

# A Business Introduction to Social Media

🕒 READ TIME: 2 MINS

👥 AUDIENCE: BUSINESS & MARKETING

Social media is a powerful communications tool which offers distinct and unique marketing benefits. Every major organisation in the world uses social media. You don't need to be a marketing expert to use social media effectively, whatever resources you have, with social media, a little can go a long way.

## LINKEDIN & TWITTER

Founded in 2003, LinkedIn is considered the professional social network. Content is typically formal in tone and topic. Business accounts on LinkedIn are great for sharing industry insight and news, and for influencing and connecting with other influencers. It also has the benefit of allowing organisations to build specialist networks, such as a network for its own staff, or a network for customers/clients etc.

LinkedIn is also valuable to individual users as well. They can demonstrate their expertise and promote their projects. This is beneficial for both the individual, as it supports their career and professional identity, and their organisation, as it demonstrates that the 'best of the best' work there.

Founded in 2006, Twitter is an online news and social network. It is often considered a 'real time' update site, with an emphasis on immediacy of information. Twitter sits between the formality of LinkedIn and the informality of Facebook; recognised as both a professional and personal social channel.

Twitter accounts are great for influencing and connecting with other influencers. Companies can also build their brand identity and share news and updates. Twitter allows a more casual/informal connection to be built between professionals and customers, and can be used to create communities.

## BENEFITS & SECURITY TIPS

### BENEFITS

- Connects and engages directly with audiences quickly en-masse
- Facilitates open, two-way communications
- Helps gain marketplace insights
- Showcases your products and services
- Generates inbound traffic to your webpages
- Provides a channel to develop relationships with customers, staff and partners

### SECURITY TIPS

**Keep on top of your accounts**, so that your social media presence is up to date, consistent, and secure- unattended accounts can be targeted by hackers, who could then post anything they liked.

**Human error.** Like anything online, think about what you click on and what you download.

**Vulnerable third-party apps.** If you are going to use third-party apps for scheduling social media and social media data analytics (e.g. Hootsuite), think carefully about which you choose and make sure they are locked down also.

**Scams and Phishing attacks**- watch out for things like fake coupons for big brands

asking for personal information.

**Privacy settings.** Just as you would for your personal accounts, make sure you understand the privacy settings, and give guidance to your staff if they need to use their personal accounts at work.



### ABOUT US

The Lancashire Cyber Foundry runs a programme designed to support businesses facing cyber challenges in Lancashire. Digital Innovation support is part of this programme but there is also business strategy support available too. This includes workshops dedicated to evaluation of the driving forces which will shape the world of today and beyond. Consider how your business is affected by external changes, now consider how much time your business spends evaluating them and planning for them.

To find out more about how your business can access support or register on one of upcoming workshops contact us: [cyberfoundry@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:cyberfoundry@lancaster.ac.uk)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Marketing Manager, Wellbeing Leader, Coach and Musician, Amanda manages the promotion of partnerships and business engagement activities for Lancaster University's Faculty of Science and Technology. She provides marketing support to many large-scale, multi-million-pound regional economic development projects like the Lancashire Cyber Foundry, facilitating communications for businesses, university staff and students

