideshare etc.)

LinkedIn now allows videos and photos. Take advantage! It's an engaging, fun way to attract people to your profile!

68. Not joining the right groups.

The groups you choose to join are visible on your profile. Make sure they're relevant to your industry and reputable.

69. Not posting open positions on your Business Page.

LinkedIn is a great resource for finding your next great employee. Don't hesitate to let people know you're hiring!

70. Not connecting to your other social media outlets.

Think of your social networks as part of a larger ecosystem. They should all be connected and working together to help boost your social connections.

71. Too much "me, me, me..."

You don't want to come off as an "it's-all-about-me" kind of person. You want your connections to feel like you care about them. Find a nice balance between promoting your business and offering your audience relevant content and solutions.


72. Not customizing your professional headline.

The professional headline is the text right below your name. Customize it so that it grabs attention and speaks to your business qualifications.

73. Not staying on top of your inbox messages.

It's so easy to let any inbox get out of control, but on LinkedIn, you are building relationships. That means, if someone takes the time to message you, you should message them back right away to show them you care.

74. Not thinking about search optimization (SEO).

[For starters, completing your profile helps your ranking, but there is more you can do to make your Business Page SEO friendly. Being visible and highly ranked will help people find you.](#) 

75. Not having a LinkedIn profile!

Even if you think that other industries or small businesses are better suited for LinkedIn than you, there are still many valuable connections that LinkedIn can offer.

One of the biggest benefits of LinkedIn is that you can learn a lot from other professionals who are using the platform effectively. Look for colleagues you know, like, and trust and follow their lead.

Up next...Pinterest!

Pinterest is one of the hottest new social media networks for small businesses and nonprofits.

This highly visual platform rakes in 2 1/2 billion monthly pageviews from its 70 million users monthly.

Whether you've been too busy to figure out what Pinterest is all about or have fully embraced the social network, there are things you don't want to do on Pinterest as you get started or more involved.

Here are the last 25 social media mistakes you do not want to make...

76. Not including your business information.

The first step in getting off to a good start on Pinterest is to create a profile that is full of details and represents your business. Upload a clear, easy to recognize logo for your profile picture, and use your business name as your profile name.

77. Forgetting to link to Facebook and Twitter.

If a customer is interested in your brand on Pinterest, they'll likely want to follow you on Facebook and Twitter too. Make sure they can do so by linking to these social networks.

78. Failing to complete your profile.

When you have a business account, you can select your "business type," add your location, verify your website, and create a short "About You" section for your profile. Completing your entire profile is important for SEO purposes.

79. Using a personal Pinterest profile instead of a business page.

If you jumped on Pinterest in the beginning, you may still have a personal account. But as a business, you want to make sure that you setup a Pinterest Business Page. Without a business page, you're missing out on valuable analytics!

80. Not following other businesses.

Find other local businesses in your area to engage with and stay updated on what your customers are pinning alongside items from your business. Also, look to other businesses similar to yours on Pinterest for inspiration.

81. Abusing #hashtags.

Only use necessary hashtags to avoid looking spammy.

82. Pinning images that aren't Pinterest-worthy.

Avoid pinning content that is too big, too small, too blurry or simply low quality. **NOTE:** Max image size: 554 pixels wide X 5000 pixels high.


83. Mixing your personal interest boards with business-related boards.

Keep your business account for your business and your personal account for your personal interests.

84. Keeping your "Search Privacy" turned on.

Allowing your boards and profile to appear in search engine results is a great way for new customers to discover your business. Make sure that you've turned your "Search Privacy" off within your "Account Settings."

85. Going on day-long pinning sprees.

[Try not to pin more than five images within five minutes. If you want to dedicate a specific time in the day for expanding your Pinterest channel, try to put at least five to ten minutes between batches of pins.](#) 

86. Using inappropriate pins or repins.

Don't forget that your Pinterest Page is an extension of your brand. Stick to images that you'd feel comfortable sharing with anyone.

87. Not installing the "Pin It" button on your browser.

The "pin it" button makes it super easy to curate content from any website. With a quick click, you can pin an image that contains a description and a website link.



88. Neglecting to choose a category for each of your boards.

For each new board you create, you should choose a "Category" from the drop-down list. Selecting an appropriate category for your boards will make your content searchable.

89. Not adding a pin description or link source to pins.

Use keywords related to your business, words or phrases people would search for, and relative hashtags to maximize your description's context. When appropriate, link back to your website, other social networks, and your blog to drive traffic to your business.

90. Not enabling "rich pins."

By enabling rich pins on your website, real-time pricing will accompany the images that are pinned from your website. Pinners will also be able to see if the product is in stock, where they can buy it, and if your item goes on sale.

91. All of your content is the same.

Include various types of content throughout your boards such as repins, content from your own website, content curated from other websites or uploaded content. Don't forget, you can also pin videos!

92. Dumping all of your content into one board.

Use numerous boards to keep your content organized and easy to navigate. Smaller, more specific boards allow your fans to quickly pinpoint content that interests them.

93. Not finding a balance.

Pinning too many images from your website or blog or only pinning images from your website or blog is not ideal. Vary the content you post to keep it fresh and engaging.

94. Not telling anyone your business is on Pinterest.

Use the networks you already have (Facebook, Twitter, word-of-mouth, email subscribers etc.) to spread the word. Adding a Pinterest logo to your website or blog will also help grow

your following and act as a reminder to people who visit your website to pin your content.

95. Ignoring Pinterest Analytics.

Your time is limited. Don't waste it! If you're not reviewing the analytics Pinterest provides, how will you know if your efforts are having an effect on your business? Knowledge is power.


96. You pin anything.

It's easy to get lost in a sea of stunning images where you might find yourself repining everything. Don't do it. Plan out your boards and outline what message or information you want your fans to walk away with before you start pinning.

97. Forgetting traditional social media best practices.

Commenting isn't the most popular form of engagement on Pinterest, but it is still important to monitor what your fans are saying and doing. Look for opportunities to respond and engage with potential customers too.

98. Neglecting Pinterest's unique features.

[You can enable Pinterest's collaborative function "me+contributor" on the boards you select. This function allows others to contribute to your boards as "guest pinners." You can also create secret boards to develop content before publically showing it off.](#) 

99. Overlooking your website's content.

Make sure your customers can pin from your website or blog. Test it out before you encourage customers to pin your images and if you don't have great visuals on your site, get some!

100. Thinking that B2Bs don't belong on Pinterest.

As a B2B on Pinterest, there's actually a lot you can do to humanize your brand and tell your story through visuals. Pinterest allows you to showcase the people that make your business a success, industry statistics or news, your brand's content or useful information, and tips your customers can benefit from.



It's easy to look at this list of mistakes and start to feel discouraged or overwhelmed. But it's important to keep in mind that social media marketing is an ongoing learning experience. No one starts off knowing everything they need to know to be successful.

The best way to learn is to stay active, stay engaged, and stay committed to growing your presence and building relationships on your social networks.

We'll be here every step of the way!

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