



# Succeed with Social Media

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## Corporate Communication and Social Media

Social media can be advantageous for many purposes, and external corporate communication is one of them. Why should you expand your corporate communication strategy to social media? Here are some of the benefits:

- Reach a broader audience faster. For instance, posting media coverage of your company on social networks can help it spread much further.
- Target audiences for certain types of communications. For example, if you don't want to send an email for every corporate announcement, and if many customers follow you on Twitter, tweet your news instead.
- Communicate news in a personal way. This helps you develop your brand and strengthen customer relationships. Rather than simply seeing a press release or news story, your audience can hear the news straight from you, in your own words.
- Monitor response to news and events, good and bad. If you're not on social media, then you're likely not privy to what is being said about your company—and this is valuable information.

### Get employees involved

You will, of course, use your company social media accounts to share corporate news, but it can also be strategic to get employees involved. Why?

- Employees at all levels can give a unique perspective of the company.
- Employees are often the biggest advocates of the company.
- Hearing positive feedback from employees makes your company seem more human and relatable, strengthening your brand and reputation.

### How to execute

An ideal avenue for corporate communication is blogging. Having a company blog is a great way to start sharing corporate news, but you should also consider getting employees involved. Ask different employees who are experts in their department or product to start blogging; this adds more personality and voice to your company and products, and additional expertise for your audience. These employee blogs can be especially valuable if your company has multiple product lines or branches—each blog can speak to a specific audience.

Remember to position these blogs as subject-matter experts sharing valuable information, not just employees pushing products or following the company line.

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**Reach a broader audience faster with social media.**  
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Employee blogs should share company or product information as a subset of your larger purpose.

Twitter and Facebook® are also viable corporate communication platforms. But, as with any social media strategy, make sure you aren't simply promoting the company. It's fine to share company news and information, but only as a portion of your content. Here it may also make sense to have various employees representing the company with separate accounts, speaking about their areas of expertise.

Encourage your employee experts to find and share information relevant and meaningful to their unique audiences—beyond company news and product-related information. The goal is for the employee to become a trusted expert in his or her niche and to build a following relating to that specific arena. This can help develop closer relationships with current customers and attract more qualified leads for your various products.

### Protect your company

As with any social media business initiative, it's important to protect your company. This is even more vital if you have employees blogging, tweeting and posting on behalf of your company. Before you implement your new social media strategy, create a comprehensive policy for employees so that all expectations are clear.

For instance, will employees use work or personal accounts for their blogging or tweeting? There are implications for use of either account. If personal, then any followers the employees gains while with the company will likely leave with the employee if he or she leaves the company. However, personal accounts can be more relatable and personable. This is a decision your company will have to consider.

Be sure to establish other guidelines, too, such as what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable social media behaviour. For instance, if you allow employees to use personal accounts to also post work information, consider setting some guidelines about the type of personal things that can be shared—once this person represents your company, anything he or she says can be reflective of your brand.

After you have a policy developed, distribute it to all employees and have them sign a form stating they have read and understand the policy. This helps protect your company from potential legal liabilities in the future.

### Sample Tweets or Facebook Posts

- #[C\_Officialname] is proud to announce the #acquisition of XYZ Company! Read all about it at [C\_Officialname].blogspot.com
- Jane Smith, VP of #Marketing at [C\_Officialname], will speak at the 2013 Small Business Marketing #conference. Come check it out!
- Congrats to Joe Johnson who recently won the Excellency #Award for his outstanding work on [C\_Officialname]'s #community #outreach project!

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