

# **Social Media Marketing**

*Essential Skills for Artists*

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## ***Part One: Perspective***

Social media is not just the domain of celebrities and bullies.  
Social media is not the Holy Grail.

Social media is a set of tools that allows you to connect with people.  
You can showcase your work as an independent artist, enhance customer connections and potentially increase sales.

### **A basic social media recipe**

1. Connect with the right people
2. in the right place,
3. at the right time,
4. and in the right way.

This requires experimenting, listening, and thinking and research.

#### **1. The right people—know your customer**

“Everyone who buys art” is not your customer  
Focus on your best customers first, then expand your audience.

The right people enjoy your work and have the money to buy it.

#### **2. The right time—know your customer**

Activity is *generally* highest in mid-afternoon (at-work slump time)

Activity *generally* drops off after 8pm and on weekends

Wednesday and Thursday *generally* show higher engagement

Pay attention to time zones.

Experiment to see when you get better interactions or responses

Learn *your* customers' habits.

#### **3. The right way—what delights you and your customer**

People respond well to images and video

Align your presentation with your personal style (keep customers in mind)

Don't be tempted to copy a “successful” artist's social media style.

#### **4. The right place—find your customer**

You can be on multiple networks without wrecking your schedule

Do some ground work before diving in

Consider 2-3 social networks to avoid burnout.

## ***Part Two: What exactly are you doing here?***

### **Set your goals**

More local customers? More customers in a certain city?

Establish or increase online sales?

Connections with gallery owners, arts reporters, magazines, style bloggers?

### **Include short-term, time-sensitive goals**

Exhibitions

Retail shows

Open studios and art walks.

*No matter how much you promote your work, no matter how many fans and followers you have, if you want to increase sales, make it stupidly easy for people to buy from you.*

## ***Part Three: Preparing to launch***

### **Your profile**

1. Your name and username
2. Profile and header photographs
3. A short statement about who you are and what you're up to

### **Profile picture—to selfie or not to selfie?**

People often make a stronger connection with your work through *you*

You can get creative with your image and change it from time to time

Use one photo for all networks (repetition = recognition)

Take a high resolution photo and resize.

### **Header image**

Feature your work in one photograph, or a number of images side by side

Low resolution (72 dpi) is best.

### **Your bio**

Mix professional with a little personal (it's *social* media)

Maximum length can be as few as 150 characters, depending on the network

Talk about what you do, not who you are.

“Abstract oil painter, life drawing instructor, arts advocate, avid hiker. Owned by Airedales. New Brunswick, Canada.”

### **Links to home base**

All social media roads should lead to your home base

- Online shop
- Your website's portfolio page
- Your website's "where to buy" page

Don't set people adrift

Use call to action—which does not have to be a hard sell tactic.

### **And links to your social networks**

Put social media links on your website, blog, newsletter and print materials

Use text rather than social media logos on your print materials.

## ***Part Four: Entertain, inform, be useful***

### **Show your work**

A peek behind the scenes in your studio

Images or video from an event, as well as the event setup

Works in progress

Pictures of art in its new home, taken by you or a happy buyer.

### **Share your interests**

Travel pics (even from a morning walk)

Pets, garden, side projects

Work by artists you respect.

### **Advocate and educate**

Information from arts organizations

News & stories that are important and interesting to you

Things that delight as well as inform.

### **Start before you follow**

Post several things before you begin to follow and interact with people

Give people a sense of what you share

Your work as well as other interesting things (it's *social media*).

### **Make connections**

Arts organizations, galleries, museums

Publications

Public figures you respect

Creative colleagues and friends (don't just connect with other artists).

Look at who people and organizations follow and who follows them

*Growing a good audience takes time. Find the smartest, most interesting people you can.*

## **Manage your time**

1. Reply to comments and questions
2. Share something posted by someone else
3. Comment or start a conversation
4. Share something of your own
5. Back away from the computer.

Decide how much time to spend on social media and stick to it  
A timer or a cup of coffee is a good guide.

## ***Part Five: Traps to avoid***

Remember that everything on social media is curated  
Everyone picks and chooses what to share with their audiences.

Don't become a Like-a-holic. Analyze instead of fretting.

Quality over quantity.

It's not just you and your keyboard: be classy.

Empathy and a sense of wonder can make promoting your artwork easier for you,  
and enjoyable for the people who see it.

Don't be afraid to direct people to your shop or site on occasion.

There's no such thing as "private" on social media  
Everything you post, favourite, like and follow is data  
Keep in mind you don't own the social media space you occupy.

If you wouldn't say it in a town hall meeting, or in an old-school letter to the  
editor, don't share it on social media.

See "manage your time" section above. Re-read as necessary.

## ***Part Six: Pick your networks***

Where do your customers hang out online?  
What's your communication style?

With tools to manage multiple accounts, you can be in several places at once  
Don't be afraid to experiment (artists experiment with media all the time).

## **Pinterest**

A place for collectors and curators that's all about themes  
40 million active monthly users  
Popular among wealthier consumers.

Personal accounts and business accounts  
Business account comes with analytics tools  
Can connect Twitter and Facebook from Pinterest.

Upload your own images and collect images from other users  
People can like and comment on your pins and repin to their own boards  
Your own pins can send people to your online shop or website.

Best practices: make sure the image you pin leads to the original image  
Make sure it's okay to pin the image. Is there a Pinterest link on the website?  
If in doubt, ask the artist for permission, or don't pin it.

To prevent people from pinning images from your website:  
<https://help.pinterest.com/en/articles/prevent-pinning-your-site>  
(Or better yet, publish low-resolution images you're happy to share.)

## **Twitter**

284 million users  
Twitter is the "newsiest" of all social networks  
Roughly 70% of tweets ignored due to speed of the network.

Great for promoting events & sharing as they happen  
Use public and private lists to stay organized  
Can connect to Facebook from Twitter.

Followers can Favorite and Retweet (share) your posts  
Tweets with images tend to be shared more  
New live stream video app called Periscope.

Large numbers of nonprofit & arts organizations use Twitter.

## **Facebook**

Nearly 1.4 billion monthly active users  
Facebook challenging YouTube on video views.

Personal Profile and professional pages  
Can create photo albums on both.

Facebook has cracked down on posts that are blatantly commercial  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/news/update-to-facebook-news-feed>

## **Instagram**

Smartphone photo & video sharing service

Upload your own photos

300 million monthly users.

Video length: 3 - 15 seconds

Minimum photo size: 640 x 640 pixels

Use up to 11 hashtags (# with keywords to aid in searches)

Can connect Twitter and Facebook from Instagram for instant updates.

People with Instagram accounts can leave comments and “like” your photos and you can reply.

[spreesy.com](http://spreesy.com) - app that allows artists to sell directly from Instagram

NOTE: research carefully before using any online selling service.

## **Google+**

Appears to be in flux

300 million reported users

Communities where people share information (not a place for promotion)

Hangouts—video conference calls with up to 10 participants—have been incorporated into Gmail and as apps for Android and Apple smartphones.

## **LinkedIn**

Primarily a place to find jobs, but there are plenty of artists there

Pulse News provides industry-related, recommended news stories

Check into LinkedIn groups (Google *linkedin groups art*).

## ***Additional Resources***

For more detailed information on the social networks discussed here:

### **Pinterest**

<https://help.pinterest.com/en/guide/all-about-pinterest>

### **Twitter**

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/50-welcome-to-twitter>

### **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/help/467610326601639/>

### **Instagram**

<https://help.instagram.com/>

### **Google+**

<http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/getstarted/guide.html>

### **LinkedIn**

<https://www.linkedin.com/reg/join>

### **Infographic of the major social networks (2014 data)**

<https://leveragenewagemedia.com/blog/social-media-infographic/>

### **Tips on how to make videos with a smartphone**

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/create-social-videos-smartphone/>

### **At-a-glance guide to current social media image sizes**

<http://blogs.constantcontact.com/social-media-image-sizes/>

### **For serious demographics & numbers geeks:**

The Pew Research Centre Social Media Update 2014

(This can also be downloaded as a PDF)

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/01/09/social-media-update-2014/>