

Social Media Overview – Poole Business Women's Lunch Club

All statistics are from either the sites themselves, [Nielsen](#) reports or [Alexa](#) web rankings.

Facebook

Overview

The world's most popular social networking site. The second most visited site on the internet (after Google), with a daily reach of 30% of global internet users. Connect with friends, share photos, videos, web-links, play games, arrange events, create and join groups of interest.

User Information

Originally college students in the US, it has largely reached saturation in this age range and the fastest growing age group is 40+ women.

Business Use

Largely a social network, with limited business to business communication. Most useful to business to consumer organisations. The most successful uses of Facebook are where a community has been created in a group (aka a "fan" page) and not where interruptive sales messages are used.

It is important to sign up as an individual and then create a business page. Pages have a number of advantages over groups: easier integration with other internet pages, the administrator is not publicly visible (allowing you to separate business/personal life to a degree) and pages are visible by anyone on the internet – unlike groups or personal profiles which can only be viewed by a member of Facebook.

Other Notes

Facebook has recently changed the privacy settings, it is worth taking some time to look at them, to control what content is visible by whom.

Top Tips

Set friendly URLs (pagenames), ie: facebook.com/yourbusiness at <http://www.facebook.com/username> – Works for personal profiles and pages (once you have 25+ fans), easier to remember and link to from email footers etc.

Always remember WIIFM – what's in it for me? From the point of view of why should somebody on Facebook connect with your business.

LinkedIn

Overview

The most popular business social network. LinkedIn gains one new member every second, with 50 million members worldwide. Connect to other business users, create a profile for yourself and company, participate in the Q&A section by sector, join and create groups of interest.

User Information

The average age of a user is 41 with a salary of \$110,000. Most companies are represented at decision maker level (CEO, CFO etc).

Business Use

Useful to all kinds and sizes of business. Connect to people you have had some

communication with already, former colleagues, classmates, suppliers, peers, customers etc. Maintain ties with people easier and more effectively. Discover and get introduced to new business connections.

Other Notes

Effective as a platform, once your network is large enough (100+). Search results contain your network and extended network as well as members of any groups you have joined.

Additional functions can be purchased for a monthly subscription including "InMails", allowing you to contact people outside your network, advanced notification features for search results, adding notes to contact records (thereby using LinkedIn as an advanced contact manager) and other functions.

Top Tips

Make sure you have a photo, profiles with photos always stand out above those that don't (the majority). On the "edit my profile" page, set a compelling headline that describes what you do in a few words. By default this is set to your most recent job title.

Twitter

Overview

A micro-blogging service and social network of sorts. Different to other tools, in that the relationship does not have to be reciprocal: "Follow" people (or organisations) whose updates you are interested in and if they are interested in what you have to say, they may follow back. Near real-time transfer of information ensures "interesting" or notable content goes viral very quickly.

User Information

Largest age group is 35-49 with more women than men.

Business Use

Main uses are transfer of information, be that popular culture, industry news or events – as such there are a large number of journalists, bloggers, PR and other opinion makers on twitter.

Also useful as a customer service mechanism. Search results can be used as a form of brand monitoring.

Other Notes

The twitter platform is one of the most open for external development, so a large number of additional services adding functionality are available.

Top Tips

Set up lists that are the most important accounts you follow, this way if you have less time, you can look at a subset of twitter messages.

For advanced searching use search.twitter.com this allows you to do location based "near:london" and other more specific searches.

Other notable sites.

MySpace

Until 2008 the largest "social" network, average consumers have declined noticeably and migrated to Facebook but it is still the primary web resource for musicians, bands, artists and other creative types, thanks largely to the user pages being very customisable. Effective to target musicians and creative individuals or to brand a business in that sector.

Bebo

A much younger social network, with a larger share of the 13-24 bracket than Facebook. Extra care should be taken if marketing to this group, so as to match the tone and style of the site. Fairly customisable and with a large gaming/fun element.

YouTube

With the second highest volume of search queries next to google, anything and everything is available on this online video resource. There is also a large community of video bloggers and connections can be made between profiles/users.

For daily tips on smart email management you can follow Monica on Twitter as [the email doctor](#) and/or link to her on [LinkedIn](#). Luke frequently updates both his blog <http://www.socialtech.biz/> and twitter account ([socialtech](#)) with useful information to help you to get more from the social web.