



# Social Media How-to Guide



twitter

facebook

LinkedIn

YouTube



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## How-to Guide Overview

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way we work, offering new ways to engage with customers, colleagues, and the world at large. It's a new model for interaction and we believe social networking can help you to build stronger, more successful business relationships, showcase you as a true Internet Marketing expert and help you find new business ventures. It is also a way for you to take part in global conversations related to the work we are doing at WSI and the things we care about.

In this Social Media Toolkit we will be covering the 5 most popular social media platforms

1. Twitter
2. Facebook
3. Linked In
4. YouTube
5. Blogs

We will give an overview of each platform, best practices on use, highlight any important considerations, provide examples of how they can be used to raise your WSI online profile, highlight tools and resources you can use to assist with management and tell you how you can get started.

Whether you are just getting started in social media or have been using it for months, even years, this guide will provide you with some great foundational information on how to effectively leverage social media in your everyday business activities.

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## Social Media Guidelines

Each social media platform has its own rules and regulations but the social media guidelines listed below are a standard list that applies to all social media interactions.

**Be transparent.** Your honesty—or dishonesty—will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. If you are conversing about your WSI projects and services, use your real name, identify that you are a WSI Internet Consultant and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, then be the first to point it out.

**Be judicious.** Make sure your efforts to be transparent don't violate WSI's privacy and communication guidelines as outlined in our [Code of Conduct](#). Ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to WSI. If you want to write about the competition, make sure you know what you are talking about and that you have the appropriate permission. Also be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and WSI's proprietary and confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.

**Write what you know.** Make sure you write and post about your areas of expertise, especially as related to WSI and our products/ services. If you are writing about a topic that WSI is involved with but you are

not an expert on the topic, you should make this clear to your readers. And write in the first person. If you publish to a website outside WSI, please use a disclaimer something like this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent WSI's positions, strategies, or opinions". Also, please respect brand, trademark, copyright, fair use, trade secrets (including our processes and methodologies), confidentiality, and financial disclosure laws. If you have any questions or are unsure as to whether you have the permission to share certain material and information, please contact franchise support for clarification. Remember, in the end you are personally responsible for your content.

**Perception is reality.** In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a WSI Internet Consultant, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about WSI and other WSI Consultants. Do us all proud. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with WSI's values and professional standards.

**It's a conversation.** Talk to your readers like you would talk to real people in professional situations. In other words, avoid overly pedantic or "composed" language. Don't be afraid to bring in your own personality and say what's on your mind. Consider content that's open-ended and invites response. Encourage comments.

**Are you adding value?** There are millions of words out there. The best way to get yours read is to write things that people will value. Social communication from WSI should help our customers, partners, and co-workers. It should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community. If it helps people improve knowledge or skills, build their businesses, do their jobs, solve problems, or understand WSI better—then its adding value.

**Your Responsibility:** What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social networks as a WSI Consultant should be treated seriously and with respect for the WSI brand. Please also follow the terms and conditions for any of the social portal sites.

**Create some excitement.** As a business and as a corporate citizen, WSI is making important contributions to the world of Internet marketing. Let's share with the world the exciting things we're doing—and open up the channels to learn from others.

**Be a Leader.** There can be a fine line between healthy debate and inappropriate reaction. Do not disparage our competitors or WSI, and understand that in the event you receive criticism of complaint know that you do not need to respond to every single one. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. Once the words are out there, you can't really get them back. And once an inflammatory discussion gets going, it's hard to stop.

**Did you screw up?** If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.

**If it gives you pause, pause.** If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't shrug it off and hit 'send.' Take a minute to review these guidelines and try to figure out what's bothering you, then fix it. If you're still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your fellow consultants or WSI Corporate. Ultimately, what you publish is yours—as is the responsibility. So be sure.



## Twitter Overview:

[Twitter](#) is an online portal based on continual updates of your personal or business activity. Its primary service is for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: **What are you doing?**

Over the last 6 months Twitter has become a popular avenue for businesses to communication with the audiences that matter most to them (eg. customer base). Its inherent nature as a real-time news feed, its every growing population (8 million plus users in March 2009) and its low cost of use (it's free, only cost is resources) makes it an ideal business tool. In fact many businesses use Twitter for the following activities:

- Customer service
- Public relations and news
- Advertising of new products
- Thought leadership and knowledge share
- Research and development

There is no question that Twitter is the most talked about social portal at the moment and many WSI Consultants have jumped on the bandwagon and are using Twitter in their business. Whether you are just getting started or have been using Twitter for months, the information below will ensure you are using this tool effectively.

## How to Leverage Twitter in Your WSI Business:

WSI Consultants can easily leverage Twitter as a business tool for their own personal business. Here are some of the benefits:

- Expand personal business networks by locating individuals with same interests  
<http://tweetsourcer.com>
- Create brand recognition amongst your followers <http://mashable.com/2009/05/20/twitter-personal-brand>
- Have followers look to you as a source of information and subject authority  
<http://mashable.com/2008/12/19/how-to-win-twitter-friends/>
- Ask questions to a community and get answers <http://mashable.com/2009/04/21/twitter-questions-answers>
- Build trust and loyalty community amongst your followers  
<http://mashable.com/2008/11/17/twitter-community-donts>
- Provides an opportunity for permission based marketing to your followers
- Use Twitter as a customer service tool <http://mashable.com/2009/05/09/twitter-customer-service>

- Use Twitter as a research tool <http://mashable.com/2009/05/03/twitter-research-tools/>

## 5 Ways to Getting People to Follow you on Twitter

The more people who follow you on Twitter, the more influence and networking opportunities you have. Thus, it makes sense to try and build a following. Here are some best practices on getting others to follow you:

1. **Follow them:** There's an almost automatic reaction to follow people who follow you. However, there's a backlash against people who follow just about everyone for the sole purpose of gaining followers. In short, be discriminating with whom you follow.
2. **Post some good tweets right before following someone else:** Help people to decide to follow you by posting some good, informative tweets. This will help them to see you provide valuable information through your Tweets and tweet regularly.
3. **Complete your bio:** People rarely follow strangers, so complete your one-line bio and include your IC Site URL in the More Info URL section of your profile. People want to know who they will be following before they actually follow them so providing them this information upfront will help.
4. **Add your Twitter feed to your blog or to other social media profiles:** If you have a following at your blog or a lot of connections at Facebook or LinkedIn, you can leverage this audience to increase your followers at Twitter.
5. **Reply to people you are following, especially if they're not yet following you:** That's a good way to engage someone and get them to follow you, even if they didn't follow you immediately. Remember, though, some people have thousands of followers, and may not be able to respond to every reply.

## Important Considerations When Using Twitter:

Twitter has grown more to be a business tool over recent months and therefore is becoming a testing ground for sales pitches and affiliate marketing. However, neither Twitter nor other social networks react well to individuals who are transparent in their business approach. Having followers in Twitter does not necessary mean you can pitch and market to those people immediately. If you are going to use Twitter as a business tool, make sure you do the following:

- Have provided a good source of recurring information to your followers
- Interact with followers communicating to you
- Don't pitch frequently in Twitter
- Build a strong foundation of reputation amongst your followers first
- Become known as an expert or resource first

## Twitter Tools/Resources:

### Search Tools:

The Twitter search box will search matches in others' profiles, but not in individual tweets. Here are a couple of 3rd party tools that allow for more advanced searches:

- [Who Should I Follow?](#): Finds and suggests like-minded people based on your tweets.
- [Summize](#): Allows you to search tweets for keywords and offers lots of customization tools.

### Publishing Tools:

Whether you are managing just one Twitter account or multiple accounts the follow tools will help you to publish your tweets more effectively.

- [Tweet Deck](#)
- [Seismic](#)
- [Splitweet](#)

### Twitter Utilities:

These additional tools will help to make your Twitter life much easier.

- [TweetLater](#) - allows you to schedule posts for a later time
- [Twimailer](#) - an enhanced email notification with more information on those who follow you so you can see if you want to follow them

### Twitter Guides:

- <http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/>
- <http://business.twitter.com/twitter101/>

For more information on how you can set up your WSI Twitter page please have a look at the *Your WSI Twitter Page Getting Started Checklist* in the Appendix A section at the end of this guide. Also for a full listing of the WSI templates that are available please consult Appendix section B.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

## Facebook Overview:

[Facebook](#) is a social networking service that lets you connect with friends, co-workers, and others who share similar interests or who have common backgrounds. It has come a long way since its original use as a network for college studies. What makes Facebook different from other social networks are its extensive privacy controls, its development platform, and its large and quickly growing user base. In fact with over 108 million users worldwide, Facebook has even surpassed email as the most frequently used tool online.

From a business perspective, companies have been primarily leveraging Facebook for the following activities:

- **Branding** - Facebook can be a great resource for generating brand awareness, as it has become popular amongst various age demographics and can be a great interception point for building your relationship with you consumers and prospects.
- **Customer Engagement** - Using Facebook applications can be a great way for communicating promotions, contest and events. Again it is another interception point that can be leveraged to entice consumer engagement with your brand, your products or your service.
- **Drive Web Traffic** - Facebook can act as a portal point for driving traffic to your site and other online properties.
- **Reputation Management** - Facebook can be a useful tool for seeing what users are saying about you and your brand. In addition your Facebook profile can now be indexed in the search results and as a result can provide another favorable listing in the organic search results of the engines.
- **New Customer Acquisition** - Facebook provides an opportunity to find consumers you may have not otherwise discovered.
- **Lead Generation** - Similar to the previous point is that Facebook can act as another potential lead gen tool that can be used to qualify leads. Reviewing potential prospects' profiles may help you build a relationship with your prospects and aid in the lead generation qualifying process.
- **Client Retention** - provides another potential interception point to build the relationship with your consumer.
- **Access to the social world and its inherent value** - aka the cool factor. You never know who is using Facebook. Consider the following scenario: a potential prospect could be doing research on your brand or organization and may use Facebook to see if you have a presence there. Then they see that you have a Facebook profile and see a number of positive posts about your brand. This in turn can shape their sphere of influence and could end up being one of many deciding factors as to why the prospect selects you over another vendor. The perception that Facebook is "IN" and the fact that you are using Facebook could help influence their perception of your brand. Having said that, there are still many who are anti-Facebook so it could also affect the perception about your brand. The fact remains is that Facebook continues to gain popularity and it is not going away anytime soon.
- **Feedback Mechanism** - Using Facebook and the various applications available can help you understand consumer behavior based on the sharing of content and commentary on the social networking site.
- **Build Business Use Cases** - Facebook can provide you with an opportunity to build successful business cases as you target specific vertical markets with specific business objectives.

## How to Leverage Facebook in Your WSI Business:

As a WSI Consultants you can use Facebook the same way other business use it as detailed in our Overview section above. If you are having problems knowing where to begin, we recommend starting

with the following:

- **Facebook Pages:** These "Fan" pages give your business an identity on Facebook and they have much more functionality and opportunities to engage with your customers and prospects than a Facebook Group does. Use your fan page to:
  - Build a following and create buzz about your business in your local area and among other professionals
  - Promote any special offers
  - Highlight upcoming events like the WSI Whitepaper series

[Click here](#) to get more information on how to set up your business Facebook page.

- **Polls:** Facebook Polls are great for businesses looking to get a quick answer about a particular campaign they'd like to implement, or just to find out information and opinions from a specific demographic. What type of polls could you run? Here is a list to consider:
  - Industry poll - to see what industries your fans belong to so you can communicate to their specific vertical
  - Services poll - see what online marketing services your fans already use in their business and what ones they are looking to use
  - Trends poll - ask them what other social media platforms they are using for their business and what they are using them for
  - Stats poll - post a stat from eMarketer and poll your fans on how they relate to the statistical data
  - Seasonal polls - see if they are gearing up their marketing for the holiday season and what tactics they are using

Check out this the [Facebook Poll page](#) for more information on how to set up polls and include them in your Fan page.

- **Advertising:** Facebook has a powerful advertising engine that enables businesses to specify a specific demographic target, see how many people that demographic will hit, and advertise to that demographic. If you are looking to broaden your advertising spend for your WSI business, this may be something to consider. Please be advised though that compared to Google Adwords the click through rates for Facebook ads is low, however the cost is low as well. For more information on how to set up advertising campaigns through Facebook [click here](#).

## 5 Best Practices on Promoting your Facebook Fan Page

1. **Create an engaging Page.** Use applications like the discussion board and YouTube video box to add more interesting and engaging content to your Page. Give users a reason to become a fan of your Page and engage with you.
2. **Leverage the viral nature of Facebook (The news feed):** The added benefit of creating an engaging page is that every time a fan engages with your page – from becoming a fan, to posting a comment, to attending an event – that activity is published to their “news feed” which is seen by all of their friends on Facebook. When a user first logs into Facebook, they see a feed of their friends’ recent activity, so each and every activity of your fans on your page gets shared with a greater network, giving your business more visibility.

3. **Draw on your existing network:** You most likely already have email subscribers and blog readers – so make sure they know that they can now become a fan of your WSI business on Facebook. Consider emailing your opt-in mailing list, including a link to your page in your email signature, blogging about your Facebook page, and posting a link or badge to your page on your website or blog.
4. **Make your Page publicly searchable:** By default, your Page will be public so that it can get indexed by search engines and give you the opportunity to drive organic search traffic to your Page. If you don't notice your page showing up in searches, make sure you have set it to be publicly indexed and searchable. Go to Edit Page and then Settings and set your page to be "Published (publicly visible)."
5. **Use Facebook Ads for an extra push:** Facebook ads allow you to advertise a website or something on Facebook, including Pages, groups, and events. If you're familiar with Google Adwords, the system for building and running ads on Facebook is very similar. Facebook has a great resource guide detailing the best practices for advertising on their social portal. So if you are looking to do some advertising for your WSI business on Facebook, be sure to visit [http://www.facebook.com/ads/best\\_practices.php](http://www.facebook.com/ads/best_practices.php) and learn from Facebook directly on how to advertise on their portal.

## The Difference between Profiles and Page:

On Facebook, Profiles are meant for people and Pages are meant for businesses. You do not want to create a personal profile for your business. There are a few key differences between Business Pages and Personal Profiles that you will want to be aware of.

- Pages allow you to designate multiple administrators, so that you can have multiple people help manage the account, and if one of your administrators leaves the company, you can still have control over the Page.
- Pages are, by default, public and will start ranking in Facebook and public search results.
- Pages are split into different categories (local businesses, brands, musicians) that help you get listed in more relevant search results.
- Personal profiles have friends, which require mutual acceptance, whereas anyone can become a fan of your Page without first going through administrator approval.

## Facebook Tools/ Resources:

### Facebook Marketing Guides:

- Inside Facebook blog dedicated to providing information on how to market on Facebook - <http://www.insidefacebook.com>
- Hubspot Webinar: Facebook for Business - <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-webinars/facebook-for-business-webinar-archive/>
- Check out the HubSpot Page (<http://facebook.hubspot.com>) to see some of the ways to create an engaging page, and also become a fan to get updates about future resources

### Usability Tools:

- Firefox Add-ons for Facebook - <http://facebooktools.blogspot.com/>

### Research Tools:

- **Lexicon** - This Facebook tool allows to you to find out what people are saying on Facebook and understands the trends that are happening so you can tailor your information and communications to these topics where applicable.

For more information on how you can set up your WSI Facebook page please have a look at the *Your WSI Facebook Page Getting Started Checklist* in the Appendix C section at the end of this guide.



### LinkedIn Overview:

[LinkedIn](#) is a business-oriented social networking site mainly used for professional networking and as of May 2009, it had grown to more than 40 million registered users, spanning across 170 industries.

The purpose of the site is to allow registered users to maintain a list of contact details of people they know and trust in business. The people in the list are called *Connections*. This list of connections can then be used in a number of ways:

- To gain an introduction to someone you wish to know through a mutual, trusted contact.
- To find jobs, people and business opportunities recommended by someone in one's contact network.
- To list jobs and search for potential candidates.
- To review a person's profile before entering into a business relationship with them.

The "gated-access approach" LinkedIn utilizes (where contact with any professional requires either a pre-existing relationship or the intervention of a contact of theirs) has build trust among their users and is one of the reasons it has become the preferred social portal for professionals. LinkedIn is a superb tool for creating, developing, and maintaining business relationships. It can be used to create awareness of yourself among those who do not know you but whom you'd like to know (e.g. potential clients), and to demonstrate your company's competence and expertise in order to establish the trust upon which business relationships depend.

### How to Leverage LinkedIn in Your WSI Business:

Below are the main ways in which you should be leveraging LinkedIn to promote your WSI business and expertise as a WSI Consultant.

- **Connect with other WSI Consultants:** Do a search for WSI Consultants on LinkedIn and invite them to become a part of your community. Also, when you receive invites from other WSI Consultants be sure to accept them, even if you do not necessarily know them. Use the power of the network to your advantage.

- **Join groups:** Find and join communities of professionals based on common interest, experience, affiliation, and goals. Stay in touch with organizations, schools, and companies that you are and were a part of and build your connections. Groups are also ideal for networking with professionals with similar interests and goals, and allows for collaboration in a professional community online.

Try doing a general keyword search for groups related to our core offering of Internet Marketing and also for industries you specialize and have a background in.

Access LinkedIn's Group Learning Center directly at this link: <http://learn.linkedin.com/groups/>.

- **Create your own group:** You may also want to consider creating your own group to generate connections directly related to your WSI business. If you are creating groups remember to always provide value. NEVER sell your services. Simply showcase your expertise with posting informative information and generating discussion by asking questions.

Here are some ideas for types of groups you could create:

- Create a group specifically for those who have done business with you
- Create a group based on a service you specialize in, and consider making it for a specific industry

For more information on how to set up your own LinkedIn group go to:

<http://learn.linkedin.com/group-management/>

- **Answer Questions:** By answering questions put out by members of your groups or members of a group you belong to you will start to gain credibility and showcase your expertise in your field. So if you think you have some valuable information to add to a question, be sure to take the time to share your thoughts. Make sure that you do not do any hard selling of your services when answering your questions, this will only turn people off and lower your credibility. The strategy here is to provide is to openly share your expertise with the other members, that way down the road they will remember you when a need for your services arise.
- **Use LinkedIn's Direct Advertising:** The advertising channel offered by LinkedIn allows you to find the perfect audience for your business with highly-targeted text advertising. Through their network you are able to:
  - Reach a rapidly growing community of over 43 million professionals
  - Select your ad's audience by seniority, industry, job function, company size, and more
  - Write, target, and start your ad in minutes. Pay by clicks or impressions. Get started with as little as US\$50.
  - Leverage the power of LinkedIn by using your professional brand to put a face to your business.
  - Target your ad to potential customers based on geography

Since LinkedIn is a member base of professionals, they make a great target audience for WSI services. If you are doing paid advertising on other directories and search engines, you may want to seriously consider testing the advertising feature for LinkedIn as well.

For more information on how to advertise with LinkedIn visit: <https://www.linkedin.com/directads/>.

- **Integrate LinkedIn into your Marketing:** This tactic is applicable for all social media profiles you have, but is specifically important for LinkedIn because it is the professional's social media portal and therefore this overall of the other portal we mention in this toolkit, this is THE one you should be on. Here are some ideas on which marketing pieces you should incorporate your LinkedIn profile into:
  - Webinar presentation - Title and ending slide
  - Tradeshows banners and posters
  - Business cards - Include in contact details or include all your social profile URLs on the back of your cards
  - Marketing collateral - Include with the rest of the contact details
  - Email signature - Add the LinkedIn logo to your email signature with a direct link to your profile

## 10 Best Practices to Fully Leverage Your LinkedIn Profile:

LinkedIn is, first and foremost, about *individuals* so many of the best practices below will address how you as an individual WSI Consultant can use LinkedIn for business purposes rather than how you as a WSI business can use LinkedIn. Here is a list of recommended best practices:

1. **Ask to connect:** Whenever you have interactions with people, ask them if they're on LinkedIn and if they'd like to connect.

Try sending LinkedIn requests shortly after a business meeting in which everyone swaps cards. You've got their email address so it will be easy to find them on LinkedIn and considering you've just met with them, they likely have an interest in creating a relationship.

2. **The more you give, the more you get:** Fill out as much of your profile as you can. The more information you put in, the more connections you're making and by doing so, you're creating more opportunities for people to find you.

For example, by including former employers on your profile, you will be connected to other LinkedIn users who have worked for that company. Same with colleges: by including the colleges you attended, you'll be connected to others who have attended the same college.

3. **Use keywords that people will likely be using in their searches.** As you put yourself in the mind of the people by whom you want to be found, think about what searches they'd perform on LinkedIn in order to find you.

Build up a list of those keywords and search phrases and use them throughout your profile. This is a similar activity to doing keyword research for an online marketing campaign. Try using Google Insights and Google Trends to build these keyword searches.

4. **Don't hide.** All your search engine optimization will go to waste if you hide your profile. The two things that people do when researching business associates they have not met is Google them and search for their LinkedIn profile.

Change the settings on your profile to “Full View” so your profile can be fully indexed by the search engines.

- 5. Recommend.** Give and ask for recommendations. Recommend those you think are worthy before they ask you to recommend them. They will often return the favor. Recommendations are yet another aspect of LinkedIn that helps to establish trust and allow you to control which ones are displayed in your profile.
- 6. Update your status.** Update your status regularly and strategically. Use your status update to remind your network what you do and what you know. For example: “John is putting together an Internet Marketing proposal for a new prospect.”

You can also use your status update to share articles with your network. The WSI Whitepaper Series is a great item to share, as well as our Internet Marketing Trend Reports.

If you plan on including links in your status use a URL shortener like [bit.ly](http://bit.ly) or <http://tinyurl.com> to save space in your status updates and to track how many clickthroughs a given link garnered.

- 7. Personalize your URL.** Change your LinkedIn profile URL from the default set of numbers to your name. This helps people find you when they search for your name within LinkedIn as well as in Google and other search engines.
- 8. Join industry groups.** Search for and join industry-related LinkedIn groups, even if there is no activity within them. The icons for those groups will show up on your profile which tells people at a glance that you are involved in your industry and presumably knowledgeable about it. It also creates a connection between you and anyone else who is a member of that group. If the group is active, join in the conversation where appropriate. This is an opportunity to demonstrate your expertise.
- 9. Ask and you shall receive.** If you want to make connections with a specific type of person, you can use LinkedIn’s Answer feature to try and attract them by posing a question the LinkedIn audience. Think about the type of person you want to reach and then formulate a question for which you think that person would have an opinion about that they’d like to share.
- 10. Spread the love.** Answer questions posed by others. This, again, is another aspect of LinkedIn that can be used to demonstrate your competence. If you use this tactic, don’t just do intellectual handstands to show off your knowledge, *actually answer the question*. You should come across as wanting to help the person who posed the question by sharing your expertise. If you are truly helpful to the person, they’ll consider assigning you as the best answer among the group. Your answer and any answers you have that are highlights as best answers will be displayed on your profile.

## Important Considerations Regarding Your Profile Picture:

Saying your LinkedIn profile picture should appear “professional” states the obvious. But more specifically, paying a professional photographer to give you a few headshots to choose from is worth the modest investment because your picture is one the first things people will notice on your LinkedIn page. If you don’t get a professional photographer, then be sure your picture is on a fairly neutral background with very good lighting.

And on the issue of timeliness, while you don't need to update your picture every year, it should still match up pretty well with your current appearance. General rule of thumb is: "If people are going to meet you and be surprised by the difference, it's time to get a new one."

## LinkedIn Tools/ Resources:

Unlike Twitter and Facebook, LinkedIn doesn't have many apps, but those that they do can be helpful for positioning and to create more contact points. Here are some to consider:

- The WordPress and BlogLink apps allow you to send your blog posts automatically to your LinkedIn profile.
- The Google Presentation and SlideShare apps let you embed PowerPoint presentations you've created into your profile.
- The Polls application can be used to attract a specific audience by carefully crafting the right poll question.
- If you travel a lot, the MyTravel application lets you know your network's travel activity so you can see when your colleagues are in the same place, creating yet more opportunities to connect.
- The Amazon Reading List app lets you list the books you've read, the books you're currently reading and those you'd like to read and it connects you with other who are using the app.

## Resources:

- LinkedIn's eLearning Modules: <http://learn.linkedin.com/training/>

To ensure you are getting the most out of your LinkedIn profile, have a look at the *Your LinkedIn Getting Started Checklist* in the Appendix D section at the end of this guide.



## YouTube Overview:

[YouTube](http://www.YouTube.com) is the leader in online video, and the premier destination to watch and share original videos worldwide through a Web experience. YouTube allows people to easily upload and share video clips on [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) and across the Internet through websites, mobile devices, blogs, and email.

Everyone can watch videos on YouTube. People can see first-hand accounts of current events, find videos about their hobbies and interests, and discover the quirky and unusual. As more people capture special moments on video, YouTube is empowering them to become the broadcasters of tomorrow.

## How does it work?

Like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, YouTube is free to use, all you need to do is register with the site and create a profile if you want to post videos or comments. The videos you publish—which include tags, a category, and a brief description—can be made public or restricted to members of specified contact lists.

YouTube also allows videos hosted on its site to be embedded in other Web pages, such as blogs or personal Web sites.

## Ideas on Promoting Your WSI Business on YouTube:

When it comes using YouTube to promote your WSI business, here are some ideas on videos you can create and upload to YouTube and also your YouTube channel.

- Existing WSI Webmercials
- ABCs of Internet Success Video (on eFusion IC Site)
- Video version of your blog posts
- Your recorded presentations and webinars
- Videos of WSI Events, like E&I, IM Summits, MCPH worldwide golf tournament
- Video version of end client testimonials
- Videos of you outlining best practices for any of the 5 profit centers

## 4 Steps to Getting Your Video Ranked Higher:

YouTube video search uses a variety of signals to determine the placement of a video in their rankings, including the video file name, title, and any associated metadata. The more information provided about a video, the better it can be searched. In general, YouTube strives to give the best possible objective video result. That said, here are some best practices that you can use to help your videos rise in the search results:

1. **Add a descriptive title to your video:** When users search for a video on YouTube, they will find your content easier if you include an accurate and descriptive title for your video. An engaging title can also help your video stand apart from the rest of the crowd.
2. **Make your descriptive content clear and specific:** Try to determine what content your video contains that will help users find it and distinguish it from other videos. Providing content that is descriptive, accurate, and unique is an important factor. Using complete sentences in your description is also a good idea. For more information, you can reference [what should I put in my video description?](#)
3. **Provide accurate tags:** Including tags that users may use when they search or browse videos also helps. However, avoid using techniques such as keyword stuffing which will ultimately hurt your videos rankings.
4. **Embedded Videos:** Embedding videos on your website may make your videos more discoverable and easier to find on the web. For information on how to embed videos, please refer to [how do I embed videos on my website or blog?](#)

## Online Video Production Tips:

- **Be Professional:** Nothing can quickly turn off your target audience as a poor quality, slow loading video. No need to rent an expensive studio to create a top-notch online video. Incorporate basic stock photography and video clips from sites such as iStockphoto.com.
- **Stay Focused:** An online video isn't meant to convey your entire product line or multiple features. Hone in on one key message with the strongest lead benefit. Create one video to demonstrate one product. A simple clip is more likely to be viewed in its entirety for today's distraction driven viewers.
- **Broaden Your Reach:** YouTube isn't the only site to submit your video production to. New competitors have emerged including Google Video or Binkx, a video search engine with over 18 million hours of video. Another tool introduced by the company allows advertisers to place targeted text ads in any video embedded in a website.

## YouTube Tools/ Resources:

- Google has also published [webmasters guidelines](#) that apply to all sites that embed or point to video content. This document also provides important quality guidelines that webmasters should take into consideration when linking to or pointing at videos.
- [YouTube Handbook](#): Everything you need to know about watching and producing videos for YouTube.



## Blogs Overview:

I think it is safe to say we all know that a blog is type of website that is geared towards specific topic and whose goal is to provide its audience with frequent postings of information. But there are some questions with regards to the best practices of blogging and what needs to be done in order for your blog to be successful.

Generally we recommend WSI Consultants to incorporate their blog into their IC site so that their site can benefit from the fresh and updated content you add to your blog, which search engines love.

If you are looking to create a blog external of your IC site then the two blog platforms we recommend (mainly because they are the most popular and widely used) are:

1. Blogger - [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)
2. WordPress - [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

## 5 Reasons Why You Should have a Blog for Your WSI Business:

1. **The Ultimate Humanizer.** Writing a blog allows you to express the personality behind your business. It is important to recognize that while WSI is the overall brand you use to promote your business under, you as a consultant also need to consider how your personal brand is being represented. Your clients ultimately need to feel comfortable with you as their business advisor if they are going to give you their business. Blogging allows you to showcase that you are knowledgeable in your field and are an overall great business person.
2. **Easy Distribution.** At its very core a blog is a website. As such the content contained within them is easily distributed, easily shared and easily reference by others. If you provide great content and promote your blog well, your blog will likely be picked up by others and mentioned on other blogs as well. This all contributes to building your consultant brand.
3. **Better than your email newsletter.** Blogs are essentially more easily edited versions of a newsletter. You can update your blog on the fly, at any time you need to and virtually anywhere you have a connection to the Internet (computer or mobile devise). With a newsletter you are limited in your updating capabilities once you have distributed that newsletter to your database. So if you are looking to have an easy way to give your audience information in a frequent manner, blogging is the ideal solution.
4. **Great place for comments.** Like all of the other social media tools referenced in this toolkit, blogs have the room for comments and feedback. It is another great way to find out how you are doing and connect with your audience/ customers.
5. **SEO Benefits.** As mentioned before, when written strategically, blogs can drive your organic rankings on search engines, and in our line of business we all know how important it is to be visible online. If you are going to use a blog platform external of our IC site be sure your posts provides links back to your site so it can also benefit from an SEO perspective.

## Seven Secrets to Successful Blogging:

1. **Narrow cast:** Blogs are generally regarded as **broadcast platforms** as anyone who connects to the Internet may view it. By having a very targeted topic you can greatly enhance the benefits derived from your blog. As Internet marketers on many occasions you will create multiple sales pages with different copy for multiple visitor profiles or have specific landing pages created to drive specific traffic to a particular offer or information. You can extend the depth and reach of a blog in this same way by using **narrowcasting channels**.
2. **Invite a conversation:** One of the most important aspects of developing a successful and popular blog is growing your audience of both new and loyal readers. A critical component of achieving those goals is to develop relationships with your readers.

The first thing you need to do to start the conversations on your blog to write [compelling blog posts](#). Through these posts invite the readers to join in by either leaving comments or request their thoughts and opinion on the subject. When your readers take the time to join in the conversation, make sure that conversation is truly two-way by responding and making your readers feel comfortable in expressing their thoughts and opinions on your blog.

3. **Always link, always be relevant:** We all understand the importance of linking as it relates to search engine optimization, well the same holds true for linking in your blogs as well. The combination of strong link anchor text and theme relevant content gives the blog exactly what the search engines are seeking as well and is another reason why linking to relevant blog post or other resources is so important as well. Finding and creating the links for your blog posts can take longer than writing the post itself but the benefits are well worth it.
4. **Write for web readers:** The flicker flicker syndrome is why Web readers don't read word by word, they scan. Many successful blogs keep their content brief and focused, use short sections with clear titles, keep long dense documents deeper in the site and link to them from the blog, and use words that anyone can understand.
5. **Publish consistently:** Would you buy a newspaper everyday if the articles in that paper never changed? Probably not. The same theory applies to blog content. If you don't update your blog with a new post, there is no reason for people to visit. However, if you post new content frequently that is timely and written in a style people enjoy, they are likely to return again and again to see what you have to say. The more frequently you publish new posts, the more new content there is for people to see and the more reason there is for people to visit again and again.
6. **Take risks:** Blogs provide the potential to significantly change how an organization interacts with its customers/employees/shareholders/partners, etc.. Allowing consumers to share opinions on your business offering can be a big risk but it is one worth taking. Besides, if you don't allow them to voice their opinions they will only voice them elsewhere and wouldn't you rather have them be voiced in a forum you control and can react to quickly rather than elsewhere on the web?
7. **Be AUTHENTIC:** From a business and organization perspective authenticity in the blog atmosphere is key to the audience. They want to make sure that they see your business in a real light and that they are able to "trust" their thoughts and actions. This secret is not only applicable to blogs but to any communication you do on social portals.

## Blogging Tools/ Resources:

- [Pingoat](#) – pinging service
- [Pingomatic](#) – another pinging service
- [AudioBlogger](#) – audio post to your blog via phone
- [BlogRolling](#) – a service to manage your blog roll
- [Creative Commons](#) – copyright protections service
- [Feedburner](#) – RSS tool that adds a variety of features to your blog's RSS feed
- [Picasa](#) – find, edit and share all the pictures on your PC
- [Flickr](#) – Store and share your images - good way of hosting images if you don't have a standalone blog on your own domain.
- [Flock](#) – A browser that enables sharing and blogging from within it
- [Copyscape](#) – allows you to track down other sites that are stealing your content
- [TalkDigger](#) – 'find, follow and join conversations evolving on the Internet.'

- [Blog Flux](#) – Stats, Pinging and Directory

## Key Success Indicators and Metrics

There are no standards when it comes to measuring your success on your social portals but below is a list of the top metrics you should be measuring if you are interested in learning how successful social media is in generating awareness for your WSI business.

- **Incoming Traffic** – # of visitors that are coming to your IC site from social portals (check referrer data)
- **Incoming Links** – Conduct a linking report to see how your linking has increased since participating in social media and outline which ones specifically are coming from social portals and blogs
- **Reader Engagement** – Look at the # of conversations, retweets and comments you have sparked as a result of postings you have made.
- **Connections** – Number of connections, followers and members you have across your social media profiles. Also consider which ones are mutual across social portals.

Even with web analytics tools, you don't have all the tools necessary to get started tracking analytics related to social media. Why not add some more tools to your inventory that track detailed social metrics? Some suggestions:

- **Bit.ly:** When you use a URL shortener, it's always a smart idea to use one that has analytics information, like [Bit.lybit.ly](#). This will track information like number of clicks, traffic sources, and even at what time clicks occur.
- **Xinureturns:** Despite the funny Scientology-inspired name, [xinureturns](#) provides a great dashboard overview of your website's standing in social media. Run a report and you will receive information on Technorati, Google Pagerank, Diggs, and even backlinks to your website.
- **PostRank:** Formerly known as AideRSS, [PostRank](#) provides detailed information on Tweets, stumbles, diggs, and [FriendFeed](#) all in one place. It's best for blogs and websites with a lot of content.
- **SocialToo:** [SocialToo](#) is a comprehensive tool for creating social surveys and tracking social stats. It also will send you a daily email describing follows and unfollows on Twitter.

For more information on resources for social media visit [www.mashable.com](http://www.mashable.com), it is a great resource and if full of valuable information.

If you have any questions on any of the information provided in this How-to-Guide please contact the WSI Franchise Support team.

## Appendix A - Your WSI Twitter Page Getting Started Checklist

- Get your Twitter Account** - Go to <http://www.twitter.com/signup>
  - Your WSI Twitter Account is to be set up on your approved WSI branded domain name. For example if your domain was wsiPowered.com your Twitter account name would be WSIPowered or WSI\_Powered.
  
- Complete your bio**
  - Be sure to include a URL in the More Info URL section of your profile
  - If you are adding your email address to your provide be sure to use your approved WSI branded domain name based email address
  
- Customize Your Twitter Background**
  - Use our WSI Twitter template showcased below to customize the background of your Twitter page and brand it WSI. Note: Additional twitter templates available in Appedix B, at the end of this guide.

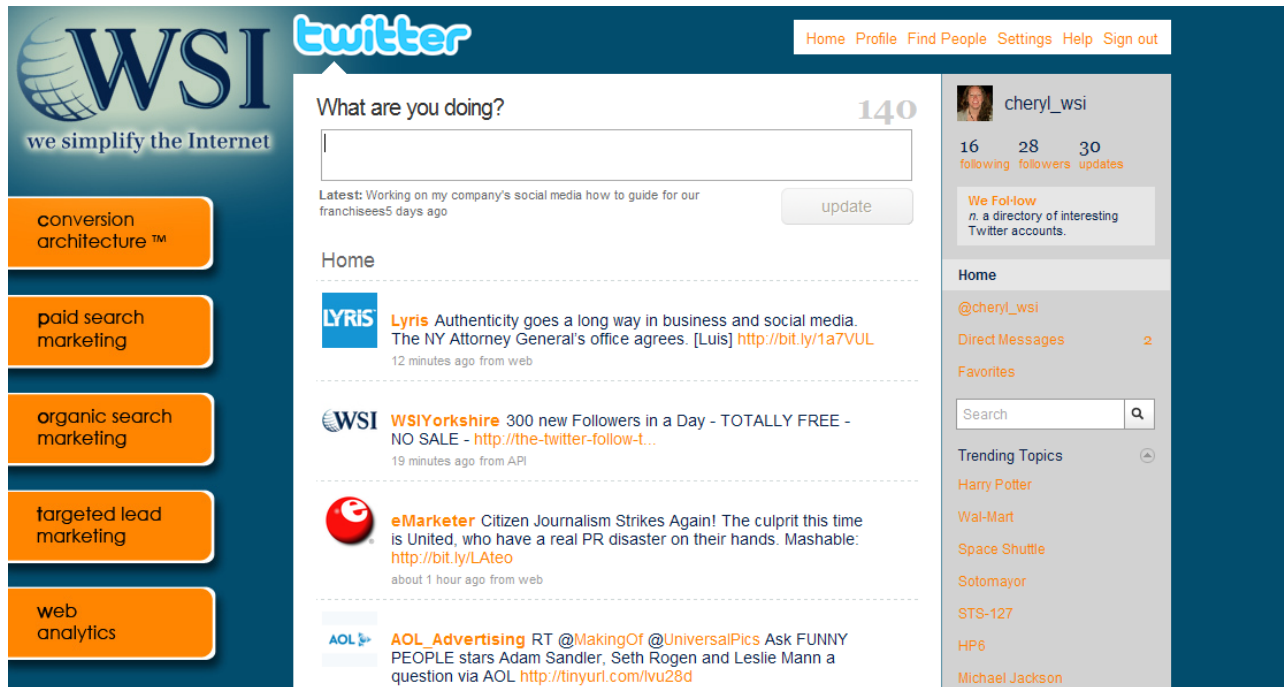


- Change the design settings of your Twitter page to incorporate WSI colours.** How to below:
  - Login to your Twitter account and click on Settings -> Design -> Change Design Colors
  - Set the colors to the following HEX codes:



- ❑ Upload the Twitter template image to have the same look and feel as the Twitter page below. Note this template is optimal for Resolutions at 1280x720 or higher. Links to this Twitter template in our 3 different blues are below:

- [Dark Blue](#) – Note: If using this version change the background color to 052148
- [Medium Blue](#) (this is the one showcased in this checklist)
- [Light Blue](#) – Note: If using this version change the background color to 5C91A4

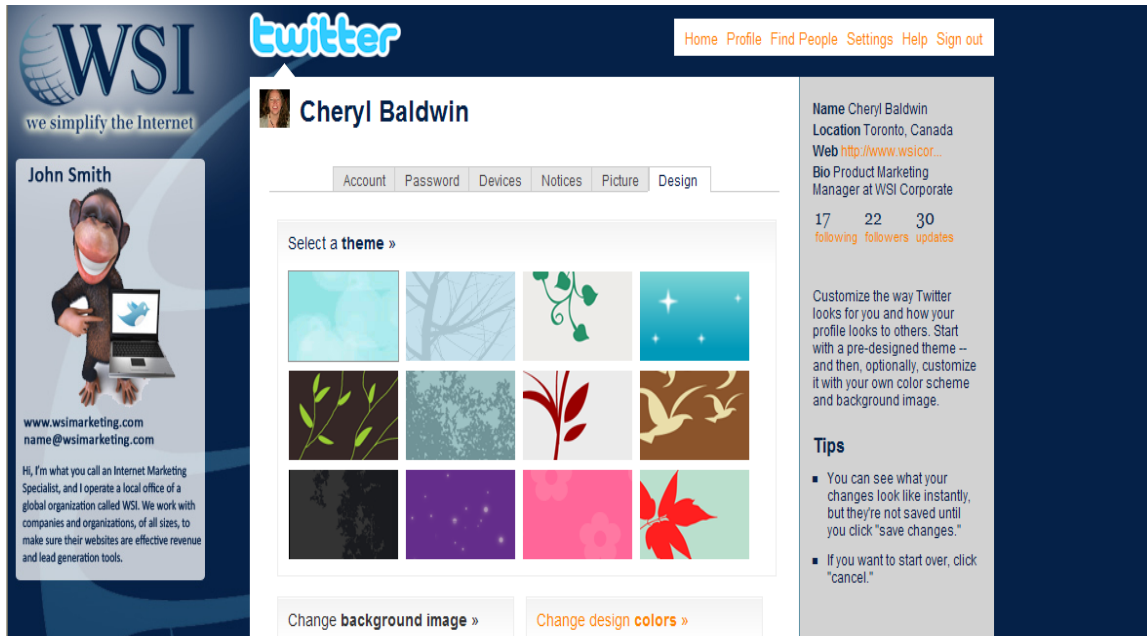


- ❑ Post some good tweets before you start following others
- ❑ Conduct a search and find others to follow
- ❑ Add your Twitter feed to your blog, other social media profiles and offline materials like your business cards
- ❑ Start Conversations. Use the TweetDeck to reply to people you are following, *especially* if they're not yet following you.

## Appendix B: Additional WSI Twitter Templates

Below are the current WSI templates that are available to you to download and use on your WSI Twitter pages. Please follow the same change design color guidelines detailed in the Twitter checklist.

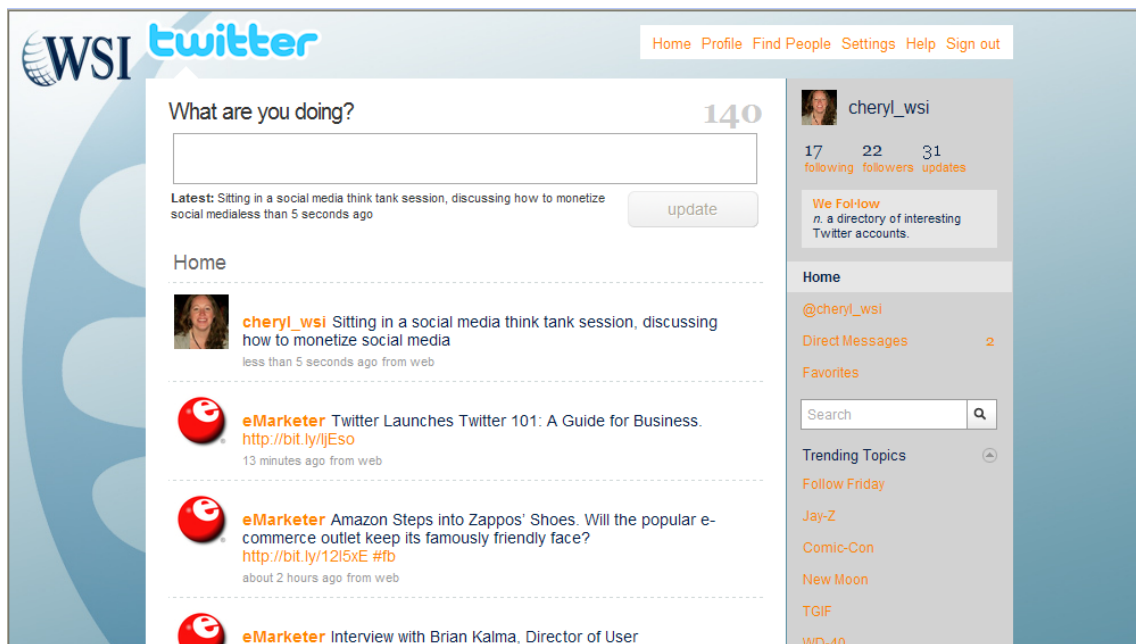
**Resolution: 1280x720 or higher**



\*Note: with this template you will need to replace the monkey with a picture of yourself

[Dark Blue](#) | [Medium Blue](#) | [Light Blue](#)

**Resolution: 1024x768**



[Dark Blue](#) | [Medium Blue](#) | [Light Blue](#)

## Appendix C: Your WSI Facebook Page Getting Started Page

- Visit this URL: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>
- Pick a category for your page, either Local or Brand, Products and Organization are most applicable to your WSI business. Under the category select a sub category, Professional Service is likely the most applicable. Note: You will not be able to change your category later.
- Enter a name for your page. This should be the name of the business you are representing, which is WSI. Specific guidelines for the name of your Facebook page are below:
- When setting up a Facebook vanity URL...for your WSI business you can either use your personal name, a combination of your name and WSI (eg. johnsmith\_wsi) or your approved WSI domain name. For Example: Your WSI Domain Name is: wsipowered.com, your Facebook URL would be: [www.facebook.com/wsipowered](http://www.facebook.com/wsipowered).
- Under the "Add Information to this Page" area we, at a minimum, suggest entering a short description of your WSI business and your approved WSI branded IC site domain. You could take a short excerpt from your profile page on your IC site for your description.
- From a branding perspective we recommend using the WSI logo for the photo/ image of your page. The following logos are both available for download in our [WSI Brand Marketing System](#), under the category called Brand Yourself WSI and the Logos folder and the WSI (No Tagline) and WSI ICE sub folders.



- Click on your business name in the top left corner (it's a hyperlink) and then click "publish this page" (until you do this, nobody but you will be able to see your new Facebook business profile).
- Finally, and this is important, from your new profile page, click "Add to my products". This way, you become the first "fan" of your business.

Now comes the fun part. Once you've become a "fan" of your business, your friends on Facebook (some of which are likely customers) will see a message in their home page. Hopefully, some of your Facebook friends will befriend your business. Then, their friends will see a message, and so it goes...

For a complete guide on getting your WSI business set up on Facebook please read [Hubspot's Facebook for Business' eBook](#).

## Appendix D: Your LinkedIn Getting Started Checklist

Get the most out of LinkedIn by starting with these three easy steps.

1. Own a profile that truly represents you.
  - List your [current](#) and [past positions](#) & [education](#) along with your tenure there. This helps the right people and opportunities find you.
  - Add a [profile photo](#)— people never forget a face!
  - Add a [summary paragraph](#). Think of it as your professional elevator pitch.
2. Ensure your connections represent your “real-world” network.
  - Use [webmail import](#) to see, in seconds, all the people you know who are already on LinkedIn. You can then select who you wish to invite to join your trusted network.
  - [Upload](#) a contacts file from Outlook, Palm, ACT!, or Mac Address
  - View our list of your [colleagues](#) and [classmates](#) that are already on LinkedIn.
3. Leverage the power of your LinkedIn network!
  - [Post a question](#) on Answers and tap into the experts you’re connected to and the entire LinkedIn network. With a professional community of 40+ million, this is the perfect place for those tough questions.
  - [Look up](#) someone’s profile before you meet with them. Learn their background and see who you know in common to get off to a fast start.
  - Search for [Service Providers](#) and select based on trusted recommendations from people in your network. Anonymous web searches to find providers are a thing of the past.

With a profile and connections that truly represents you and your “real-world” network; you’re all set to get the most out of LinkedIn.