



## Finding Time for Social Media

Social media can suck up every minute of available time, if we let it, and we all had plenty to do *before* social media came along. Here are some hard-won tips on saving time.

### Set Goals First

**If you have no goals, you never know when you are finished for today.** Start with a list of the services and networks you plan to use and how you plan to use them.

- **Sample Goal: maintain a strong network of local support.** Daily actions: reply/comment on seven local business people's Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter status updates. Weekly actions: go through new followers or connection invitations on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Comment on a local blog, Facebook Page or forum where your residents gather to comment.

### Use Checklists

Put your action steps on an index card, like a checklist. **Set a scheduled time daily for your social media activity**, such as the first thing in the morning, or for 30 minutes after your lunch. Use that time to follow your checklist. You save time two ways: you aren't getting distracted by social activity all day, and you are much more focused in your time.

### Skip to the Summary Tools

Instead of giving your social networks partial attention throughout the day, use smart summary tools to bring you only the highlights, and let you deal with it once or twice per day.

- [Nutshell Mail](#) collects all your social media updates and mentions into email digests at the times you set. Instead of checking Facebook, then Twitter, then Yelp, and then LinkedIn, you scan through one email.
- [Paper.li](#) makes an online daily newspaper out of links shared on Twitter. Instead on monitoring Twitter all day for interesting links, scan your Paper.li only once per day. Create yours on a specific topic, or from all the people you follow on Twitter. (Tip: create a list of locals, and make a Paper.li from that. You'll get daily tips of things to share.)

### Automating Doesn't Work

Because social networks are all about social, **automated messages usually fall flat.** They make it look like you are present, until someone replies to you and you ignore them, because you aren't really there. **Each network has its own flavor.** Long updates that work well on Facebook don't fit on Twitter. Hashtags from Twitter look silly on LinkedIn. Putting the same exact text on every outpost just annoys fans who follow you multiple places. So you can't just copy and paste your way through this. You have to be smart about it.

## Multiplying Efforts Does Work

There are some effective ways to multiply your efforts when you **know which pieces of the puzzle go where**. For example, you write one **email newsletter**. From it, you pull the most discuss-able sections and post them on your Facebook Page to start conversation. Then you pull out the most interesting or attention-getting quotes to update your Twitter status. To update your LinkedIn status, you select an interesting and business-like bit. Finally, you add more photos to the text to make a blog post. **To remember what pieces go where, you might want to put this process into a checklist.**

**Use a Multi-tool:** [Tweetdeck](#) allows you to monitor and send updates to both Twitter and Facebook. [HootSuite](#) allows you to send updates to Twitter, Facebook Pages, LinkedIn and Google+ Pages. Both allow you to add multiple accounts so you can manage more at once.

**Use Smart Automation Carefully:** Hootsuite and Tweetdeck allow you to schedule tweets in advance. Just remember **when bad news breaks**, you need to stop your scheduled tweets so you don't look callous. [If This Then That](#) ("IFTTT") will automate all kinds of sharing activity. It works with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and many more services. For example, when you publish a blog post, IFTTT can automatically share the photos to Flickr and post to LinkedIn. Use it to set up some smart automation, but be selective, following the rules above.

## Use Your Calendar

Your events can benefit from online promotion spread over several weeks. Create an editorial calendar of events and projects you'll want to promote online, at least three to six months ahead. Your editorial calendar includes your email newsletter, blog posts, Twitter updates, and updates on your Facebook Page. **You'll save time searching for something to talk about** and stay focused on your goals.

**Success Secret: Give social media short bursts of focused attention, based on your goals and plans.**

## Adding Bloggers to Your “Online Champions” Army

Want even more online coverage for your place? Time to call in the bloggers. These are today's online reporters, travel writers and photographers. They can bring you blog posts, pictures, videos and long tail marketing. We'll also offer you a chance to get our lesson on bloggers, which includes:

- Where do you find bloggers? How do you evaluate them?
- Building stronger online relationships
- Bringing online relationships offline
- Easy ways for your blogging champions to help your destination marketing
- Videos: Learning to navigate the blogosphere, strategies for finding and pitching bloggers

[Read the case study from Greater Franklin County, Iowa.](#)

(Link: <http://www.tourismcurrents.com/add-bloggers-to-your-online-champions-army>)

There's no charge at all for the case study.