

1. The Impact of Social Media on Politics

A [new study from Pew Research](#) claims that about one in five U.S. adults gets their political news primarily through social media. The study also finds that those who do get their political news primarily through social media tend to be less well-informed and more likely to be exposed to unproven claims than people who get their news from traditional sources.

In comparison to other media, the influence of social media in political campaigns has increased tremendously. Social networks play an increasingly important role in electoral politics — first in the ultimately unsuccessful candidacy of Howard Dean in 2003, then in the election of the first African-American president in 2008, and again in the Twitter-driven campaign of Donald Trump.

The [New York Times](#) reports that “The election of Donald J. Trump is perhaps the starkest illustration yet that across the planet, social networks are helping to fundamentally rewire human society.” Because social media allows people to communicate more freely, they are helping to create surprisingly influential social organizations among once-marginalized groups.

2. The Impact of Social Media on Society

Almost a quarter of the world’s population is now on Facebook. In the U.S., nearly 80% of all internet users are on this platform. Because social networks feed off interactions among people, they become more powerful as they grow.

Thanks to the internet, each person with marginal views can see that he’s not alone. And when these people find one another via social media, they can do things — create memes, publications, and entire online worlds that bolster their worldview, and then break into the mainstream.

Without social media, social, ethical, environmental, and political ills would have minimal visibility. Increased visibility of issues has shifted the balance of power from the hands of a few to the masses.

The flipside: Social media is slowly killing real activism and replacing it with ‘slacktivism’

While social media activism brings an increased awareness about societal issues, questions remain as to whether this awareness is translating into real change. Some argue that social sharing has encouraged people to use computers and mobile phones to express their concerns on social issues without actually having to engage actively with campaigns in real life. Their support is limited to pressing the ‘Like’ button or sharing content.

This passivity is a very human reaction when people are given options that absolve them from the responsibility to act. A [2013 study by the University of British Columbia’s Sauder School of Business](#) found that when people are presented with the [option of ‘liking’ a social cause](#), they use this to opt-out of actually committing time and money to a charitable cause. On the other hand, when people are allowed to show support in private, they are more likely to offer meaningful support by making a financial contribution.

The researchers found that a public endorsement is meant to satisfy others’ opinions, whereas people who give in private do so because the cause is aligned to their values. This peer pressure may be a factor in the recent trend of political polls in the U.S. to misread voter intentions: people who respond to the polls may be answering how they think the pollsters expect or the way they think will please their peers, but in the privacy of the voting booth (or at home with a mail-in ballot), they vote according to their true preferences.

3. The Impact of Social Media on Commerce

The rise of social media means it's unusual to find an organization that does not reach its customers and prospects through one social media platform or another. Companies see the importance of using social media to connect with customers and build revenue.

***Businesses have realized they can use social media** to generate insights, stimulate demand, and create targeted product offerings. These functions are important in traditional brick-and-mortar businesses and, obviously, in the world of e-commerce.*

Many studies suggest implementing social networks within the workplace can strengthen knowledge sharing. The result is to improve project management activities and enable the spread of specialized knowledge. Fully implementing social technologies in the workplace removes boundaries, eliminates silos, and can raise interaction and help create more highly skilled and knowledgeable workers.

The flipside: A low number of social 'shares' can lead to negative social proof and destroy business credibility

Interestingly, although social sharing has become the norm rather than the exception in business, some companies, after experiencing first-hand some adverse effects of social media, have decided to go against the grain and remove the social sharing buttons from their websites.

***A case study of Taloon.com**, an e-commerce retailer from Finland, found that conversions rose by 11.9% when they removed share buttons from their product pages.*

These results highlight the double-edged nature of the impact of social media. When products attract a lot of shares, it can reinforce sales. But when the reverse is true, customers begin to distrust the product and the company. This effect is what Dr. Paul Marsden, psychologist and author of 'The Social Commerce Handbook,' referred to as 'social proof.'

4. The Impact of Social Media on the World of Work

Social media has had a profound effect on recruitment and hiring. Professional social networks such as LinkedIn are important social media platforms for anyone looking to stand out in their profession. They allow people to create and market a personal brand.

Nineteen percent of hiring managers make their hiring decisions based on information found on social media. According to [CareerBuilder's 2018 social media recruitment survey](#), 70 percent of employers use social networking sites to research job candidates.

Also Read: [Personal Branding Vs. Business Branding](#)

5. The Impact of Social Media on Training and Development

Job candidates who develop skills in the latest and most advanced social media techniques are far more employable.

A 2020 survey by OnePoll on behalf of Pearson and Connections Academy asked 2,000 U.S. parents and their high-school aged children about the “new normal” of high school. Sixty-eight percent of students and 65% of their parents believe that social media will be a useful tool and part of the new high school normal.

[Blogs](#), wikis, [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [podcasts](#) are now common tools for learning in many educational institutions. Social media has contributed to the increase in long-distance online learning.

Despite issues of lack of privacy and some instances of cheating among long-distance learners, this has not deterred [social platforms](#) from being used in education.

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6. Negative Impact of Social Media

Social Media is relatively a newer technology, hence, it is a little difficult to establish its long-term good and bad consequences. However, multiple researchers have concluded a strong relationship between heavy use of social media platforms with an increase in risk of depression, self-harm, anxiety, and loneliness.

[Fear of Missing Out \(FOMO\)](#)

Long-use of social media platforms make you addicted to checking out what other people are doing. FOMO is an exacerbated feeling that other people are living better lives or having more fun compared with you. This feeling makes you check your notification every second, just to make yourself feel better.

[Cyberbullying](#)

Teenagers need to fit in, to be popular, and to outdo others. This process was challenging long before the advent of social media. Add [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Instagram](#) into the mix, and you suddenly have teenagers subjected to feeling pressure to grow up too fast in an online world.

The [Cyberbullying Institute's 2019 survey](#) of U.S. middle and high school students found that over 36 percent report having been cyberbullied at some point in their life, with 30 percent having been victimized twice or more. It also found that almost 15 percent admitted to having cyberbullied someone at least once, and nearly 11 percent admitting to doing it two or more times. Teenagers can misuse social media platforms to spread rumors, share videos aimed at destroying reputations, and to blackmail others.

[Lack of Privacy](#)

Stalking, identity theft, personal attacks, and misuse of information are some of the threats faced by social media users. Most of the time, the users themselves are to blame as they share content that should not be in the public eye. The confusion arises from a lack of understanding of how the private and public elements of an online profile actually work.

7. The Impact of Social Media on Relationships

One of the effects of social media is encouraging people to form and cherish "social media friendships" over actual friendships. The term 'friend' as used on social media is a weak shadow of traditional friendship. Real friends actually know each other, frequently interact face to face, and have a personal bond.

2)

Trying to figure out the difference between social media and social networking is like trying to fully understand every ranking factor that Google uses for SEO: it's not easy.



To really understand the difference between the two, we first need to define them. Merriam-Webster defines social media and social networking as the below:

Social Media: forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos).

Social Networking: the creation and maintenance of personal and business relationships especially online

With that said, let's take a look at the five biggest differences between social media and social networking.

Communication Style

On social media, you're doing all of the talking. You're publishing content-images, videos, eBooks, infographics, white papers, and more-and trying to generate engagement with your fans and followers, and ultimately hoping that they interact with your brand or take an action.

With social networking, there needs to be a mix of both talking and listening. If you're joining groups and networks on social media and doing all of the talking-posting about your brand and tooting your own horn-you're not going to get the type of respect that you probably deserve, and you're likely going to miss out on some great opportunities because you're not listening.

To be great at social networking, you have to take the time to listen and engage with others.

Goals

Perhaps the biggest difference between social media and social networking is the goal that you're trying to achieve.

With social networking, your ultimate goal is to build your network of fans/followers and foster those relationships. Whether or not those relationships lead to new business is an unknown, but it's not the ultimate goal.

Social media differs because while you're certainly trying to generate buzz and interaction, you also want to increase your bottom line, and that means data acquisition for lead generation and sales for eCommerce.

Content

Content is so important to every aspect of marketing, and while you need it for both social media and social networking, the type of content you use for each is going to be different.

In social networking, it's a lot of rich conversation and questions. You're having deep, informative conversations with people in hopes of sparking a connection and gaining a new fan or follower while growing your referral network.

On the social media side of things, you're trying to drive engagement, and you can't do that with 250 word Facebook posts. No, you need to be posting and sharing images, videos, infographics, and other meaningful pieces of content to keep your audience engaged and interested in your brand.

It's not to say that this type of content can't overlap, but how you use the content should be different.

Time & Effort

If you're an active brand on social media, you're probably using a tool like Hootsuite or Sprout Social to help save time and measure the analytics behind your efforts. You can create your posts and schedule them out days ahead, and then sit back and watch the engagement that takes place.

With social networking, there's no automated way to really grow relationships, and you can't cut corners. Each interaction you have needs unique focus and attention.

Social networking is like dating-it's time consuming, and it takes a lot of time and effort to really make it work, but it's all worth it in the end.

ROI Measurement

In this digital age, we're all trying to measure the ROI from everything that we do, especially social media.

How you attribute ROI to your social media and social networking is going to differ because you need to go about the two completely different. Measuring the ROI from your social networking efforts is going to be easier because there's more direct response-if your network of social followers is increasing, then that's measurable ROI.

But since your social media strategy is about generating buzz and engagement, it's a bit difficult to nail down that type of return. Over a longer period of time, you should be able to attribute some type of success, but it's not going to be as clear as it is in your social networking game. Of course if you're driving things like sales and you have your tracking and analytics in place, it'll be easier to measure your ROI.

All in all, social media and social networking are two important marketing tactics, but they each come armed with their own unique challenges.

3)

Social media marketing involves using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and TikTok to effectively reach a wider audience and communicate with customers. Social media marketing is necessary for any small business marketing strategy and requires a robust plan. Your customers expect engaging content and the ability to communicate with you through direct messaging and comments.

Effective social media marketing for small businesses gives you the unique opportunity to humanize your brand and drive traffic back to your website. With social media advertising, you can also generate leads and sales while increasing brand awareness. Many small businesses even use social media for customer service, allowing customers to message them directly to have issues resolved and questions answered.

How to market your business on social media

Social media is integral to any marketing strategy, but it may seem daunting for small business owners who don't know how to use different platforms. Luckily, social media marketing is fairly easy to learn and doesn't require too much time or money. Any budget can support a robust social media marketing strategy as long as you get to know your customers and can create engaging content regularly. Here's how to promote your business on social media.

1. Identify your audience

Many businesses make the mistake of trying to reach everyone. But understanding and organizing your audience can help you send the right message to the right people and more effectively meet your marketing goals.

This begins with identifying your target audience. The details about who these people are should be based on the audience data you already have, as well as your market research.

To find your target audience:

- *Compile data. In order to reach your target market, you need to know what they're like. It's important to know things like your audience members' ages, locations, and engagement patterns to market effectively to them. While it may seem daunting to gather this information, customer relationship management software stores and sorts this data and makes it easy to put into action.*
- *Use social media analytics. Many platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, have built-in analytics that can tell you about your followers, including when they post, where they post, and other interests. Plus, these tools are free to use with business accounts.*
- *Check the competition. Understanding your competition will give you insights about how to talk to your audience. You can look at what your competitors are doing wrong to fill any gaps in your current strategy.*

Once you've identified your target audience, it's important to keep up to date with their interests and to implement a social listening strategy to understand their wants and needs.

2. Define your goals and KPIs

To excel in social media marketing, it's important to create goals that guide your efforts. The SMART goal strategy provides a helpful framework to create foundational goals and meet your overall objectives.

SMART stands for:

- **Specific:** In order to measure and meet goals, it's important to be clear about precisely what you hope to achieve. This is especially important for getting your team onboard as you work collectively towards the goal. A specific social media goal, for example, might be to increase your Twitter followers by 20% this quarter.
- **Measurable:** You need to know definitively whether you've reached your goal or not. Measurement makes that possible. By using metrics to track your progress, you can also pivot your goals if need be. For instance, if you find that likes and follows don't lead to website traffic, you can change the metric to something that will help you achieve your goal.
- **Achievable:** All goals should be within reach of your business. If you set goals that are unreasonable, you risk discouraging your employees and creating friction in your [business plan](#). As you set specific, measurable goals, make sure to adjust if it seems like you aren't reaching them.
- **Relevant:** Your social media marketing goals should ladder up to your larger business objectives. For example, if it's your objective to build brand awareness, you could set a goal to get 100 social media followers to click through a post to a landing page that describes your offerings.
- **Timely:** To keep yourself accountable, goals should have a time limit. Instead of creating a goal for some undefined time in the near future, make sure to set a specific cadence to check in and ensure you're staying on track.

Though social media marketing has many moving parts, SMART goals give you a starting point, as well as a means to check in and make changes as needed.

3. Allocate your resources wisely

For small businesses strapped for money and time, sometimes social media tasks get arbitrarily offloaded onto whoever is available. But social media management requires unique skills, like:

- Strategic thinking
- Organizational skills
- [Branding](#) expertise

If you have the means, hiring an [expert](#) to handle social media can pay off. But if you don't have the budget for an on-staff social media manager, you can still invest in [advertisements on social platforms](#), which can boost brand awareness and expand reach.

4. Use multiple platforms

Consider the multiple social media platforms your customers use daily. Ultimately, your strategy should allow you to reach as many people through social media as possible, and you can't do that by focusing on only one platform.

Depending on your audience, many of them may use Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok throughout the day, giving you three opportunities to get your content in front of them. [Social media apps to know](#) include Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Twitter. However, investing in a strategy for all of these platforms isn't necessary. Instead, consider the apps your customers are most likely to use.

5. Post relevant content regularly

[Success on social media](#) is a matter of posting compelling, engaging content consistently. Not only will this help make your business look dependable, but it also shows that you have timely knowledge to share and that you care to be in conversation with your audience.

Social media platforms change their algorithms over time, but the rule of posting regularly holds true: This practice helps your content show up in newsfeeds. By focusing on consistent, relevant content, you show the

algorithms that your posts are worthy of showing up in various newsfeeds and ultimately, will attract followers to your page.

6. Interact with followers

Social media users enjoy interacting with brands, and as a result brands experience benefits like:

- Social proof of your business
- Expanded market reach
- Boosted brand awareness
- Cost-efficiency

The opportunity for a high return on investment (ROI) is huge—83% of customers value customer experience, and that includes social media interactions in which businesses make their audience feel seen, heard, and understood. Social media allows you to monitor conversations in real-time and answer questions or concerns from your audience promptly.

This can take many forms, like:

- Asking questions relevant to your offerings
- Creating a Facebook Group for your audience
- Using GIFs, videos, and emojis to spice up messages
- Utilizing platform tools, like Instagram Live to start discussions

A good strategy is to allow 1 hour a day to communicate with your audience on social media. However, if there are pressing concerns, you should always take the time to respond promptly.

7. Always maintain professionalism

It's important to remember that as you post on social media, you are always representing your business. Posts are taken out of context all too often, which can lead to conflict and upset followers. If your social media responsibilities are allocated to other staff members, consider creating a social media policy to guide their posts and conversations.

Typically, a standard social media policy will include:

- Clear expectations about what to post
- Instructions on how to respond to negative posts
- Platform laws and rules to follow
- Brand considerations
- Security protocols

By investing in a social media policy, your business can be ready for any scenario. It's important to remember that at the core of social media, you are implementing your customer service philosophy.

8. Reflect your brand identity

Brand identity is what helps people connect to your business and sets you apart from your competitors. This means that all marketing, including print, digital, and social media, should be consistent.

Brand consistency can be challenging for businesses, especially when you're just getting started. But it's important across channels, and that certainly includes social media. As you are posting, you'll want to think about:

- *How you talk to your customers, otherwise known as a brand voice*
- *Posting similar visuals across the various platforms*
- *Focusing on your unique selling point.*

Not only will a consistent brand identity make it easier to know what to post, but it can also help increase brand loyalty.

9. Prioritize quality over quantity

Instead of posting multiple times a day on as many platforms as possible, you should focus on delivering consistent, quality posts. In fact, some social media sites may penalize your account and mark you as spam for too many low-quality posts. Additionally, posting could become overwhelming and problematic whoever handles your social media, whether that's you or a teammate, and that could wind up hurting your strategy rather than helping.

To mitigate these risks, consider implementing a social media calendar. These calendars can help you plan posts in advance while ensuring you stay organized. Categories including when to post, post caption, post visual, and which platforms to post on can help marketers keep track of the various moving parts of social media.

Another way to prioritize quality posts is to ask yourself the following questions:

- *Does this content help my followers?*
- *Is this original?*
- *Is this actionable, inspiring, or entertaining?*
- *Does the content have cited sources, if needed?*

All of these questions can help you create quality content that will engage and attract followers. Learning about the top social media content to create for each platform is key to helping you reach more people online.

10. Measure your results

There are many factors that affect social media marketing, and that's why it's important to analyze and measure results. Analytics come in handy because they can help:

- *Optimize campaigns*
- *Create new goals*
- *Assess tracking metrics*

Before you start tracking, though, you should identify which metrics are most important to your marketing goals. The most common metrics are:

- *Reach*
- *Engagement*
- *Impressions*
- *Mentions*
- *Post clicks*
- *Video views*

11. Develop a unique strategy

You might have the impulse to post on as many platforms as possible, but this could actually derail your social media marketing strategy. For example, if you're trying to target people who are over 50 years of age, you'll find that most of your audience is on Facebook, so it's not as worthwhile to prioritize Instagram.

When creating a social media marketing strategy, focus on:

- *Where your audience is*
- *Where your competitors post*
- *What your metrics tell you*

Additionally, you'll want to think about how to best use each platform, based on what it was created for and the content that does best there:

- *Facebook offers quality video streaming, like live video, as well as a high-functioning messaging platform that allows brands to interact with their followers one-on-one.*
- *Instagram supports more visually compelling posts and creative short videos.*
- *YouTube is best for longer informational or entertaining video content.*
- *Twitter allows for real-time conversations, news updates, and alerts.*
- *LinkedIn works well for long-form written content, like blog posts.*
- *Pinterest lets users discover content and relies on visuals to catch their attention.*

Depending on your social media strategy, you may realize that you don't have to use YouTube if your users are primarily on Facebook. Or if you find that you can say more with pictures than you can with words, Instagram might be more useful. Make sure to research the best strategy for each platform you use to get the most out of your marketing efforts. While there are many tips to grow your small business, social media can help you discover and retain new customers.

12. Partner with influencers and industry leaders

Partnering with influencers can help you take your social media marketing to the next level by leveraging their talents to help you grow your business. Influencers have their own personal branding and followers that trust their expertise. Working with influencers in your industry can help you build brand awareness and increase sales. Since influencers are real people, they're more easily trusted by customers, allowing you to use that to your advantage.

13. Livestream occasionally

Live streaming can help boost your organic reach on social media. Because live streaming taps into your followers' fear of missing out (FOMO), you can reach more people at a time. Live streaming also allows you to be more personal with your audience and give them insight into your business and its products to build trust.

14. Post at the best times

Creating quality content can ensure you reach more people and engage your audience. However, if your customers aren't active on social media when you post, they likely won't ever see your content. You can find the times when your audience is online by looking at your social media analytics. Many social media management tools also give you insight into the best times to post based on when your followers are typically online. You can also experiment by posting at different times of day to determine how it affects engagement and reach. Every small business should invest in social media marketing to promote their business and boost online visibility. A few benefits of social media marketing include:

- *Cost-effective. Social media marketing and advertising is cost-effective. If you want to post content organically, it may only cost you your time. However, advertising your business on social media is one of the most cost-effective advertising solutions available for small businesses. You can set a budget for as low as \$1.00/day on Facebook.*
- *More exposure. Marketing your business on social media allows you to reach more people. Engaging content will likely be shared, helping you increase your online visibility.*
- *Boost brand awareness. Social media is a great tool for increasing brand awareness by boosting online visibility. However, if you want to take advantage of social media to raise brand awareness, consider creating advertisements that expand your reach.*
- *Drive traffic to business websites. Your social media marketing should drive traffic back to your website, where customers can complete actions like filling out forms or making purchases.*
- *Support customers quickly. Social media allows you to handle online customer service requests quickly and easily. When someone messages you directly on social media, you can answer their questions in real-time, giving them a fast response that improves their experience with your business.*
- *Increased credibility. Posting engaging and educational content can increase your credibility, helping new customers learn that you're a thought leader they can trust.*

Effectively market your business on social media with Mailchimp

Social media marketing is necessary for any business that wants to stand out. Your competition is using social media to reach new customers, so it's time for you to enhance your efforts. Mailchimp makes it easy to market on social media by offering [content creation tools](#) to help you build targeted ads. You can also use our [social media marketing tools](#) to schedule posts and publish at the right time.

4)

Modern hackers try constantly to access your data using social media accounts, and breaches that begin on social media can spread, threatening the personal data of your customers.

User Authorization

If you use Facebook as your primary login, then your data is at risk. It's that simple.

A more complicated explanation is this: user authentication tokens allow you to use your Facebook login as a single-sign-on option. When you start using a new application, you'll get the "Sign on with Facebook" or "Sign on with Google" options. Using a secondary site to login creates a new point of entry for potential hackers – one that may not be as secure as you think.

Social media sites like Facebook (or Google, or LinkedIn) are constantly under threat from hackers. Therefore, you need to think about how you log into your social media accounts and how you use them to log in to other applications.

Phishing

Phishing scams continue to plague us. Now, however, attackers have begun targeting messenger applications. For example, maybe you've automated your direct messages to send discounts to your customers.

Hackers will try to take over these automated applications and send out messages that look like yours. When they put links in the messages, they use the same social engineering tactics of fake links that look real. To protect your branding, you need to make sure that you monitor your messenger applications regularly for these kinds of intrusions.

Poor Password Hygiene

That's right. If you use a risky password for your corporate social media accounts, you're putting them at unnecessary risk to be compromised by attackers. You're putting your corporate data environment at risk.

Think about it this way: all the information you collect as part of your social media marketing strategy is linked to those social media accounts. Any customer or potential customer information is at risk if a hacker gains control of your social media account.

Are you tracking potential leads based on social media analytics and using a weak password? You're putting everything from your information landscape to your reputation on the line. All for the ease of remembering a password.

As a marketer, however, you also need to work with your IT department to manage your own social media activities.

Sitting down with your chief information security officer gives you the opportunity to understand how your marketing practices might make his or her job more difficult. For example, your social media accounts may not be third-party vendors, but your third-party social media tools are. Buffer, Hootsuite, and IFTTT all connect to your systems and networks. You need to talk with your CISO to identify the risks that these tools pose.

If you're using a work browser connected to your work network from a company device, then managing your social networks affects your security risks. Here's an example.

You're sitting down to review posts on LinkedIn. You click on something to read an article. The article, however, is a phishing attempt. Clicking on the link now downloads malware to your browser that can capture any passwords you use on the browser. You log into the web platform for your marketing database. The login information (name and password) could be compromised.

All of this happened because you were using a social media account to do your job. Now, your IT department's security attempts are compromised.

Three steps can help you mitigate the data risks inherent in social media marketing.

1) Social Media Policy

Create a policy specific to your social media marketing strategy. This includes making sure that you have clear expectations about:

- *Password strength*
- *Content monitoring*
- *Access lists*
- *Interacting with the public*
- *Security breaches*
- *Crisis response*

You need to talk to your CISO about how you report and handle the aftermath of a social media hacker getting into your accounts. You need to make sure that you and the IT security team are working together rather than isolating yourself from a department that helps you protect your client lists.

2) Training

You're the first line of defense for protecting all the information you access. More importantly, since you focus on protecting brand identity and image, you need to make sure that you're creating a safe place for customers.

To do this, you need to make sure that you're staying updated on the most recent threats to your social media accounts. Whether it's another Facebook vulnerability or a Twitter hack, you have to educate yourself about how your activities threaten the whole company.

3) Monitoring

If you have multiple people working with your social media accounts, you need to make sure that you create a chain of command reviewing the activities. Who has access to the accounts, and what devices are they using to login? If your staff is using their personal computers or phones to access company-owned social media accounts you may want to consider additional security for those devices.

Oversight is also critical for the posts and direct messages that originate with your social media team. Sharing a phishing link or opening an attachment from an unknown account can compromise your security and put your followers at risk. Make sure to review posts before they are scheduled and to have protocols in place for answering any messages you receive via social media.

Performing a Social Media Risk Assessment

Let's start with the difference between a security assessment and a risk assessment. A security assessment is a test of your various controls that will highlight any security vulnerabilities and expose any issues that must be resolved. A risk assessment is a thorough exploration of any potential risks that your company could face, to prepare yourself for future problems. While security assessments are an important part of your risk management strategy, an assessment is a key tool for avoiding risk in the first place.

[Social media risk assessments](#) aren't much different from any other risk assessment. The scope is more narrow, but the five principles of risk assessment remain:

- *Identify. Examine your social media channels and take note of any areas where risks may occur.*
- *Assess. Take into account who or what might be harmed by these risks occurring.*
- *Evaluate. Take a closer look at the risks and determine what you need to do to prevent them from occurring.*
- *Decide. Are your current controls sufficient? If not, what will you do to improve your security?*
- *Record. Keep detailed documentation of your assessment so you are able to review and revise in the future if need be.*

The key difference is in the dangers that are specific to social media usage. User authorization (as discussed above), accidental posts from staff members, and fake accounts are all risks inherent to marketing your business on social media.

Rather than search for tools to manage social media separately, you can incorporate social media risk assessment into your overall risk management plan. [The "siloing" of different threats](#) can create gaps in your security plan, and may also cause redundancies as you attempt to solve the same problem more than once.