

Nine habits you need for social media success



By [Amanda Patterson](#)

28 Jan 2016

If you are trying to create more awareness for yourself, your product, or your business, you should be creating an online presence. Many people try and then give up. The reasons vary, but most involve forgetting that being online is not about being remote. Social media requires you to be social, which means you have to be present. It is also hard work and requires discipline.



Sometimes, we fall into bad habits or negative ways of thinking about starting something new and social media is a scary place for many people. We do not like change, and social media requires [change](#) at a pace that seems inconceivable to somebody who had a job before cell phones were invented.

Once we get over the fact that we have to grow and change, we need a new mindset and new habits that will allow us to succeed in this media. Here are nine useful behaviours that will help you.

1. Have a plan. This includes a goal for your online presence, as well as having a reason for everything you post. For example, we share three main types of posts at Writers Write, and all three relate to what we are about - writing. We aim to inspire with writing quotations and literary trivia. We aim to educate with articles on writing. We aim to entertain with daily writing cartoons and comics.

2. Do it yourself. Do not completely automate your posts. Social media is about being there. You need to track people's

reactions and answer their questions if they have any. It also helps if you can see the mood and tone of that day on social media. It is a bit like the weather. It is changeable.

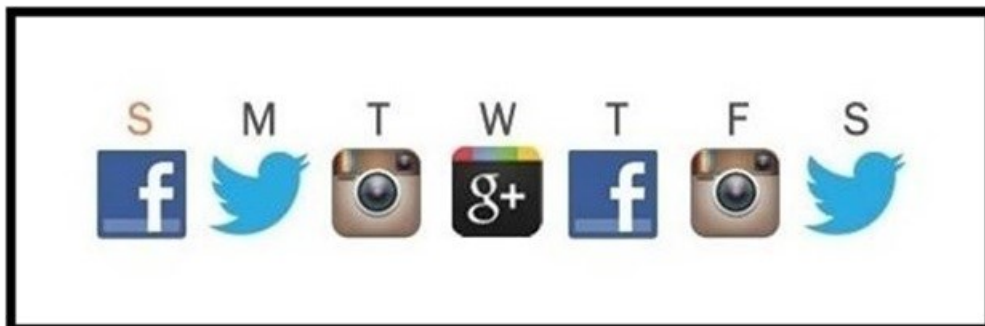
3. Make time. Many business owners convince themselves that social media is a waste of time. This is because they expect immediate, spectacular results. It comes as a shock for some who believed that the Internet was just waiting for them to show up. Setting yourself or your company up online requires an entrepreneurial spirit. Ask these business owners how hard they have to work to succeed.

4. Start. Do not overthink everything. If you do, you will never begin. It is better to make some mistakes than not to try at all.

5. Learn the basics. It does not take too much time to learn the rules and the [etiquette](#) of each of the sites you choose. Do not annoy other people with your behaviour. Be courteous and thoughtful. Being online does not give you the right to behave badly. (Read our [Social Media 101 Series](#) to learn about the different platforms.)

6. Engage before you sell. Social media is not a sales platform. It is there to make others aware of who you are and what you do. You have to offer people value before they trust you enough to buy anything from you. Spend the first few months building up your profile without selling. [Create content](#). Write posts on your blog filled with useful tips and interesting articles and share these on your platforms. Once you have done this, a good rule of thumb is to offer at least five posts that add to your followers' lives before you ask them for anything.

7. Be present. If you want others to take you seriously, [show up](#) every day. Take weekends off if you want, but show up and add value on the other days. It is even worse if you open social media accounts and then abandon them. Have you visited a company's page only to see that the last post was 10 months ago? People will not take you seriously if you do this.



8. Be mindful. Do not bombard people with invitations, offers, events, reviews, and accolades. You will become annoying and they will stop following you. Do not boast about your accomplishments, your productivity, your beautiful city, your beautiful weather, and your possessions. This is more obvious online than it is in real life - everything that you put in writing is. It also makes you look insecure and desperate.

9. Schedule your posts. If you understand your brand and your goals, you should be able to [plan your posts](#) a week, or even a month ahead. Create a social media calendar so that you know what you have to do each day.

If you work on these habits, and if you embrace the challenges, you will establish credibility and create a [following](#).

If you want to learn how to blog and write for social media, join us for [The Complete Blogging and Social Media Course](#). Please send an email to news@writerswrite.co.za for details.

ABOUT AMANDA PATTERSON

Amanda is the founder of Writers Write. She creates business and creative writing courses. She has a social media following of more than 300 000 fans.

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