



Social Media & Blogging

Keep it relevant and simple,
and make it personal





Social media is like hosting a cocktail party where you need to keep lots of conversations going at one time without getting stuck in any of them.





Rule #1
Don't freak out
or get overwhelmed.





Get a Plan

- How do you measure/define successful use of social media?
 - Once goals are defined, write a loose social media plan (editorial calendar, objectives and strategies, timeline to address, revisiting and evaluation)
 - If multiple people are responsible, how will they stay on task ?
 - Correlating various tones – sales versus service versus education?
 - Ensuring that the “stuff” and the busywork (promoting events, releasing news etc.) doesn't get in the way of *telling the story that matters – the chill bump factor.*
 - Why does the work you're doing matter, and are customers hearing that story?





Guidelines

- Your grammar and spelling should be *impeccable*. *The moment you post “U are the best LOL!” or misspell a word, your personal brand and your farms reputation take an enormous hit. It does matter, and people do care. Take the time to do it right. Even an omitted letter or missing punctuation matter – stop and think.*
- Be succinct – brevity is essential.
- Don’t just talk about yourself. Counterintuitive – but use the same idea you use in life – if you stand at a party and drone on about yourself without asking about others, you'll find yourself standing alone very quickly.
- Frequency is good – but overdoing it is not. Find a good stride – for some people, daily posts are good, and for others, once a week is ideal. There will be days when you post several times throughout the day, but try not to overwhelm.
- The quickest way to acquire an “unfollow” is for someone's feed to be nothing but your posts for hours on end.





Facebook (www.facebook.com)

A Great Place to Start

- Set up a page for your farm/agribusiness – NOW, TODAY
- Add a fabulous, unique profile picture
- Remember your voice and timing – every move you make is *very visible*.
- Tag others (@), mention other brands (like them first) and share the love.
- Best place to post plenty of photos.
- Be interactive and reciprocal.





Twitter (www.twitter.com):

serves as a news aggregator and microblog

- ▪Set up a profile, and complete all settings (photo, website, bio).
- ▪Don't be silly – your username should make you or your business findable.
- Worried about having more followers? 1. Don't. 2. Follow others.
- Comment, retweet, contribute substance to the conversation.
- Avoid “Good morning” or “Just had oatmeal for breakfast” tweets.
- RT (retweet), D/DM (direct message), # (hashtag), @ (username)





LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com): your online resume and/or business card

- Set up a profile, follow prompts to 100% completeness.
- Invite current contacts and prospective customers to connect.
- Give it a little attention – once a week at least – to grow your network.
- Not just a jobseeker's tool – excellent for the organization's brand as well.
- Great way to replace business cards or exchange post-event information.
- - Set up a group or page for your business/farm.





YouTube

- Using YouTube as part of social media with a goal to generate sales and educate is useful because the videos can be easily shared amongst a like-minded audience on other social networks.
- While you shouldn't set out to make a viral video, creating a unique, entertaining, and helpful video that attracts a targeted audience will have the potential to reach more people than your other social networks, and these people could be easily converted into paying customers.





Blogs

(www.blogger.com, www.wordpress.com):
your press release/microphone

- Conversational, more casual and interactive.
- Enthusiasm and genuine sentiments prevail.
- Be approachable – in real life and online.
- Set up profile, link to special email address as appropriate.
- Press releases and brochures require formality – a blog is conversational.
- Grammar/punctuation remain impeccable, but take liberties with voice/tone.
- Let your enthusiasm come through!
- Perfect platform for day to day updates that don't warrant newsletter articles.
- Excellent tool to show your fellow farmers and customers a little bit of love.
- Real time news – wax poetic here, link from Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn.





Tips & Tactics





Use a manager such as Tweetdeck (preferred), Twhirrl, Twitterific, Hootsuite

- Manage multiple accounts, multiple social media tools, searches, key words.
- Post the same update across multiple accounts.
- Leave it running in realtime and scan updates quickly.
- Make quick posts throughout the day without multiple logins and delays.
- Schedule and time posts to go at key times or to cover absences.





Manage your time intelligently

- Once you get the hang of it, establish a routine – should be natural like email, not a burden.
- 10 minutes each morning is sufficient, maybe a nightly check.
- Weekly is fine – less frequently, your voice may be lost, inconsistent or unrecognizable.





General Tips

- Create a well-developed and well-rounded brand.
- Increase numbers with contests.
- Follow farmers that excel in social media - Madison Creek Farms, Mary Jane's Farm.
- Follow professional associations, competitors, people and companies you admire, those with whom you'd like to do business or connect.
- Search by demographic: in your area, in a specific field of work.
- Be shameless in inviting others, asking for connections – be direct, but not overwhelming. Don't stalk/broadly chase people you don't know.





QUESTIONS?

