



**DOWNTOWN**  
**LONDON**  
Social Media Handbook



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01.

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# The Importance of Digital Marketing.

Times have changed.

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The Internet and social media are now a huge part of daily life for most Canadians. Checking social media accounts while eating breakfast, on break at work, or before bed has become routine for many.

Gone are the days a consumer looks for people and places in a phone book. Consumers Google stores and services, read online reviews about restaurants before visiting, and posts they engage with on social media influence their decisions.

An active digital presence will introduce new customers to your business and will allow you to connect with pre-existing customers.

Many of you may be thinking, “We already know that social media and the Internet is important to business”, but do you know how to maximize the benefits of your social media accounts and how use them to establish your business as a destination of choice?

Anyone can create social media accounts and post. Posting randomly simply to have a social media presence does not ensure sales or convert followers into champions for your business.

The real magic happens when you follow a strategy, establish a brand, and use social media as a tool for storytelling.

# “Active Digital Presence is Key.”

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## Ask Yourself These Questions First.

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Before you begin to develop your social media strategy, you need a solid understanding of what you want to accomplish. Ask yourself: What are you trying to accomplish? Do you want to increase sales? Improve your brand recognition? Build a positive reputation? Attract more customers?

Once you know the answers to these questions, it's time to decide whom you are trying to reach with your messages.

Your target market is a very specific audience that you want to engage with. If you operate a ladies fashion boutique, your target audience might be women aged 30-50 with high disposable income that are required to dress business casual most days of the week because of their chosen profession.

The more specific you can make your target audience, the more effective your marketing will be.

**Take time to conduct market research so that you can identify:**

- Who makes up your target audience?
- Where can you find these people?
- What do they value?
- What are they worried about/what problems do they have?  
(problems that you can help them solve)
- What do they need right now?



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## Let's Talk About Messaging.

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Once you have established the answers to these questions, gear all of your messaging to them. Identifying the worries or problems of your target audience allows you to find matching solutions and promote these solutions to them.

Filling a need or providing a solution to a problem that your target audience has is essential and will help you to achieve success.

## Start With Why

Think about why you started your business. Beyond making a profit, what pushed you to open your specific business? What are you passionate about? What is your dream? How do you want to inspire your clients?

Keep these answers in mind every time you write a caption for a social media post or run a special promotion. This is what your business is all about and will encourage buy-in from potential clients.

Show them that you have passion and that your business is for more than making money.

Show them how you want to improve their life or make an impact in the world. For example, the brand Aerie not only sells women's lingerie and sleepwear, they work towards increasing body positivity and raising the self-esteem of their clients. Their messaging shows that they care about their clients and want them to be comfortable in their own skin. You can buy pajamas just about anywhere...but not every business is helping you to raise your self-esteem and showing you that every body is perfect.



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## Show, Don't Tell.

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Many businesses make the mistake of using social media simply to tell followers to drop by. Although this might entice some consumers, it is not the most effective means to attracting visitors.

Showing followers what to expect when they visit your business, showcasing what makes you unique, and telling the stories about the people who bring your business to life is much more effective.

People want to know why they should visit you and what makes you unique. They want to see the personalities behind the people they will meet when they walk in the door and how your product or service is going to improve their life.

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# Experiences Over Everything.

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In the past, it may have been enough to carry an awesome inventory in your business. That alone may have drawn in a large amount of clients, but the world is evolving, customers have more options from which they can choose and in order to set yourself apart, you have to go the extra mile.

Right now, many small businesses are finding it very effective to offer more than just a retail line... they also offer an experience. This could be anything from a cooking class, workshop, fashion show, pop-up vendors inside your business on special occasions, live music, or selfie opportunities. The sky is truly the limit!

Not only do these experiences give people another reason to walk through your door, it gives you the opportunity to set yourself apart and provide something that the consumer cannot get at the mall or big box stores.



06.

Sunny Side Up  
Breakfast Scone

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## Best Practices.

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### Gear Your Content to the Platform

- Facebook is ideal for events, promotions, and sharing stories
- Twitter is ideal for quick updates and is news based
- Instagram is ideal for high quality photos and showcasing experiences

### Be Responsive

- Answer all direct messages
- Respond to comments
- Interact with other accounts – like, comment, share, help promote your neighbours and other businesses that you admire and with whom you align

### How To Make Social Media Management Less Time-Consuming

- Use Content Calendars
- Content Batching
- Scheduling Tools
- Connect Your Channels for Cross-Posting

## Hashtags & Tagging

- #GetDTL
- #LdnOnt
- #LdnGem
- #FanshaweCollege and #WesternUniversity
- #LdnEnt (especially for posts related to unique in-store performances)
- Create your own hashtag specific to your brand and encourage customers to use it to showcase their purchases/experiences, and to participate in any promotions you are running
- Tag @Downtown London & @Tourism London

## Posting Best Practices

- Post at least once a day
- Use apps such as “WhenToPost” to determine best time of day to post for your followers
- High Quality Content – Quality over Quantity
- Keep Tone Consistent
- Limit Promotional “buy me!” posts – focus on storytelling
- Give followers the opportunity to engage with your posts. Ask them questions!
- Refer to online sites like Pinterest to review infographics and advisory memes that summarize social media strategies, posting tips, calendars and more





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## Content Ideas

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Having a wide range of content is key to success. It keeps people engaged and interested in your messaging and ensures that they don't get fatigued from hearing the same message over and over again. Below are some great ideas for content:

- People Behind the Business
- New Products/Services
- Showcase Customers
- Interior Business Shots
- Showcase new products/services

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# Content Calendars for Social Media

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Using a content calendar will save you time, keep you organized, and ensure your content is fresh!

Social Media Content Calendar

Date	Photo	Caption
January 2	Modo Yoga-2.jpg Modo Yoga.jpg	Grow your Yoga and find inner calmness with the team at @modoyogalondon #GetDTL
January 3	Rebel Remedy.jpg Rebel Remedy-5.jpg Rebel Remedy-2.jpg	Keep your New Year's resolutions with the help of @rebelremedylondon's health conscious food and cold-pressed juices! #GetDTL
January 5	Lifestyles-6.jpg Lifestyles-7.jpg Lifestyles.jpg	@lifestyles womenswear and @jessshoes ca have all of this seasons latest styles and fashion accessories! #GetDTL
January 7	Raja Premium Indian Restaurant-3.jpg Raja Premium Indian Restaurant.jpg	Don't know what to make for dinner? Make Raja Premium Indian Restaurant tonight's choice! #GetDTL
January 8	Salon Entrenous-3.jpg Salon Entrenous.jpg	Style and care for your hair with the amazing stylists at Salon Entrenous! #GetDTL
January 9	Stache.jpg Stache-6.jpg Stache-2.jpg	Dive into your creative side with fabric patterns, kits, and classes from Stache for any textile project! #GetDTL
January 10	Nicholas & Elizabeth Bridal-2.jpg Nicholas & Elizabeth Bridal-4.jpg	Say yes to your dress at @nicholasandelizabethbridal! #GetDTL



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## Measure Your Success.

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In order to gauge how effective your efforts on social media have been, it is essential that you complete metric reports from time to time. Metrics can be collected right in the social media applications for free! This is a good way to track how many people are engaging with your posts, which posts are more effective, and assist you in identifying areas for improvement. It is recommended that you go through your metrics at the end of the month each month.

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# What can Downtown London do to help?

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The team at Downtown London is always here to help you advance your marketing initiatives. We have a large following across our social media platforms and are more than happy to share your content. To have your content shared, please tag Downtown London or email your content to Colleen at [colleen@downtownlondon.ca](mailto:colleen@downtownlondon.ca). We are also happy to promote your content through our What's Up newsletter that goes out to members of the general public and on our website.

Should you require assistance setting up social media accounts or have any general questions about marketing, please feel free to reach out. We would be happy to sit down with you and brainstorm potential ideas!



