



# Turning Minds Social Media Starter Guide



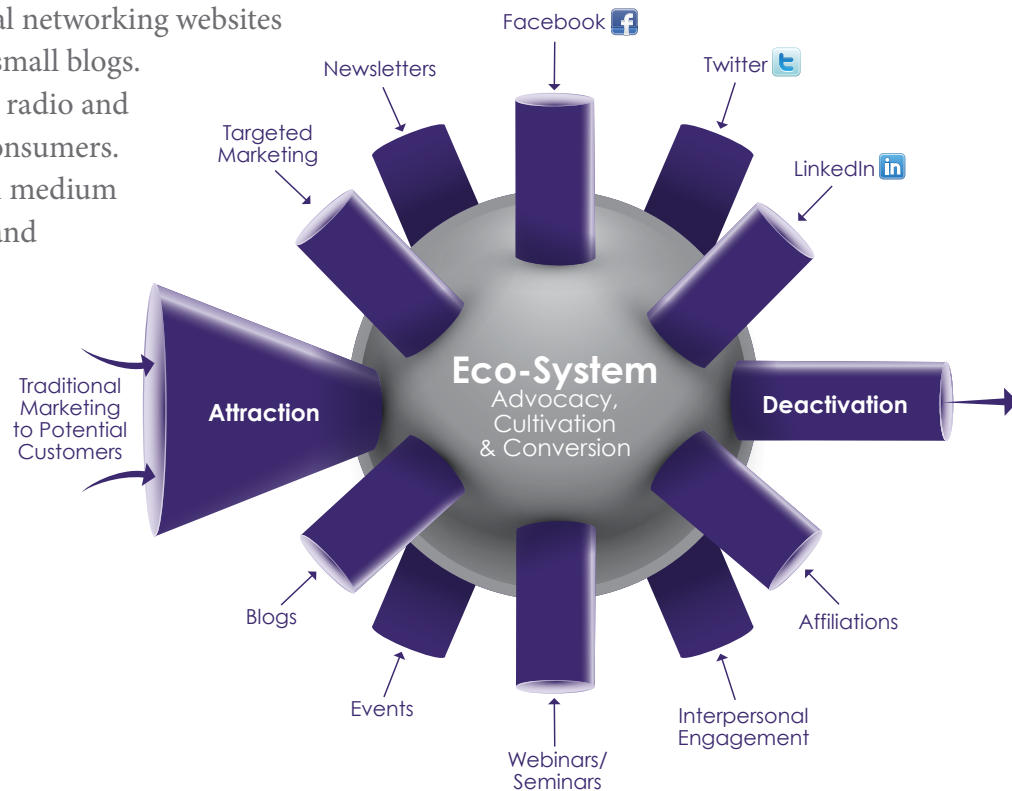
# What is Social Media Anyway?

Welcome to the fast-moving, fast-changing world of social media. Its no surprise “social media” is a misunderstood term. “Media” indicates a a marketing channel in which a company can send its message to a known audience. “Social” implies people interacting: collaborating, talking, sharing, recommending, and communicating with others online.

Social media is made up of popular user-driven social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and both large and small blogs. Advertiser-based media like newspapers, magazines, radio and television that are focused on pushing messages at consumers. Social media is primarily a two-way customer driven medium where the emphasis is in conversation flowing back and forth between individuals.

Social media lets you personally connect with individual customers. It lets you build trust, credibility, and authority with individual customers and prospects – when you talk about things important or relevant to them.

If traditional advertising and marketing helps you create awareness and interest, social media lets you know who’s interested, what they care about, and how to be a part of the conversations they are having, starting and joining.



# Social Media Benefits



## Improved Visibility:

The more networks you use the more it increases your online presence and widens your net to reach new prospects and customers.



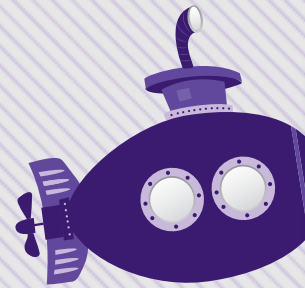
## Known and Liked:

Every tweet, status update, blog post and comment attracts attention and fosters more communication amongst peers and followers creating a sense of getting to know you over time.



## Being Found:

Not only will you have a wide net cast across the web, but your activity in social media is often placed in real-time search improving your performance on search engines.



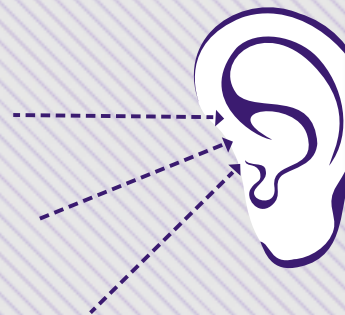
## Add Depth:

Leverage social media to scale your brand to new heights by adding more depth and substance through relevant messages and comments that resonate with people in-the-moment.



## Rapid Connections:

People engaged in social media are often more accessible and easier to connect with. Open communications with a new contact are often just a message away.



## Guide and Encourage:

Monitor, listen and hear what's being said about your brand and products or services and offer public feedback on problems and issues to help customers and would be customers.



# Seeing the Bigger Picture

While tight groups and conversations will form on individual social networks, many businesses use social media to drive their overall online presence—effectively making social media a dynamic and integral spoke in the marketing wheel with the website focused at the center.

Social media is a link in the chain, not a silver bullet.

Social media efforts typically follow the same pattern: Create, Share, Attract and Connect. This is a two way street. You're either creating interesting content or sharing interesting content. You're attracting people and connecting with people. That's how it works.

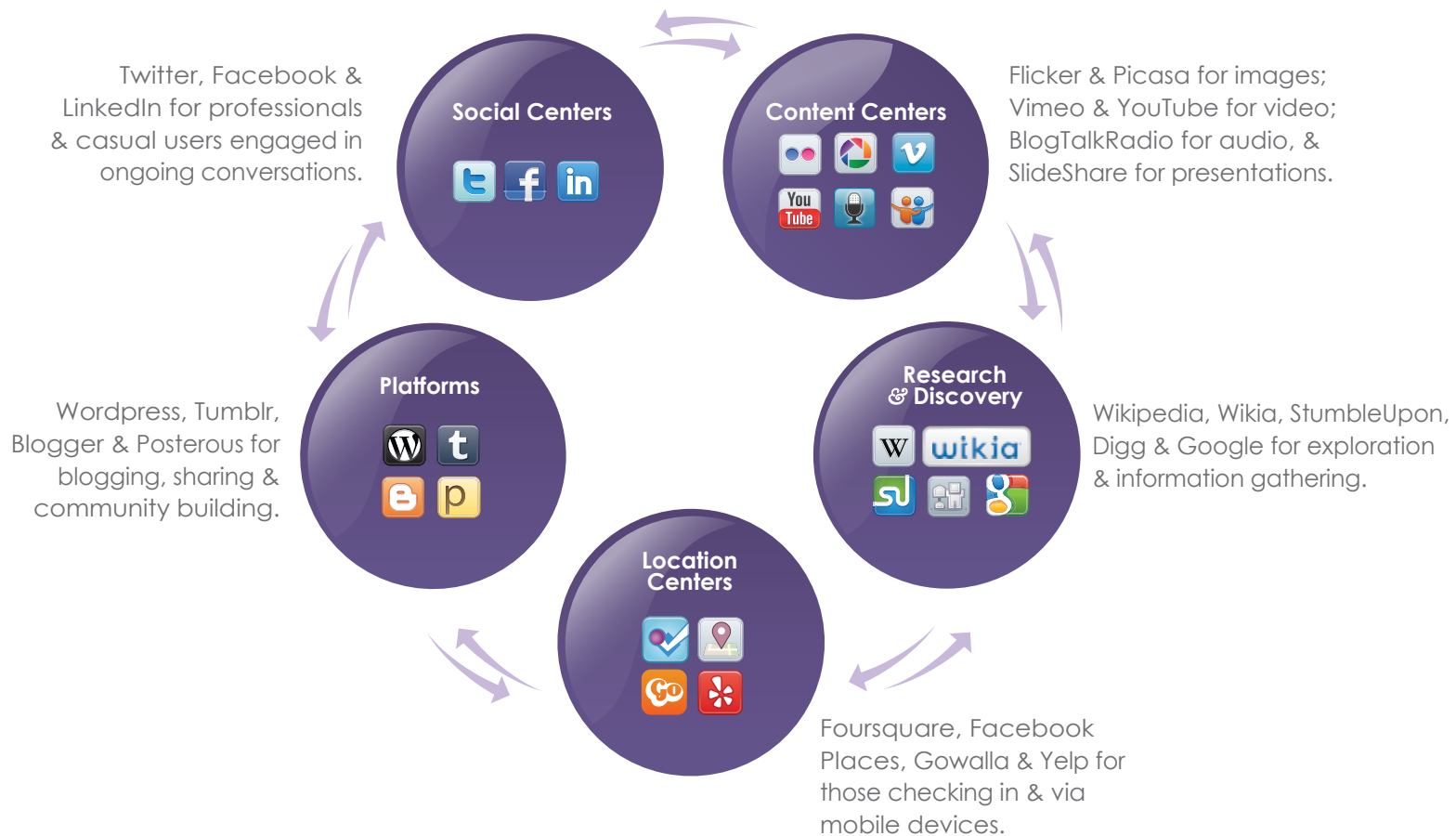
Since all social networking sites have an area for a brief bio (about you or your business) and a link to your website, you'll be creating interest in you or your brand and many people will visit the website you have linked in the bio area. This is one of the best ways to drive traffic to your website and convert them into a follower, friend, sales lead or repeat visitor.

Social media allows you to create relationships, share with others, cultivate advocates and drive engagement with you, your brand and business.









# Social Media Landscape

Social media is not a one size fits all service. While sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are popular and you've probably heard of them before, there are many social networks and social tools that are critical to your social media success and it's important to know how various sites serve different needs and users.



# Leveraging Social Media for Business Success

The following grid will help you understand the most basic aspects of the six most popular social media sites available and why they are valuable to you, your brand and your business. This is a baseline for understanding, but each individual may have different results or unique advantages this grid doesn't consider or account for. So please, use it as a guide, but be open to the possibility of creating your own unique outcomes according to your usage and strategies.

	Good For Branding/Messaging	Encourages Conversation	Validates or Creates Authority	Fosters Unique Content	Drives Traffic to Your Site	Helps Your SEO	Easy To Share
 Facebook	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	No	Yes
 Twitter	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Yes
 YouTube	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
 LinkedIn	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	No
 FourSquare	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
 Blogs	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe



# Using Social Media



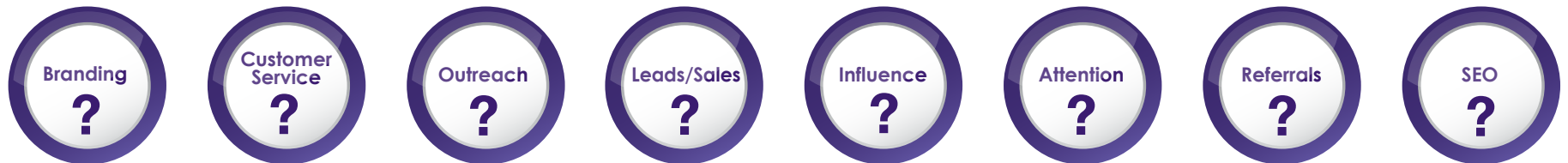
## Strategy & Purpose

Diving into social media head first is probably not the best way to get started, but many do it this way. We always recommend that you take some time to think about what you want to accomplish with your online presence and social media activities. Are you trying to get closer to customers or prospects? Are you trying to increase your customer service, reduce your negative comments, or enable positive word-of-mouth? Are you trying to get share of mind and create authority within your marketplace? Are you looking to connect with peers, leaders, or influencers? Do you need to do several of these at one time?

Having this understanding can help you calculate resources, plan your usage, and why you are investing in these new marketing channels. Decide what you want to happen and how the various social networks can help you with those objectives.

We often help companies develop this clarity, create action plans as well as the required content and resources. A little time spent here can have long term benefits.

### What Are You Trying To Accomplish?



# Using Social Media

## Part Two

### Social Media Accounts & Getting Started

By now, you understand how social media works, how it connects your online presence and the unique ways to leverage the most popular social media websites. You've taken the time to think about what your business and brand needs to accomplish via social media—all that's left is setting up the accounts and beginning to use them.

As you do this, be sure to use a username that can be continued across all networks for consistency. Also, whenever possible, use a compelling picture of you or your company and always complete your bio information with links to your website.

And remember, baby steps are okay. Setting up one or two social networks and growing is better than spreading too thin and poorly executing across multiple networks.



### Friends, Followers & Connections

As you setup these accounts, they will allow you to connect to your address books, email accounts, and other social networks to find people you know that may already be on the network you are creating an account for. Take advantage of this, it will accelerate your initial connections, friends and followers.

Review your personal and professional connections as well. You might be surprised to find many in your offline network are already online.

Once your initial connections are in place, new acquaintances offline should become online connections, too. Always dedicate a little time to create new connections to grow your network. This is where friends, customers, and vendors are made and it usually starts with a general introduction and interest in the other person.



### Consistency, Participation & Valuable Content

Social media requires an ongoing and persistent interest in your network. This requires a mix of sharing interesting content that is relevant to those in your network as well as spotting others comments and joining in their discussions and spreading their message. Get noticed by being involved with someone else rather than expecting them to get involved with you.

Try to maintain a consistent presence and follow-up routine so you do not go cold and have starts and stops that prevent the momentum of the relationship and continued interest in you or your brand.

Limit the outright promotion and heavy advertising messages—if you do this frequently you will be seen as a spammer more so than a connection.



# Simple Guides & Best Practices

## 1. Keep it Social

Be likeable and make sure you create opportunities to have a conversation, not just blasting messages out.

## 2. Keep it Clean

Always be polite, nice, and optimistic. Negativity and spiteful messages won't position your brand well nor will they create positive momentum.

## 3. Listen

Be sure to listen to your network and monitor things being said about you and your brand as well as things in the areas you serve. Social media makes it easy to listen in and sometimes just being aware of the conversation makes the difference.

## 4. Be Creative

So much of this relies on a unique voice and perspective. Creating interesting content around your business and sharing interesting content will make sure you don't blend in and look like everyone else.

## 5. Give Value

Avoid temptation to just talk about yourself or your business. Share and talk about things your audience will find valuable. Sometimes that's a news story or video, but remember it's not always about you.

## 6. Encourage Others

You may not be able to learn about everyone, but always encourage correspondence. If you see someone reaching out, share advice and connect—it's just the right thing to do.

## 7. Stay on Track

Leave room for spontaneity, but remember what you set out to do for your business within your social network. Keep consistent and keep moving toward your goal.

## 8. Keep it Moving

Make sure you are updating your messages and content on a consistent and frequent schedule. Don't let days, weeks, or months pass by without a word to your fans and followers.

# Here To Help

Turning Minds doesn't think every company should be on Facebook or Twitter. We're concerned with your goals. If social media will help you reach those goals, we'll help you make it happen.

We help companies like yours drive sales, leads, awareness and deepened relationships with your current and future customers. We'll help you figure out how social networks, websites, and external communications can grow your business.

My name's Justin McCullough. We're here to help. If you've found this Social Media Starter Guide useful, you'll love the way we put these ideas into action, and help you structure your efforts. Are you ready to get started with social media, or even to re-consider your other marketing and business development programs? Call Turning Minds at 409-550-6681.



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# Hire Us

## Scout Plan

Need help figuring out what your marketing and communications goals are and which social networks are best for those goals?

Turning Minds will help you identify a plan of action, your primary and secondary social media channels, and recommend how to leverage those channels for your success.

## Content Plan

Do you have current content? Unsure how to structure or share it online? Do you need to develop new content to use within your social networks and online marketing? Turning Minds will customize an editorial plan that indicates the types of messages you'll use to seed conversations, the content you'll need for those messages, and your overall outreach plan over the months ahead. We'll also be on standby to help coach you through the delivery of content and using the social networks that are right for your goals.

## Total Care Plan

Would you rather just be hands-off on with your social media and leave it to the pros? Turning Minds can combine both the Scout and Content Plans, along with a unique assessment of your marketing challenges and utilization of online tools to drive your social media efforts for you. This is an annual service that can be adapted monthly, based on your business needs and goals.



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