

The Pros and Cons of Each Social Network

Understanding the pros and cons of each of the leading social media channels will help your organization make an informed decision as to where you should be active.

Social Network	Pros	Cons
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest audience on social media • Advanced ad targeting options • Interconnected with an ecosystem of other platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and others • The network is continually improved to provide more ad options and account for changes in user behavior • Ability to communicate across different types of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent privacy and data misuse issues • A budget for paid advertising is required to earn business results • It's difficult to keep up with the consistent changes to the network's newsfeed algorithm • More crowded on the network than ever before, making it more difficult to stand out • Young people prefer other platforms
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular destination for product discovery amongst consumers • Highly engaged audience • Low barrier of entry to start an account • Effective at generating brand awareness • Still one of the fastest-growing social media channels • Advance advertising capabilities through Facebook Ads Manager • Ability to communicate visually across different content formats • Top channel for partnering with influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited ability to send traffic offsite due to restrictions on sharing URLs • Account functionality from desktop is limited • Organic reach will continue to diminish with the increase of advertising • More difficult medium for promoting services and B2B businesses
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to reach audiences on a one-to-one level • Join or start discussions in real-time • Ease of creating written content for the network • Useful means of providing customer service to audience • Listening to the real-time feedback of customers is helpful for market research • Ability to schedule publishing of tweets in advance • Video is the primary ad format brands invest in, indicating its effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of spam, bullying, hate speech, and trolling on the platform • Requires content to be published more often than other channels to earn consistent visibility • Difficult to learn the network's interface and features at first • Easy for tweets to go unseen on the network, since there's lots of competition

LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only network that's primarily focused on business topics and working professionals • Ability to target ads based on job title, seniority and other helpful attributes • Platform for creating thought-leadership-focused content • Ideal for showcasing an employer's brand • Organic reach is still high on the network • Best option for recruiting talent and networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large portions of the LinkedIn audience only uses the network during their job search • Difficult to build an audience on a company page • Younger audiences aren't as active on the platform • Advertising is often more expensive than other social networks
YouTube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's the second-largest search engine and owned by Google, thus content is particularly SEO friendly • Allows for hosting and discovery of video series • Analytics offerings are robust • Integration across Google properties provides greater reach for advertisers • Time spent on YouTube is longer than other platforms • Top channel for partnering with influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time-consuming and resource-intensive to create video • The amount of bullying, hate speech and trolling on the platform • Lack of control over the videos your advertising appears with • Pre-roll ads are disruptive to consumers
Facebook Messenger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mobile app is owned by Facebook, integrated into its ecosystem • Quick and efficient method of providing customer service support for a Facebook page • Automate certain conversations and interactions with customers using bots • Can serve as an alternative to an email newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy concerns related to the data usage issues at Facebook • Messages sent on the app are not encrypted by default
WhatsApp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User-friendly interface • Encrypted messaging to maintain the privacy of messages • Ability to offer seamless customer service to users with automated messages • The mobile app is owned by Facebook, integrated into its ecosystem • Group chat is a widely used feature • Option to share different content formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy concerns related to the data usage issues at Facebook • Lack of content moderation on the app leads to spread of misinformation • Account functionality from desktop and non-mobile devices is limited

Snapchat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplicity of content creation and private messaging for users • Platform prime for sharing raw, authentic content, especially since it disappears • Highly engaged user base with 3.5 billion snaps sent daily • Users pay attention to content since it's going to disappear • Audience comprised of users under 34-years-old • Advertising opportunities for brands within original content series and in between user snaps • Custom filters, lenses and other creative features make content distinct compared to other networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience is limited to younger demographic • Confusing interface, not as user friendly as other channels • Difficult to find and discover other accounts as compared to other networks • Limited desktop functionality • Not an ideal platform for conducting customer service • Limited analytics available
Pinterest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women make up a majority of the audience active there • Best suited network for facilitating ecommerce as many users plan purchases on the channel • Evergreen content is likely to be found not only in the short-term but in the long-term • Major source of referral traffic for businesses • Its out-of-the-box analytics are robust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrower demographic limits reach for brands • High-quality images or videos required for success on network • Potential copyright issues when curating the content of others • Use cases are limited to certain types of businesses unlike a larger network like YouTube or Facebook
TikTok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to add content to a trending hashtag challenge to start or enter a conversation • Easy to create short video and photo slideshows with templates, music, voice effects, and other features • Opportunities for sharing original music to connect with users • A network quickly growing in popularity amongst a younger demographic • Less competition from other advertisers on TikTok as the channel is still earning mainstream visibility • Content discovery is straightforward and AI based, easier than other mobile-first networks • Seamless sharing functionality to other social networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited desktop functionality • Ad offerings are less developed than other social networks • The network is primarily used to drive awareness and brand engagement, less for earning sales and other conversions • The use cases are limited to a short-list of industries • Limited reach amongst adult audiences
Quora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn visibility for your organization's expert answers to relevant questions • Optimal network for B2B businesses to earn credibility and develop thought leadership • Less competition and lower cost for advertising offerings • Ability to drive traffic to related resources when answering questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a universal audience, B2C companies less likely to gain traction • Ad offerings still in their infancy • Time consuming to write insightful, distinct answers to questions

Tumblr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active creative community and younger demographic • Range of content formats offered for blogging • Popular destination for sharing memes and GIFs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niche audience limits reach for businesses • Simplicity of platform restricts design options and formatting • Issues with misinformation and hate speech • Limited advertising options
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-in audience for earning visibility for written content • Simplicity of writing interface, easy to begin blogging • Integration with Twitter for streamlined social sharing • Ideal platform for republishing written content published elsewhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing written content on a third-party publisher limits control of format • Reduced ability to build your own audience and earn SEO benefits • The competition for content visibility is high since the network is free to access
Reddit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn visibility by participating in subreddits to target niche communities interested in specific topics • Less competition from other brands because of the nuances of the platform's user base • Users are passionate, authentic and influential, leading to positive outcomes with the right approach • AMAs are an underutilized tactic for driving engagement for influential voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing efforts can backfire if seen as disingenuous, thus significant research is needed ahead of time • Requires a significant investment of time and research to learn platform and user preferences to build good will • Lack of moderation leads to inappropriate content existing on the platform
Yelp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime opportunity for local businesses to earn credibility and attract customers through user generated reviews • Ability to pay to promote local listing to encourage visits • SEO visibility from company listing • Gain useful customer feedback and address criticism in public forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False reviews are monitored with an algorithm that sometimes hides legitimate reviews • Negative comments can lead to a downturn in business, requiring consistent monitoring • Consumers often leave reviews when feeling an extreme love or hate towards a business
GIPHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited access to a vast library of embeddable GIFs • Ability to upload your own branded GIFs to be searched and used on social media • The networks' API is integrated with many major social networks like Instagram and Snapchat • Provides app for businesses to create their own GIFs on mobile and Mac devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a destination to build an audience • The use of your company-created GIFs will likely only drive awareness and engagement