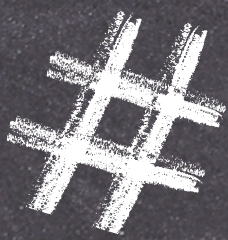


PARADIGM'S SUMMER SCHOOL OF MARKETING



INTRO TO SOCIAL MEDIA



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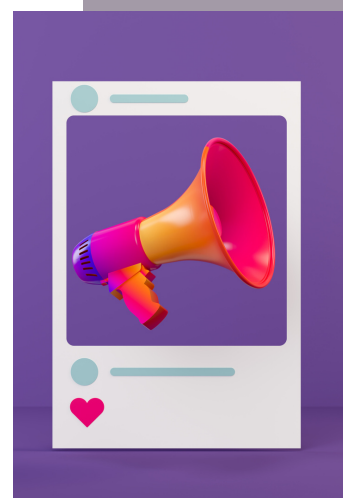
A guide to social media

Social media is something everyone is aware of. Even if you don't have any social media accounts yourself, you know someone who does, which is not surprising considering more than half of the world's population is now using at least one form of social media. As such, this has become an integral part of a marketing strategy because it's a free way to stay connected with your customers (or potential customers) and gain visibility for your business.

The number of social media platforms that are considered popular is constantly changing and evolving, with different audiences being better represented on different platforms. When we've said marketing is all about getting the right message, to the right person, at the right time, we weren't kidding! Social media allows this to happen. For example, if you are looking to target first time buyers aged 18-30, you probably wouldn't use Facebook as typically, this platform has a higher age demographic.

We strongly recommend not creating accounts on every single platform; start small and do one really well before moving on to managing numerous accounts. If you've already got a strong presence across multiple platforms, see which posts work better via analytics and apply this to future posts to maximise your effectiveness, and integrate this with your overall strategy.

We will go through the basics in this guide including: choosing the right platform, our top tips, analytics and creating eye-catching images (legally!).



“

Stay connected, the key is to listen, engage, and build relationships.”

”

Choosing the right platform...



There are so many platforms to choose from, with each one providing a different user experience. A good starting point is working out which platforms will work best for you and your business. You might be thinking they're all the same and that you just want to post the same message on different platforms and just hope for the best. As with traditional marketing, different platforms have different audiences, so repurposing content won't always provide you with the results you may hope for. We will focus on the more traditional platforms used in marketing throughout this guide, which are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Should I use Facebook?

Well, it's a platform for individuals used predominantly in a personal capacity and therefore suited to business-to-customer marketing and targeting both existing customers and new prospects. Facebook often has promotions for free ad credits throughout the year, so it may be worth testing ads and using the data from this to see if it's something that might work for you.

Okay, how about LinkedIn?

This platform is for individuals and businesses in a professional capacity. It is predominantly a business-to-business network used for job hunting, and sharing professional content but can also be useful for demonstrating your background, experience and more about your business to potential customers. As a financial adviser, you can therefore use LinkedIn to share industry news as well as articles you have written i.e. 'Green Mortgages – are they really sustainable?' – pieces that will get people thinking. Whilst you might be connecting with other professional contacts on here, it is worth remembering that most of these people will, at some point in their life, require financial advice that you might be able to help with. It's worth noting that with LinkedIn, you are unable to schedule future posts without additional software, so bear this in mind during your content planning.

Is Instagram right for me?

Whilst Instagram is slightly uncharted territory for most in financial services, it shouldn't be completely ruled out. With 1 billion monthly active users, the use of hashtags could help you find customers previously not targeted.

What is Twitter?

A micro-blogging platform giving users 280 characters per tweet to share news and connect with other users. Used by a wide variety of individuals of varying ages, both members of the public and businesses. Good for short news items or general updates. We definitely recommend using call-to-action and using this platform to redirect people to your website or more information.

Our top tips across platforms

If you don't already have an account set up, we would definitely recommend your usernames or handles are all relevant to your business and not just something completely random or a bit daft. For example, we use @Paradigm_Mtgs, not @Marketingilovefootball1997.



1

Location, location, location!

It is a good idea to include your location on any social media profiles – this can help particularly if your company name is fairly popular or has similarities to other companies across the country or even the world.

2

Use calls to action!

Social media is a great way direct people back to your site or to places where they can get more information. Once a reader is on your site, they will hopefully be encouraged to explore more pages. Use tracking links so you can analyse how popular the post is – find out more on this in our Week 2 Guide!

3

Scheduling and planning makes life easier!

Hootsuite is a great example of a tool from which you can manage your various accounts across different social media platforms, you can trial this for free for 30 days. From this one platform, you'll be able to plan your marketing messaging, schedule messages to go at certain times from the various platforms, monitor engagement from your followers and get basic analytics to understand whether your content is successful.

4

Check in...

Whilst Hootsuite is a great tool for scheduling posts, especially on LinkedIn, using a tool such as this can sometimes disconnect you from your audience with messages and mentions. It's therefore really important that you do check your accounts on the platforms in question in order so that you can respond to any incoming messages from clients in a timely manner.

5

Have fun!

Whilst there are things to remember in marketing, promoting your business on social media provides you with the chance to get a bit creative and have fun!

Our top tips across platforms (continued)



Follow as many local businesses and individuals as you can – they are all potential customers and they may follow you back. Be sure to check relevant hashtags and interact with people who use it.

Think about the content you're using – does it serve a purpose? Is it of value or interest to the reader? If not – don't post it. Try not to reuse content too much – it could annoy your followers.



Remember that you can always ask people you know well if they would be willing to share certain messages to widen the audience you can reach.

A hashtag is essentially a searchable link. By using one, you create a link which means your content will appear whenever someone searches for that particular phrase. You can therefore use hashtags to reach a wider audience. Our Marketing Coordinator, Aimee has an introductory video on hashtags that you may find useful which can be found [here](#).



Always include links back to your website where the reader can find information relevant to the content in the post. This helps improve your hit rates and once a reader is on your site they will hopefully be encouraged to explore more pages.

Be careful about any content that you share – have you read the content on any links included and do you definitely agree with everything said? In particular, you might want to be careful about opinion pieces and articles without having read the entire thing, as sharing this can be perceived as an endorsement.



There are perks to using a business account for your accounts on these platforms; one being that it automatically tracks and creates reports on posts. These are provided for free and help you understand more about your audience and how successful your posts are.



Immediately you'll be able to see some high-level data about your activity over a 28-day period such as number of posts, how many times these posts have been seen (views), profile visits, how many times you have been mentioned and your number of followers. For each of these metrics, you'll also see the change versus the previous 28-day period. Analytics for Twitter can be found on its own separate page that is accessible via your settings and LinkedIn analytics can be found via your profile and underneath each post. It's worth noting that both of these only work for business accounts (even LinkedIn won't work for personal accounts!)

STOP! Don't scroll...

If you use any social media platforms yourself, you'll know that there are so many posts from so many accounts, that most of the time it can be too much to consume and we end up not paying too much attention to the actual content. This is where you need a good, eye-catching image or video that will help you stand out and make your audience stop scrolling.

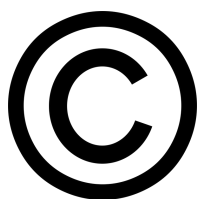
Evidence of this comes with Instagram, being a predominantly image-led social media platform, now taking 93% of influencer marketing. Not only are posts with images included more eye-catching, but the algorithm on most social media platforms will now work to prioritise all posts with more likes, comments and shares, and even more so depending on how quickly this engagement occurs after posting.

So, it's a good idea to keep in mind that the better your post looks, the better engagement it will receive, which will lead to a bigger audience who will see your content.

Hopefully, it goes without saying that if you are posting anything in a professional capacity, it is best to steer clear of 'funny' images or memes that may catch attention but aren't related to the post and could: a) cause offence in any way to any followers (worst case scenario) or b) make your company look unprofessional (best case scenario).



Keep in mind... Copyright!...



There is no question that at some point in the past, people have simply Googled an image, downloaded it and then used it as their own – whether that's on a website, to accompany social media posts or even on printed materials such as posters. This might be a copyright infringement and should be avoided at all costs! There are loads of easy and free alternatives available to get free-to-use images. Deliberate infringement of copyright on a commercial scale may be a criminal offence.

On the next page, we will explore creating your own images in a bit more detail, but a good top tip to remember is that certain websites host images you're allowed to use, all in one place that can be found via keywords. We personally love [Unsplash](#), [Pexels](#) and [Pixabay](#). If you're unsure if a picture you want to use is safe and free to use, triple-check.

Customising your images

As a team, our daily go-to for creating images is Canva! This website allows you access to a whole host of images, shapes and fonts for free. You can also get some great templates for you to work from, which also auto-generate in the correct size for the social platform you choose. For example, you can search "LinkedIn social post" in templates and you will see a host of content that you can adapt for your business. Whilst this guide is focussing on social media, Canva can also help you create banner ads, posters, PDFs and even presentations. There are tons of free options on this, but they do offer a paid-for service which provides you access to everything on the site (hundreds of additional images and fonts etc.).

We recommend spending some time creating a "bank" of graphics that you can quickly customise for new updates, this will help to keep you consistent with your branding and help your page look uniform. As you can see from the images below, we use the same layout for all Lender and Provider updates and just amend/personalise each graphic to include the correct wording and logo.



In addition, you can either upload your own images onto your designs, i.e. your logo or you can use their vast database of images to search for something.

And finally... get more people involved!



Getting your employees involved in your Marketing Strategy is a tool many companies don't utilise. Social media is all about connections and followers to get your message out there, so use this to your strength. On posts

that you feel are important for your business to shout about, you can tag employees in the social post, or ask that they share articles, posts or news. The more shares or post interactions, the more likely it is that your post will be seen! Likewise, ask employees to tag your business page in posts so you can engage with them and enhance your visibility. If you feel that you may be posting too much from your business accounts, ask employees to post from their own accounts and reshare onto the business account. This will help break up your page and will help give your business a more personal feel!



... week 3 over and out

That concludes our third guide!

As firms are regulated by the FCA, it is absolutely crucial that all of your communication with customers and financial promotions including marketing activities are clear, fair, and not misleading. At Paradigm, we understand how important it is to showcase your business to both your client bank and the general public, highlighting all of the services and support that you can offer in a compliant manner.

Our Technical Helpdesk team have been helping firms with their financial promotions since our launch in 2007, and can assist with your financial promotion procedures as well as helping you to draft and issue compliant promotions designed for your target audience.

Examples of items we get asked to check include:

- Websites
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Stationery
- Blogs
- Social media

Please get in touch on **03300 536061** or arrange a [call back](#) if you'd like to learn more about the support available.

We would love to hear your feedback and any questions you might have on the information included in our summer school so please don't hesitate to let us know your thoughts.

Thanks for reading,
Paradigm Marketing Team.





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