

The Nonprofit Organization's Guide to Social Media

Being active on social media is no longer optional. As organizations compete with both traditional brands and other nonprofit organizations, it's more important than ever to stand out on social channels with a distinctive personality.

It's usually not enough to throw up haphazard posts on Facebook or Twitter and expect supporters to come running. Successful social media communications occurs through thoughtful, strategic planning, setting measurable objectives, and committing to consistency.

This guide will walk your organization through the chaotic and valuable world of social media. We'll teach you how to set goals, optimize your profiles, engage and grow your following, and measure the impact of your efforts in the ever-changing world of social media.

And, if this guide isn't enough, we have an [entire online course](#) dedicated to teaching nonprofits to make the most of their social media efforts. Use discount code **GURU50** to get it 50% off!

What's Inside?

1. [Setting Digital Goals](#)
2. [Optimizing the 'Big Four' Social Media Platforms](#)
 - a. [Facebook](#)
 - b. [Twitter](#)
 - c. [YouTube](#)
 - d. [Instagram](#)
3. [Writing Social Media Content](#)
 - a. [Using hashtags, sharing other people's content](#)
 - b. [Responding to comments, messages, and tweets](#)
 - c. [Dealing with #Haters](#)
4. [Growing Your Social Following](#)
5. [Helpful Social Media Tools](#)
6. [Measuring the Impact of Social Media](#)
7. [More resources!](#)

Setting Digital Goals

It's hard to understand the value that social media has without having measurable goals to prove some sort of reward from your efforts. Setting digital goals that indicate forward movement for your organization's mission will help you measure how you're doing and optimize your strategy.

Setting Relevant Digital Goals

A [BHAG Chart](#) outlines your organization’s mission and its major, long-term goal. That goal (which will be similar to your organization’s mission or vision statement) is divided into more specific “programmatic goals”, which are broken down into more manageable “digital goals”, and then even further into “measurable metrics”. It’d be nearly impossible for [Power Poetry](#) to measure whether or not they were able to “create a generation empowered by creative expression”, but they can certainly measure how many teens are writing and responding to poems- a measurable metric that supports their end goal.

BHAG (Big Huge Ambitious Goal)	Power Poetry leverages technology and poetry to create an empowered generation through creative expression, social engagement and literacy.		
Programmatic Goals	Creative Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enlarge body of work ● Build engaged poets ● Improve poetry skills ● Increase poetic confidence ● Build an audience appreciative of poetry 	Social engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage with issues beyond poems ● Engage with personal challenges through poetry ● Learn about new issues ● Learn about new perspective on issues 	Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve writing ability ● Improve reading & comprehension ● Improve excitement about reading & writing ● Improve speaking ability ● Improve digital and media literacy
Digital Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get teens to become members ● Build a poetry community where poets actively share and comment on poems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce engaging action guides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Become the Wikipedia of literary terms ● Increase high quality poem submissions
Measurable Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of new poets ● Number of new poems ● Number of comments ● Number of responses to comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time spent on action guide pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time spent on glossary pages ● Time spent editing poems

Create a BHAG chart for your nonprofit and focus on those digital goals and measurable metrics- these will guide you in setting social media goals.

On-Platform vs. Off-Platform Goals

Do you care about users engaging with you on-platform (i.e. within Facebook's walls)? Or off-platform (i.e. getting them from Facebook to your website)?

On-platform goals are set to be reached on the social media platform (whether that be Twitter, Facebook, etc). These are goals like number of impressions, engagement rate, total number of followers, and other vanity metrics. These goals are helpful for brand awareness and social proofing and can help drive traffic to your site. You can dig into [Facebook Insights](#), [Twitter Analytics](#), [YouTube Analytics](#), and Instagram Analytics to understand your past performance, set attainable goals, and then track progress.

Off-platform goals are set to be reached off of the social media platform. Email signups, donations, resource downloads, time spent on page, and volunteer signups are all off-platform goals. Often, these goals are more closely tied to the true impact of your organization than on-platform goals are. Off-platform goals are probably going to be more indicative of your true social media ROI.

Setting and Tracking Off-Platform Goals

If you don't have Google Analytics set up already, [do that now](#)– you're going to need it to track off-platform goals and understand the behavior of users that come to your site from social.

Refer to your BHAG chart- what are your digital goals? Say you're Power Poetry (whose BHAG chart is shown above). 3 of your off-platform social media goals are:

- Get teens to become members
- Produce engaging action guides
- Become the Wikipedia of literary terms

Those are great goals that support their mission. But how do you measure those? This is the part where you turn your digital goals into 'measurable metrics', which can be tracked in Google Analytics. So for the 3 goals above, those metrics would probably be:

- Number of new members
- Time spent on action guides pages
- Time spent on glossary pages

Once you have those 'measurable metric' goals [set up in Google Analytics](#), you can start measuring! We'll talk more about measuring impact later on in this guide.

Optimizing the ‘Big Four’ Social Media Platforms

We’re going to dive into how your organization can optimize your Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram accounts for reach, engagement, and impact.

After you work through this guide, download our [best practices checklist](#) to use and share with your team!

Facebook

Number of monthly active users: **1.86 billion**

Facebook is the best-known and most widely used social networking site. If there's one network for your organization to be on, Facebook is probably it. But, as Facebook continues to change its algorithm in order to decide which posts will end up appearing in viewers' newsfeeds, organizations have seen their organic reach go down. In other words, just because you post something doesn't mean every one of your followers will see it.

To ensure that the most followers see your messaging, it's important to focus on "engagement," or the number of people that like, comment on, or share your posts. It's also important to understand what kind of content Facebook's algorithm prefers so you can maximize your chances to snag that coveted spot at the top of someone's newsfeed.

Facebook: Best Practices Checklist

- ❑ **Are our profile and cover images the correct sizes?**
 - Profile: 168px by 168px in header; 32px by 32px on Timeline
 - Cover photo: 828px by 315px
- ❑ **Are our profile and cover images different?**
 - Your cover photo overs more real estate to advertise your organization and any current campaigns. We recommend keeping your profile image as your logo, and changing your cover photo from time to time. Whenever you have a new event on the horizon, we recommend changing your cover photo to a relevant image.
- ❑ **Does our cover photo have a CTA?**
 - In the caption of your cover photo, be sure to include a call to action and a link to your site. The cover photo is one of the main introductions to your organization, and you want to optimize every part of your profile to lead users to your website.
- ❑ **Do we have a custom URL?**
 - Custom URL's make your profile easier to find, and they look more credible.
- ❑ **Are we optimizing our tabs?**
 - If you have an Instagram, Twitter, or Pinterest account or Trip Advisor page, you can cross promote these on your Facebook page. This will direct more users to your other social media pages. Instructions [here](#).
- ❑ **Are we engaging with our audience?**
 - Keep the “social” in “social media.” Be sure to share content from other users, tag relevant accounts in posts, and reply to any questions on posts. Tagging and sharing will help expand your reach, while replying to comments will humanize your organization on social media.
- ❑ **How often are we posting?**
 - Best practices say to post at least once a day, preferable 2-3 times a day.
- ❑ **Is our profile entirely filled out?**
 - Ensure you have provided contact information and a detailed description of your organization.
- ❑ **Is our ‘About’ section optimized?**
 - Facebook provides space for both a short and long description; optimize both with keywords and phrases to help draw humans and robots to your page. By using search keywords, humans will be able to recognize that your page suits their interests, and robots will be able to index your organization appropriately.
- ❑ **Do we have a call to action button?**
 - Select your call to action based on your goals: do you want users to “sign up” for your newsletter, “call” your location for more information, or “donate” through [Facebook Donate](#)?
- ❑ **Are we adding content/context to all posts?**
 - Add your organization’s perspective to every post in order to boost your reputation as a thought leader. Provide insight into why you are posting this particular video, photo, link, or text.

- ❑ **Who is our target and are we reaching them?**
 - Use Facebook Insights >People to get key demographics information in order to curate and cater your content toward your followers' interests.
- ❑ **Is our page verified?**
 - The little check mark adds credibility and allows you to use advanced features like Facebook Live. [Instructions here.](#)
- ❑ **Do we have video content uploaded natively to Facebook?**
 - Posting YouTube links helps drive YouTube views, but is not likely to show up high in News Feed or get high engagements. In Facebook's Edgerank algorithm, they give more weight to posts with embedded videos than links to YouTube. Most recently in 2016, Facebook's order of priorities are (1) Facebook Places; (2) Video Updates; (3) Picture Updates; (4) Link Updates; (5) Status Updates.
- ❑ **Is our industry description accurate?**
 - Facebook needs to know your industry in order to lead interested users to your page. When a user searching for "Art Museums" finds Asia Society, they will be more likely to click through than if they were searching for, say, "Clothing Stores."
- ❑ **Are we tracking competitors in FB Insights?**
 - Go to Insights >Posts > Top Posts from Pages You Watch to add Facebook pages of similar organizations in order to track their content. This will allow you to get an idea of what similar organizations are posting, what is working for them, and what types of content you can post on your page.
- ❑ **Do we have lingering messages that no one has responded to?**
 - Ensure someone is checking in from time to time to respond to any relevant and legitimate messages. Some messages will be spam, but some may be from highly engaged users that you will want to convert into loyal followers.
- ❑ **Have we "follow as page" -ed like-minded organizations?**
 - Follow other organizations to see their posts on your News Feed as another way of tracking "competition" and getting ideas for potential content.

Twitter

Number of monthly active users: **319 million**

Twitter is one of the best outlets nonprofits have to share relevant content. Twitter users expect concise, useful bits of information, so Twitter it can be a great place to drive followers to your website, promote older content pieces, and engage with other influencers in the space. Plus, your organization can post more frequently on Twitter than on any other platform, so this is a great opportunity to share and test a wide variety of content.

Twitter: Best Practices Checklist

- ❑ **Are our profile and cover images the correct sizes?**
 - Profile: 400px by 400px
 - Cover photo: 1500px by 500px
- ❑ **Are our profile and cover images different?**
 - Your cover photo overs more real estate to advertise your organization and any current campaigns. We recommend keeping your profile image as your logo, and changing your cover photo from time to time. Whenever you have a new event on the horizon, we recommend changing your cover photo to a relevant image.
- ❑ **Is our Twitter bio optimized?**
 - Use keywords, phrases, and hashtags in your bio to help draw humans and robots to your page. By using search keywords, humans will be able to recognize that your page suits their interests, and robots will be able to index your organization appropriately.
- ❑ **Do we have a custom URL?**
 - Custom URL's make your profile easier to find, and they look more credible.
- ❑ **Are we engaging with our audience?**
 - Retweet your followers and relevant organizations. When you retweet other people's content, it shows you are not only a content creator, but also a content curator. Be sure to quote-retweet to add your organization's perspective.
 - You have 1,000 likes per day, use these as "free advertisements" to leave a brand impression. Like good, relevant content by users who would benefit from your content. You can make this even easier by creating a list of users you trust to post high quality and relevant content
- ❑ **Are we reaching out to others?**
 - Tag influencers with an "@" to ensure they see your tweet. Be sure to include their "@" handle at the end of a Tweet so other users can see the post as well.
- ❑ **How often are we posting?**
 - This is important since Twitter shows users' feeds in real time, and your message can quickly be relegated to the bottom of people's feeds. More is often better when it comes to Twitter, so aim for 3-5 tweets a day to start (avoid posting several tweets in rapid succession—that can be a major turn off). Use Twitter's analytics tool to find the frequency that resonates best with your followers.
- ❑ **Are we including relevant visuals and links?**
 - We recommend following the 80/20 rule when it comes to content.
 - ❖ 80% of posts should be:
 - Original content written by your organization or content that features someone from the organization
 - Content related to your mission or space but aren't directly related to your organization
 - ❖ 20% of posts should be:
 - Self promotional, advertising upcoming events or campaigns

- ❑ **Do we have video content uploaded natively?**
 - Twitter gives more weight to visual content over text, especially videos. Consider uploading more videos natively to Twitter to increase reach and video views.
- ❑ **Are we including relevant hashtags?**
 - They're an easy way for potential new followers to discover your content. Explore which hashtags are popular in your field and use them. Creating campaign or event-specific hashtags are also an excellent way to set your brand apart and make it easy to see who's talking about your organization on Twitter. We recommend using no more than 3 hashtags per tweet. Check out [Hashtagify.me](https://hashtagify.me) for ideas!
- ❑ **Are we optimizing our content?**
 - Use Twitter Analytics to see what posts users have engaged with the most, find topic or formatting patterns amongst these posts, and continue tweeting content your users want to engage with.
 - Current best practices encourage Twitter users to use their own links rather than bit.lys or ow.lys.
- ❑ **Who is our target and are we reaching them?**
 - Use Twitter Analytics to get key demographics information in order to curate and cater your content toward your followers' interests.
- ❑ **Is the account verified?**
 - The little blue check mark adds credibility. [Instructions here.](#)
- ❑ **Do we have Twitter Lists created?**
 - Adding users to lists gives them a notification (aka brand impression) and allows you to track partner organizations to
 - ❖ Get ideas for content
 - ❖ Make it easier to like/retweet relevant content from accounts you trust
 - Public lists: For accounts you want to convert into followers. When you add someone to a Public list, they **will** get a notification. You do not have to follow someone to add them to a Public list.
 - Private lists: For influencers or accounts you admire and want to see what they are up to. When you add someone to a Private list they will **not** get a notification.
- ❑ **Are we following key influencers and tracking competitors?**
 - Key influencers and similar organizations are prime candidates for lists. These are users you should be retweeting, tagging, and tracking to get ideas for content.
- ❑ **Do we have lingering messages that no one has responded to?**
 - Ensure someone is checking in from time to time to respond to any relevant and legitimate messages. Some messages will be spam, but some may be from highly engaged users that you will want to convert into loyal followers.

Youtube

Number of users: **1.3 billion**

YouTube is often overlooked by nonprofits but, as the world's 2nd largest search engine, it shouldn't be. Sure, YouTube requires a bit more effort and creativity than the other social media platforms, but it can help your organization create a strong personality online. Video can be a great way to tell your organization's story, to disseminate PSAs or spread cause awareness, and to highlight successes or milestones for your organization. Making a video can be a big investment depending on your resources, but it can go a long way.

YouTube: Best Practices Checklist

- ❑ **Are our profile and banner images the correct sizes?**
 - Profile: 250px by 250 px
 - Cover photo aka channel art: 2560px by 1224px
- ❑ **Are our profile and banner images different?**
 - Your cover photo overs more real estate to advertise your organization and any current campaigns. We recommend keeping your profile image as your logo, and changing your cover photo from time to time. Whenever you have a new event on the horizon, we recommend changing your cover photo to a relevant image.
- ❑ **Is our 'About' page optimized?**
 - YouTube is the second most popular search engine, so treat all content on your channel as you do on your site. Optimize your About page with keywords and phrases to help draw humans and robots to your page. By using search keywords, humans will be able to recognize that your page suits their interests, and robots will be able to index your organization appropriately.
- ❑ **Do we have a custom URL?**
 - Custom URL's make your profile easier to find, and they just look more credible in general.
- ❑ **Are we posting regularly?**
 - The key is consistency: the number of times a week depends on your goals and capacity, but best practices say to choose what days you want to post on, and consistently post on those days.
- ❑ **Do we have playlists?**
 - Just as you organize content on your site into specific pages under relevant headers, you should organize videos into playlists. This helps YouTube as a search engine understand the content on your channel. Also, when a user finishes a video in a playlist, the next video will automatically play, keeping engaged users engaged and on your channel. Don't forget to use keywords in your playlist names and descriptions!
- ❑ **Are our video titles optimized?**
 - Your video title should not only communicate the content of your video to users but it should also communicate keyword information to YouTube to help your ranking. Use Google's Keyword Planner and/or Google Trends to find the top keywords related to your topic and use those top contenders in your title. Many people find success with a naming convention along the lines of "Top Keyword/Phrase #1- Top Keyword Phrase #2". Test it out, but always try to keep it sounding natural.
- ❑ **Are our video descriptions optimized?**
 - To make your video as "discoverable" as possible, tag it with relevant keywords related to your organization and the video's content. Be sure to write out a full video description (200+ words) that includes important keywords and links back to your website to capture the most search traffic.

- ❑ **Do our videos include relevant 'tags'?**
 - Include topic-relevant 'tags' on all videos to help YouTube rank your content and help users find you!
- ❑ **Are we using custom video thumbnails?**
 - Use a tool like [Canva](#) to customize your video thumbnails and give viewers a clear idea of what your video is really about. If you can't make custom thumbnails, do your best to include a backdrop or something similar to give your channel a professional, consistent look.
- ❑ **Are we using YouTube annotations and cards?**
 - After users have watched your video, ask them to take action by clicking a link to your site, sharing the video with friends, or watching another related video from your organization. Adding annotations will help you mobilize an already-captivated audience. Be sure to also include a link back to your site in the video description to increase linkbacks.
- ❑ **Are we engaging with our audience?**
 - Be sure to monitor your account and respond to any questions and comments users leave on your videos or channel. Also, be sure to subscribe to similar channels- this helps YouTube understand what circle your channel is running in.
- ❑ **Who is our target and are we reaching them?**
 - Dive into Youtube Analytics to understand who is watching and engaging with your content.

Instagram

Number of monthly users: **600 million**

Created to share Insta-worthy images, an Instagram account lets your organization reach its audience in a visually focused way. It allows for a behind-the-scenes look at your organization, its events, and day-to-day life in the office. It also allows your nonprofit the opportunity to get creative with storytelling.

There is more flexibility with Instagram as a social media platform (the messaging can be more inspirational and less factually driven), and content should be varied. Use Instagram to share event promos and photos, pics of your staff and volunteers working hands-on with your cause, and images that embody the spirit of your mission. Basically, Instagram is a place for your nonprofit to get fun and creative, so go for it!

Instagram: Best Practices Checklist

- Are we showing our organization's personality?**
 - This is one platform where you can really promote your own brand without having to mix in others' content. Take this chance to shine! Share an awesome image of a project your organization is working on. Give followers a sneak peek into your organization's office by sharing a coworker's really cool desk. Take shots of a gorgeous day in the city you're located in. Get people to feel passionate about what you're doing by sharing a "photo quote" that inspires your team.
- Are we registered as a business?**
 - In order to get user demographics and more in-depth analytics, consider converting your account into a business profile. [Instructions here.](#)
- Is our bio optimized?**
 - Include keywords and hashtags in your bio to make your page easier for fans to find. Don't forget to include a link to your site.
- Are we posting consistently?**
 - Posting on Instagram at least two times a week will keep your feed fresh. But, as always, test! See how your followers respond to more or less frequent posting.
- Are we engaging with our audience?**
 - Be sure to 'like' and reply to comments on your posts to keep your audience engaged.
- Are we reaching out to others?**
 - Tag relevant accounts and people who are in your photos and videos with an "@" to ensure they see your post.
- Are we tracking similar organizations?**
 - Use the "explore" tab to see what other people in your area of interest are posting about and what hashtags they are using. This will help you get ideas for content and add more relevant hashtags to your posts.
- Are we using relevant hashtags?**
 - Hashtags are a great way to launch small campaigns and encourage followers to use a specific hashtag to raise awareness. It can also help new followers to find you. Best practices recommend using 1-3 hashtags in the caption, and commenting on your photo with more. This way, you allow Instagram to properly index your post and draw users to your photo, but you don't distract from the story you are telling in the post with cluttered hashtags. Use [Hashtagify.me](#) to get ideas!
- Are we using geotags?**
 - Tag a location for each photo. This will further help Instagram index your account, and it will help users searching near that location to find your profile.
- Are we experimenting with videos and boomerangs?**
 - Images tend to perform better on Instagram, but try sharing videos and 'boomerangs' and see what your audience responds to.
- Are we experimenting with Instagram Stories?**

- Instagram's 'Stories' feature launched in August 2016 and, while not immediately welcomed, has proven to be a valuable asset for organizations. Stories live at the top of a user's feed, so sharing stories can help you reach users even if your posts typically get buried on their feed due to Instagram's algorithm. Stories also let you to link back to your site if your account is verified- a huge win considering Instagram doesn't allow for hyperlinks in normal posts.
- ☐ **Are we optimizing our content?**
 - Keep track of what kinds of content users engage with most using Instagram Analytics. Do they like photos more often than videos? Do videos get significantly more views than photos get likes? Do they like posts about news or events or another topic? Keep these patterns in mind when creating new content.

Writing Social Media Content

You know by now that every platform is different, so your organization's approach should be tailored to whichever platform it is on. However, there are a few universal truths that hold up from platform to platform. In this section of the guide we'll dive into writing great content for social media- no matter which platform your nonprofit is on.

Social Media Writing Tips

Your organization's social media channels are an opportunity to speak to followers in a more informal, friendly manner while still maintaining a reputable presence. In order to convey this, here are several writing best practices:

- Use first-person writing throughout channels.
- On Twitter, refrain from starting tweets with hashtags or handles, unless specifically responding to someone. If you want this tweet to be seen by your entire network, rather than just that person, use a period before the person's Twitter handle.
- Abbreviate as infrequently as possible. When necessary, use common abbreviations.
- Keep Facebook posts short, averaging no more than 3-5 sentences per post.
- If including a call to action, make it clear and easy for people to understand.
- Add your logo to original image assets, such as infographics or quotes. That way, as people share, retweet, and regram your content, it's still clear where the piece is originally from — and will encourage new followers to come onboard.

Using Hashtags, Sharing Others' Content, Mentioning Specific Organizations/People

Using hashtags, sharing relevant content, and mentioning specific people or organizations are ways to become involved in larger conversations on social media channels. Here are some guidelines for using these tools:

- Use hashtags for common phrases that your organization works in (#breastcancer, #science, #poverty).
- Refrain from hashtagging #every #single #word — use three hashtags maximum for Twitter; no more than eight on Instagram (add at the end of the text, or in a comment, to keep things clean).
- When sharing another organization or person's content, be sure to give credit by using @TheirName on Facebook and @TheirHandle on Twitter.
- When retweeting content, try to add value instead of simply retweeting with no comments added. Simply adding a quick line engages followers more than just pumping out borrowed content ("Great article," "Really useful tips").
- When appropriate, thank followers who have retweeted or shared your content. Engaging directly with users makes them feel appreciated and more likely to engage with your brand again.

Responding to Comments, Messages, and Tweets

Because social media is a conversation, your organization is expected to respond at times. These are guidelines for responding to comments and tweets directed at your organization.

- In general, if a positive comment is made on a Facebook post, “like” it. People love being heard and acknowledged!
- If an individual or organization shares your content on Facebook or writes something and references the organization, a quick “Thank you for supporting us!” comment is a clear way to show acknowledgement.
- If someone has shared a personal story, it’s nice to thank him or her for sharing.
- If someone sends your organization a private Facebook message that is not spam, they should receive an answer. If it is something the organization can’t answer, such as medical advice, they should receive a standard answer about contacting a doctor. When possible, direct these people to appropriate resources to answer their question.

Dealing with #Haters

People following your organization on social media aren’t always friendly supporters. When comments on Facebook are negative, these are best practices to follow:

- If the comment is harmless but just nasty, leave it up; usually, the conversation won’t go any farther or other supporters will police. You don’t want to engage by replying.
- Use other ways to address common misconceptions. Do you receive many questions about how your organization spends its dollars? Try adding a small efficiency statement somewhere on your Facebook page.
- If a comment spreads misinformation (such as medical advice), leave it up and respond with a standard response from your Communications team.
- You may want to create standard answers for your most frequent questions to make responses more consistent and to save time. Consider posting these as an FAQ section on your social media accounts or your website.
- After an FAQ is established, it’s at the manager’s discretion whether to remove comments. Generally you will want to remove comments that are rude, nasty to other followers, or unrelated to the topic at hand . You may want to create a statement about your removal policy and post it on your social media accounts to maintain transparency. This allows your page to remain a respectful, supportive community, while providing a warning to followers ahead of time.

Growing Your Social Media Following

Your best social media posts are only valuable if people see them. This section of the guide dives into tips on growing your social media audience.

Growing your Social Media Following

- Are we cross-promote our profiles?**
 - Include calls to action on your email signup “thank you” pages, in your “welcome” emails, in the “P.S.” section of emails, and at the bottom of every blog post. Ask your Facebook users to follow you on Instagram, or tweet a link to your Youtube channel asking people to subscribe. The more your accounts are seen, the more chances you have of attracting new followers.
- Do we have social buttons on our site?**
 - Add “like,” “tweet,” “follow,” or “subscribe” buttons to your website to allow visitors to immediately follow all your accounts without leaving the page. You can even install a page badge to share your Facebook page on your website and affiliated blogs: unlike widgets, badges are simply images and will load much faster. But be careful: this design can appear junky depending on the layout.
- Are we building partnerships?**
 - Build partnerships by actively commenting and liking posts from related organizations to increase the exposure of your own handle. Repost their content when applicable.
- Are we activating our fans and ambassadors?**
 - People are often more likely to interact with and trust a human than a brand. Ask staff members to follow your social media pages, invite their friends to follow, and to like, comment, and share your recent posts. Don’t forget to have all employees include your social media handles in their email signatures and social media bios.
- Are we using incentives?**
 - Create incentives for following your account, such as requiring people to follow all of your social media accounts to be considered in a contest or to get facetime with a speaker at an event. There are platforms and tools that allow you to run giveaways and contests through social media to build your followers.
- Do we have po-pups on our site?**
 - You already use pop-ups to drive emails (right?), so why not try using popups to drive followers. Here are more [tips on using pop-ups](#).
- Are we using our AdWords grant?**
 - Create campaigns to direct traffic to pages with clear social media related calls to action. Here’s more information on how to get (and optimize) the [AdWords Grant](#).

Helpful Social Media Tools

There are several tools that can make your social media experience easier and more streamlined. Here are some of our favorites.

Facebook Page Insights

Though Facebook produces it, the Page Insights tools are robust and offer plenty of useful information. You can find out what types of posts are performing well, what time your followers are most engaged, compare specific time periods, and even allow you to compare your growth with similar organizations. Take the time to explore and learn from Insights. For a quick beginner's guide on Insights, this one by [KISSmetrics](#) is helpful.

Twitter Analytics

Twitter Analytics is a great place to get an at-a-glance idea of how your account is performing. Twitter Analytics highlights your top posts, audience growth trends, and the interests and demographics of your following. The analytics tool also showcases your most influential followers, which can help you identify big players that your organization should be paying attention to. To get started, check out our [beginner's guide](#) to Twitter Analytics.

Hootsuite

[Hootsuite](#) is a web-based program that makes it easy to get the most out of Twitter and other social media platforms. In addition to making scheduling tweets (and Facebook posts) in advance, Hootsuite also makes it easy to add different streams to view at a glance. Is there a particular phrase that your organization likes to monitor, such as "childhood leukemia"? You can create a stream that will show all its mentions. You can also stream your own Twitter lists, making it easier to see what influencers in your field are talking about. Additionally, you can monitor more than one account at the same time.

Canva

Canva is a free online platform that allows you to make professional quality images. It's an easy way to make infographics, quote posts, or just add effects like text to images already in your arsenal without pricey products like the Adobe Suite. You can also create Facebook cover photos here.

For more tips and tricks on social media and all things digital, check out the resources at [Whole Whale](#).

So, is it worth it?

Understanding your organization's social media ROI is necessary to ensure that social media is worth the time and resources that you're contributing to it. Knowing the return will also help you understand what is (and isn't) working. You can understand what platforms are better options for you, what content works well, the value of getting social users onto your site, and where you can improve or expand. It's also helpful when you're trying to prove to supervisors or donors that all your tweeting is really worth it.

In order to get an accurate idea of the ROI of your organization's social media, you'll need to measure those goals we set earlier on, compare to benchmarks, and draw conclusions.

Measure Goals

So you set your digital goals, created goals in Google Analytics, and you're tracking how many of the users that come to your site from your now-optimized social accounts are converting and completing goals. Great start, but we can't just leave it at that, because that probably wouldn't give your social media platforms enough credit.

Consider this example. A teen sees a Power Poetry tweet that includes a link to Power Poetry's site. They click through to see what it's all about and spend a couple minutes on the site. The next night they remember Power Poetry and decide they want to sign up. They search 'Power Poetry' in Google, get to the site, and become a member (convert). In Google Analytics, 'Organic Search' will get the credit for that goal completion, even though Twitter played a huge role in getting that user to convert. And if this happens hundreds of times, your Twitter account is going to be cheated out of a whole lot of credit.

That's where assisted conversions come in. Google Analytics' assisted conversions track user behavior over time so that you can understand all of a user's interactions with your site leading up to their conversion. This helps distribute credit to platforms and channels more accurately. We break down how to use assisted conversions for you [here](#).

Benchmarks

This is a question we get all the time: "What are industry standards and benchmarks for this metric?" We've researched and dug through industry reports and have come with some (varying) numbers, but the reality of it is that the best benchmarks to refer to are your own. Look at your data, compare performance to past performance, and use that as an indication of success.

For example, if your average CTR is 11% and your most recent ads have only 5%, you'd know that something is probably wrong and you can improve somewhere. But if you refer to industry standards that tell you the average CTR for a nonprofit of your size is 3%, then your ads will appear to be over-performing. If you're just starting out, go ahead and reference those industry reports for perspective, but don't let them be the marker of your success. Looking at your own data will always give you the best insights.

Draw Conclusions

Once you're measuring your data and comparing it to benchmarks, it's time to take action. You can bring this data to the table whenever someone at your company questions the amount of time and effort spent on social media. Or, what if you notice that a new social media platform isn't actually helping you move toward your mission? If social media becomes a timesuck, the data can help you ditch it despite pressure to have a presence there.

Finding the ROI of your social media efforts doesn't happen overnight, but once you identify the role you want social media to play, you'll be able to use the data to prove its value.

More Resources!

Social media is always changing, so the learning never really starts. Luckily, we're constantly updating our resource library to help keep your nonprofit up to date.

Facebook

- [Using the Facebook Donate button](#)
- [Using Facebook Insights](#)
- [Intro to Facebook Advertising](#)

Instagram

- [Instagram Stories for Nonprofits](#)
- [Advertising on Instagram](#)

YouTube

- [Using YouTube Analytics](#)
- [Creating Nonprofit Videos](#)
- [Promoting YouTube Videos](#)

Twitter

- [A Beginner's Guide to Twitter Analytics](#)
- [19+ Nonprofits to Follow On Twitter for Inspiration](#)
- [9 Most Common Twitter Questions](#)

Social Strategy

- [23 Ideas for Social Media Posts](#)
- [Creating and Optimizing Social Media Images](#)

To get all our best insights, take our Whole Whale University Course on social media strategy for nonprofits. Use coupon code **GURU50** to get the course 50% off! Then, head over to our [resource library](#) to stay up to date on all things social media and digital communications.