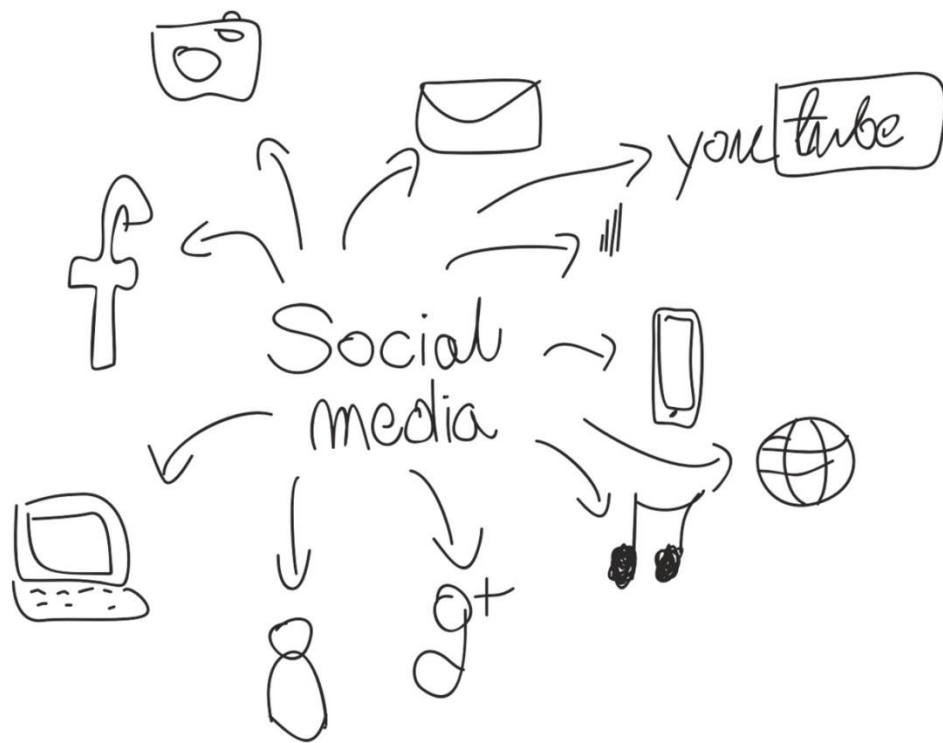


SOCIAL MEDIA

PLATFORM BUILDING BLOCKS
FOR BOTH THE SAVVY & THE SHY



KAYLA FIORAVANTI

Social Media: Platform Building Blocks for Both the Savvy & the Shy

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Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Chapter 1: All Roads Lead to Blogging</i>	4
<i>Chapter 2: The Basics of Facebook</i>	18
<i>Chapter 3: Twitter Fundamentals</i>	25
<i>Chapter 4: Guide to Google+</i>	29
<i>Chapter 5: Picture Perfect on Pinterest & Instagram</i>	32
<i>Chapter 6: Link in with Other Experts.....</i>	37
<i>Chapter 7: Newsletters, Tumblr, StumbleUpon, Reddit, Disqus & Snapchat</i>	40
<i>Chapter 8: YouTube, Vimeo, Vine & Periscope</i>	45
<i>Final Thoughts</i>	48
<i>Resources</i>	
<i>Author Hashtags</i>	
<i>About the Author</i>	

Introduction

With so many social media platforms how do you choose which one is right for you? Hang out where your demographics hang out. As you may already have figured out there are a lot of social media choices.

Audience Hangs Outs

Teens: Tumblr, Instagram and Snapchat

Young adults: Instagram and Twitter

Middle-aged adults: Facebook

Tech savvy adults (especially men): Google+

Middle-aged women: Pinterest

Writers & reporters: Twitter

Professionals in your field: LinkedIn

Older people: blogs and Facebook.

Everyone with videos: YouTube and Vine

Everyone with a phone: Periscope.

Viral crowd: Reddit

To determine what platform is best:

- **What social media platforms do you feel the most comfortable with?** What 1-3 platforms are your favorites? Don't feel like you have to be on EVERY platform. Get active on the ones you love!
- **What 1-3 platforms are your target audience on?** When you know what 1-3 platforms your target audience is on, compare those with your favorite 1-3 platforms. Is there an overlap? If so, focus on those platforms. Not only are you giving your time to your favorite platform(s), but you are also getting active on the ones that your target audience is on.
- **Set aside a weekly social media day.** This is my BEST recommendation. For example, every Wednesday can be your social media day. On Wednesdays, you can set aside the entire day to write copy and create graphics for your social media platforms for the following week. That kind of system can keep social media from interfering with your daily business.

- **Daily, you need to “check” on your platforms and engage.** But this is different. This is time on a daily basis to engage with those who are responding to your posts. You would schedule time in the morning, afternoon and early evening to look through your platforms and engage. You could give each time slot no more than 15-minutes. I have windows of time that are completely kid free. That is when I write, blog, take care of customer and have meetings. The pickup line at school has been a common time that I check in, follow back, and engage people, as well.
- **Analyze how many posts a day works best for you.** There are MANY thoughts out there when it comes to how many times a day you should be posting. See what works for you. If posting 8x a day isn't working, try 4x a day. Better content is often more important than constant content.
- **Be true to YOU!** There is no better way to get people engaged than by sharing you! Share your stories. Share your experiences. Share your struggles. Share your highs. Share your lows. Ask questions. The key to social media success is to be you—authentically you.

All these social media networks are enough to make your head spin, but each one is unique enough to evaluate and look at them all.

One thing that varies from network to network is the life span of a post. For instance, the lifespan of a post on Twitter is 8 minutes. On Facebook, the lifespan is 2 hours. On LinkedIn, it is 24 hours. On Pinterest, the life span can be weeks, months and even years. And on Instagram, 50% of comments happen in the first 6 hours, with 75% of overall comments being posted in the first 48 hours.

And consumers use each platform differently. Twitter is mostly about what you are doing, Facebook is about who you are, and Pinterest is about who *you want to be*.

You can set a day of the week aside, an hour a day or whatever works for you to work on your social media. You can estimate that a well worked social media platform will take you 4-5 hours per week to execute. Now, let's dig into the main networks.

Chapter 1

All Roads Lead to Blogging

Main Street America

The social media frontier is the single most cost-effective means of increasing sales that is available in the market today. If you don't have a blog, newsletter, YouTube channel, Twitter account, Facebook page and so forth you are losing thousands of contacts per day. You simply must put some of them to use. I am going to have you reserve your name on all the networks, and by the time you finish reading this book, I hope to show you how to pick the right ones for you. Whether you are active on them all, or not, I am going to want you to reserve your name on all of them.

You simply cannot be actively involved on every single network—but you don't want anyone else to take your name. Consumers are living their lives out on the Internet. They make purchasing decisions, form loyal relationships and create incredible word-of-mouth advertising on the Internet. Conversations are happening online, and you need to be there no matter how you feel about social media. Word-of-mouth advertising and many other opportunities abound in the virtual world of social media.

More than any other marketing method in the course of history, the arena of social networking gives small business owners the upper hand over having a PR firm. I have gone the PR firm route twice in my businesses. I've spent a whole lot of money in that direction...but what I have found is that none of that works as effectively without a powerful social media platform to share it. You are your own best advocate. You can create your own footprint in the media by using the free resource of HARO (Help a Reporter Out) and your own social media platform, but that is an entirely different book.

In order to have an awesome social media platform, you must have a landing page that all your avenues of social media point towards. The best landing page to have is a blog. It is pointless to have an amazing Facebook page if it doesn't lead to a page owned and controlled solely by you. Your social media branding should be designed to lead directly to your website or blog.

Your blog should have the consumer one click away from being on Amazon, using your affiliate link to buy your book or to buy whatever product you sell. If Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and the other social media tools go down in a blaze of fire, you will have your blog or website to fall

back on. I know some people that house their blog on their business website and others that have a stand-alone blog. For simplicity's sake, I am going to refer to it as a *blog* for the rest of this eBook.

What is important about a blog no matter where it sits, is that it should be updated consistently with fresh information to feed Google, and that you own the domain. Imagine if you were counting on MySpace several years ago as your main connection with your consumers, and then, suddenly, it turned into a ghost town as people abandoned their profiles for greener pastures.

- From 2005 to 2008, MySpace was the largest social networking site in the world.
- In 2006, MySpace was the most visited website in America—it even surpassed Google.
- In May 2009, MySpace was overtaken by Facebook in the number of unique US visitors. People left MySpace in droves.
- By February 2015, Myspace was ranked 1,296. That is a long ways from number one.¹

Many brands had used MySpace as their main hub. We can learn from the mistakes of the past by creating blogs and websites that you own and control.

Use the other avenues as a means to move traffic from those networks over to your blogs. Your blog is the goal post you are trying to bring everyone through via Twitter, Facebook and so forth. It is vital that your content is available on your blog instead of social media platforms. Here is an example of why:

Recently, a blog post of mine that had been written in July 2014 was trending on Facebook. It was 20 months old, and yet the link being passed around was bringing readers to my blog where there are multiple opportunities to buy my books. I paid nothing to get it circulating. I paid nothing to boost the post or buy advertising.

Powerful posts on your blog can bring people back over, and over and over again. Had I simply written that information on Facebook, it would have been lost a few days after it had posted. Now, that blog post wasn't just trending on Facebook, but it was also being shared on Twitter, Pinterest, StumbleUpon and more.

A few things attributed to the popularity of that blog post:

1. I spoke my mind and was honest about something I was passionate about.

2. The blog post was controversial. I got attacked in the comments, but instead of bringing myself down to the level of my attackers, I responded calmly with more truth.
3. I hit a nerve with people who agreed and disagreed with my opinion, which has caused significant sharing from both sides.
4. My website is optimized for mobile and has great SEO (Search Engine Optimization).

Yet, even with all of the social sharing it gets, that blog post is mostly found through Google searches. I checked the Google Analytics on that blog post just yesterday, and in the past few days 20,960 of the visits to that blog post came from Google searches and only 5,503 came from Facebook. Had I not written that blog post on a domain that I owned, I would have lost those 20,960 visits, and most likely would not have gotten a fraction of the Facebook shares this week.

I've been blogging since 2007, and what I have found is that if you build an honest, transparent and helpful blog, people will come. My husband and I started an internet based company in 1998 that exploded based on the power of internet searches. Because of the importance of a blog, and the fresh content it can constantly create, I am going to first focus on blogging.

I remember when I first started blogging, it seemed like a daunting task. What stands out, is how LONG it took me to produce each blog post. It was a slow and drawn out process because I was unfamiliar with it. Now, I can have a blog up in a matter of minutes, or at least, in less than an hour depending on the topic. It is overwhelming at first, but the more you blog the easier it gets.

This eBook is not exclusively for writers, but since it is a product of Selah Press, which focuses heavily on Author-preneur training, I want to take a moment and address author platforms. If you are an author, or planning on becoming a published author, I highly recommend creating an author blog. One of the most common questions I get from business owners who are expanding into becoming published authors is whether they should use their existing company website as their platform or start a new one. In my opinion, start a new platform as an author. An author platform is used to create visibility and authority to reach to a target audience. All aspects of an author platform should direct your audience back to your branded website.

If you are a business owner, and launching into writing, you should keep two things in mind. First, your readers might not be fans of your new business, and they may not be interested in weeding through your current site to find what they are interested in. Second, there is always a possibility that you might sell your current business. Even if that idea is the furthest thing from your mind at the time, you should plan for the possibility.

When I owned Essential Wholesale, I had a huge following on Facebook, Twitter and my company blog, but because I didn't plan in advance, I lost many of those connections when I sold my company. Had I been blogging on my popular blog about my new blog, tweeting about my author Twitter handle and inviting people to "Like" my new Facebook page, I would not have needed to start from scratch in my new venture. I'm not complaining, I'm just advising you to learn from my experience.

You should have a blog and social media presence before you publish your book or launch your product. Building your platform should be happening simultaneously with your book writing. If you have done it the opposite way—that is okay. You will have to work extra hard to gather your audience after you publish. This isn't impossible; it is just a bit deflating to debut your hard work to the sound of crickets. Some of us have to learn as we go.

If you don't have a website and social media presence, you limit your ability to sell your product. You will resort to hoping that folks will stumble upon you using Google. Whether you do it before your product is out or not, you still need to tap into the power of social media. Having no social media presences is like having a store on Main Street with no signage and a locked door. My goal is to help you find the key to the door and show you how to put up signage so people can find you.

Some of you may already have an active blog. Some might have been avoiding blogging like the plague. And others might have a blog that has been dormant for a period of time. Either way—it is never too late to show up, get started or improve your blog.

Your first step to creating your platform is to do a search on one of many domain registrar websites like GoDaddy, Domain.com, or NameCheap to see if your name is available to use as a domain name for your author website. If you are an author, you should use your own name or pen name for your platform. My domain name is KaylaFioravanti.com. I hemmed and hawed about whether or not to come up with a cute domain name that was easier to spell than Fioravanti, but the reality is, that if someone is looking for me as an author, they are going to be looking for my name.

To get started, simply plug your name into a domain registrar and see if it is available. If it isn't, you might have to get creative. You can also see who owns your name, and find out whether or not it is being used, and if they will sell it to you. Some people are totally fair and will sell you the domain for a tiny profit, and some people are crazy and will ask for thousands of dollars. If your name is super common, you may need to use your middle name or middle initial to find an available domain.

It is worthwhile to buy up domain names that you think you might use in the future. It isn't very expensive to buy a domain name for two years and then let it lapse if you choose not to use it. I do recommend making purchase of your domain a high priority so that you own it—just in case you become a household name.

If you are a business, with a business name, you should take a second step and check the trademark availability. Make sure that your use of an available name isn't trademarked in a way that you would be breaking any trademark laws. To do this, go to the Trademark Electronic Search System (TESS) to see if someone else has already gotten a trademark on the name you are considering for your publishing house.

Also check your name on Google. See what comes up. You may discover that the name you want to use is available as a domain name and free of trademark issues, but already being used extensively. Make sure the usage of the name matches your branding, and that it hasn't been so well unofficially branded that they will end up unable to win a trademark dispute over the first right of usage. I need to stress here that you need to do this search on Google. You can check Yahoo and Bing, but do not make those your primary search.

I recently had a customer who had done all of her research on Bing, and knew absolutely nothing about a well-known person already using the same branding strategy that she was heavily invested into. Thankfully, I found it when I decided to double check the branding messages on Google. Only days away from launching, she had to put her project on hold while she found an intellectual property lawyer.

As of right now, Google is the number one search engine. Whether you like Google or not, you need to use it to do your research.

So once you pick a name, you need to buy it and take the third step. Find a host. There are a variety of small web hosting companies available, or you can pick one of the big companies, including Ipage, JustHost, Web.com, GoDaddy, HostGator, Hub, InMotion, GreenGeeks and Selah-Press has a hosting service as well.

The next step, if you don't have a blog, is to find the right blogging platform. I am a fan of WordPress. I've used SquareSpace and Typepad in the past, but I find WordPress to be the easiest for me to use. You can use WordPress for all of your needs as a static website and/or blog—even one with a shopping cart. It is simple and easy to use. WordPress is also beyond easy to navigate. It is possible to follow the steps given in WordPress to set up your own site, but keep in mind that this is going to be where people get their first impression of you.

If your gifting is not in web design, always hire the setting up portion of your website to someone else. As you look for hosts and designers, make sure that you will have control of your website. Don't choose a designer that will force you to use them for every post and change. All of the information to move hosts, change content and so forth should be in your control.

Here are a few tips that are good for building your platform, whether you already have a blog, are just getting started or you haven't been keeping up regularly. I asked my tribe of bloggers what they wish they had known when they were new to blogging, and have included some of the most commonly asked questions.

My top tip for blogging is to never apologize. If you fall out of the habit of blogging, or if you are just showing up, don't write a blog apologizing for your absence. Most readers will show up on your blog from a Google search or a social share. They won't even know you were gone unless that is the first blog they stumble upon. Just pick up and start blogging. It is okay if your comeback story is about what happened over the period of time you were missing, but don't apologize.

Let's talk about defining your niche. What makes you special? What is unique about you? What can people connect with your on? What are you passionate about, and what will help convince readers that you are an expert in your field? Think about those things when you define your niche. Your niche shouldn't be so narrow that only a tiny portion of the population can relate or find your information useful. Think about the topic of the current book you are writing and the next 10 books you have planned. For instance, I post food recipes on my blog because in my next 10 books I have at least one cookbook planned.

I am a lifestyle blogger. I write about my life as a wife, mother, author, publisher, rancher, gardener and so forth. My books are nonfiction and fall within those areas. If you are a lifestyle brand, then a blog like that is fine, but if your niche is narrow you need to drill down into that area and make a home for your brand. So, ask yourself if you are a niche expert, business owner, professional blogger with a monetized site, journal writer, platform builder or personal brand blogger (like an author), rogue blogger doing things your own way, an opt-in blogger giving away free content in exchange for email addresses, Guru guide blogger who coaches their readers, a Lessons Learned blogger, or so forth?

Here are 6 reasons to know your niche no matter what kind of blogger you are:

1. When you have a niche, it is easier to create content. You don't have to think about what to write—because you have a niche you can pull from.

2. A niche creates a natural flow that covers your whole blog. If you are a lifestyle blogger, the flow is a bit different, but that is okay too.
3. A solid niche makes SEO keyword research easier, which makes Google love you.
4. You can organically find your audience as you share your content on social media. People like to be connected with bloggers they can identify with, so as you share, you will attract more readers.
5. Having a niche helps you avoid writers block because you are passionate about what you share. It is your niche after all—you probably chose it for a reason.
6. If you decide to monetize your blog, a defined niche will help you find sponsors—or sponsors find you.

What is a monetized blog? It is when you have sponsored posts or advertising. Most sponsors will reach out to you if you have great content and a solid niche. If you choose to go down the route of monetizing your blog, be honest about it. It is okay to accept compensation for a blog post, but have full disclosure with your readers. It will make them trust you more. Whether or not you have a niche, being useful to readers is the easiest way to be successful at blogging.

Provide content that will be helpful to your readers. You may have to play around with this for a bit until you find your strength. I used to write a motivational blog and newsletter that hit mailboxes every Thursday morning. I wasn't sure if they were working until letters from readers started trickling in, telling me how much they counted on their Thursday morning newsletter with a cup of coffee in hand. As time progressed, I got some of the most amazing, heartfelt and personal emails from my readers. Make your posts entertaining, educational, informative and/or inspiring.

Blog with Integrity

Today's modern blog has evolved from online public diaries—they were personal journals shared publically. Today some blogs are still diaries, but for the most case, they are business tools. But that doesn't mean they should be cold and impersonal. Personal, honest, transparent sharing is what defines a modern blog and attracts loyal readers. Depending on your product line, you may call your blog a *blog*, news, weblog or something like that.

On my author page, I am a blogger. On Selah Press, I share information as resources and news. On Red Cedar Bison, I share recipes and news. No matter what I call it on each site, each is really just a blog which is by definition “a regularly updated website, typically run by an individual or

a small group, that is written in information or conversational style.”⁴ Even though blogs are not personal diaries any more, you must not allow your blog to become devoid of personality and integrity.

Here are a few tips on how to avoid common blogging pit falls:

Never plagiarize

You may think that no one does that, but it is amazingly common. Before publishing my book, *The Art, Science and Business of Aromatherapy*, I decided to double check my original fact checking by doing a Google search. Much to my surprise, I discovered that the content I had written for my previous blog and website were word for word on hundreds of blogs and websites. Rather than chase everyone down for plagiarizing, I rewrote my content.

Plagiarizing is simply cheating, and readers can spot it. If you find content that you really want to share, simply give credit to the author. Bloggers ask my permission all the time to quote me, or even to use an entire blog post. I simply ask for credit to be assigned to me that links back to my original blog post from the blogger. Your readers and other bloggers will love you for it.

Bloggers will know it when you link to them. I get a pingback notice from WordPress letting me know when another blogger has linked to me. That normally makes me curious and sends me over to check them out. There is a good chance that I will share their content and comment while I am there.

Be Transparent

It is important to be transparent when you are blogging. No one ever believes people when they blog about how perfect everything is. Be real. Nothing is sacred in my life. Life is messy, and readers are going through this life too. They don't want to only hear about perfection—because it isn't real.

Don't go out into the blogosphere attempting to look super human with no flaws. Some of my most popular blog posts are the vulnerable ones that showed my failures, flaws, faults and a valuable life lesson. “Fake it till you make it” is not the motto of blogging.

Have fun blogging, and don't over think every post to the point of being sick with worry. Sometimes, when something you blogged isn't sitting right with you, it is for a good reason, but don't paralyze yourself over it. Get a trusted friend or advisor to help you through it.

Keep Your Blog Posts Short

The debate about the best length for blog posts is still up in the air, but I believe in keeping blog posts short. There is a theory that search engines like longer blog posts, but experts agree that it is just a theory and not a proven fact. In my experience, readers have a short attention span, so my preference is to write short blog posts. My theory is that if readers like what they read, they will continue reading similar blogs that I link at the bottom of the post. I generally keep my posts between 300 to 500 words.

Buffer Social found that 74% of blog posts that are read take 3 minutes to read. 94% take less than 6 minutes. Average readers have a reading speed of 200 words per minute, with a 60% comprehension level. That means your blog post should not be longer than 600 to 1200 words to fall in the 3 to 6 minute reading time. Sometimes, it is hard to keep a topic that short, so consider whether the blog could be broken up into a series of two or three blogs. If the length is necessary, there are ways to make a long post seem shorter. You can break up the bulky appearance by using images, bullet points, subtitles or short sentences. Also keep your paragraphs short—somewhere between 4 to 6 sentences. Whether people like long or short blog posts, they always like quality blog posts.²

Search Engine Optimization

It is important that you know what Search Engine Optimization or SEO means as we move forward. According to Webopedia, “Search engine optimization is a methodology of strategies, techniques and tactics used to increase the amount of visitors to a website by obtaining a high-ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine (SERP)—including Google, Bing, Yahoo and other search engines. It is common practice for Internet users to not click through pages and pages of search results, so where a site ranks in a search is essential for directing more traffic toward the site. The higher a website naturally ranks in organic results of a search, the greater the chance that that site will be visited by a user.”³

Use Catchy Blog Titles

The title of your blog is what is going to inspire people to click over to your website from the comfort of their social media space. Your title needs to engage them and make them want to make the leap. Keep the titles SEO friendly by making each title 64 characters or less. This length makes your title fit inside the clickable phrase in search results. Some experts say your title should be 6 words, but whatever you do, make it 64 characters or less.

Make Your Blog SEO Friendly

After you write your rough draft, use the Google AdWords Keyword Tool to find what key words or phrases in your blog post have the highest Global Monthly Search Volume. If you need to change a word to a similar word that is more search friendly, by all means do it. Use those keywords as your tags on your blog titles as well.

Use Tags on Every Blog

Tags are used by search engines to index content on websites. Originally websites used mostly hidden keywords to get the highest ranking from search engines, but that no longer works because search engines have improved their algorithms.

Tags are keywords for each blog post you create. They should be short, two or three word phrases. Tags are easy to add, and the best way to bring total strangers to your blog. Look for the “tags” box and type single words or phrases, separated by a comma, inside the “add” box.

Use a combination of keywords and long-tail keywords. A keyword phrase that contains at least three words (up to five) is a long-tail keyword. They help target niche. Long-tail keywords are more specific and often less hits than generic keyword terms, but the hits are targeted to consumers specifically within your niched niche.

Use a SEO Plug-in

An example is: All in One SEO Pack or Yoast. There are plenty of different SEO Plug-ins, so be sure to use one. I currently use a plug in called SumoMe.

Make Social Sharing Easy for Your Reader

Every blogging platform has a whole host of widgets that you can use to make sharing easy. Some people will automatically hit “Like” within the first few lines of your post, and others will wait until they have read the entire post before deciding to share. Your goal should be to make it easy to share for both types of readers! So, it is smart to have sharing buttons, both at the top of your blog post, and again at the bottom. You can also add widgets that allow readers to Tweet a quote and so much more. Whether you have built your social media platform or not, your readers are using social media. Make it easy for them to share your content.

Subscribers

Make it easy for people to subscribe to your blog. A newsletter and a blog feed are different things.

When a reader subscribes to your blog, they receive a notification in their inboxes each time you post a blog. A newsletter only lands in their inbox when you schedule one. Include the ability to sign up for your newsletter on your blog. I will talk more in depth about newsletters later, but it is an important means of capturing your audience.

Appearance Counts

Use a photograph in every blog post. It breaks up the content and makes the page look good. But above all, make those pictures friendly for social sharing. The key, here, is to optimize your images in your blog posts. I don't mean the quality of the image—you should always use a high quality image. I mean using plain English descriptions in the title, Alt Text, and a description of the image. Adding this helps with Google searches, and, in turn, the information follows the images in Social Shares and describes the image to blind readers. Alt Tags are a text alternative to images whenever a browser can't properly render them. You can also see the Alt Text in a fully rendered image when you hover the mouse over the image.

Adding Alt Text adds SEO value by associating keywords with the images. Don't over optimize—simply use plain English keywords. You can also add text onto the images as well. For instance, when I add a quote to an image and use it in a blog, I add my web address to the image so it travels with it on there. You can also add caption that is displayed below the image in the post that describes what is happening in the image. When you save the image from your camera, save it with a keyword-rich name because Search engines not only search the text of your blog, but also the keywords within your image files.

Search Windows

Speaking of searching, You should also have a Search Window on your blog. I love search windows on blogs. A reader might be visiting your blog because they followed a link to a recipe. If they are impressed with your recipe, they may want to search your site for other recipes. Even if you have a category called recipes, they will most likely use the search box to go directly to what they are looking for. I even use my own search window all the time to find content when people email me asking for advice or a link to a specific blog post.

Link to Your Book or Products

On my blog, I provide a static column that has images of my books with a link to them on Amazon, using your Amazon Associate code. On other pages, I have a shopping cart or an eStore you can easily access from any page. Make it simple for your reader to navigate from your blog post to make a purchase. Also when you blog, if there is an opportunity to link to your products without being super salesy, do it.

Always, Always, Always Have Links Open Up into a Separate Page

One of my biggest pet peeves is clicking on a link in a blog post, and having it replace what I was reading. It is better to have it open in a separate window, so that the reader can leave it open and go back to the original content. Once I finish reading a blog post, I like to jump around and read what links the author recommended. Having links open in separate windows makes returning to your blog an easy experience for your readers.

You Should Be a Good Neighbor in the Blogosphere

If you want people to come read your blog and leave comments, the best habit to get into is to go to other people's blogs and leave comments. There are tons of blogging groups you can join. I belong to a few on Facebook. I learn a ton from other bloggers. We share content with each other, and we have done blog challenges together. Challenges are good. I recently did the Blog Your Brand 30 Day Challenge, and am considering an A to Z blog challenge in April. Challenges help push you and help you work with a group to comment and share.

Have a Comment Policy

There are truly some mean people out there in the world, who don't have anything better to do than to surf the Internet looking for people to tear down. Don't let them get to you. Set a policy for what you will tolerate in your blog comments, because your blog is your house. Hold to the policy and delete comments that are rude, abusive or vulgar. All blog platforms have an option to moderate comments before they post. I moderate only new commenters. Once they are approved, they are approved automatically, but I can adjust them as needed when trolls arrive. I have attracted my fair share of trolls—they are just plain mean. Shake them off and block them.

Don't Invite Readers to an Empty Blog

If you are just starting out, don't invite readers to an empty blog. Either spend a month practicing blogging before you make your grand entrance, or backdate 4 to 10 blogs as you build your blog. This way people have something to look at while they are on your site for the first time. You can promote all those backdated posts in between your fresh content on social media. Before teaching today, I asked my tribe of bloggers what they wish they had known in their early careers as bloggers, and they had some powerful insight.

Many of them wished they had had a plan of action when they got started. They advised a Mind Map or an editorial calendar that will help steer the direction of their blogs. A **Mind Map** is an effective visual way of getting information in and out of your brain, by literally mapping out your ideas. A Mind Map creates an organizational structure that radiates from the center and uses lines, symbols, words, color and/or images to build a simple, brain-friendly visual map of your ideas. Imagine a city map radiating from the city center, creating visual roads that lead from your central idea into secondary roads, branches and so forth.

Creating an **Editorial Calendar** will help you stream line your blogging strategy into a planned monthly calendar. This can be as precise, or as vague, as you want it to be. I have a friend who has the topic of every single blog for the month planned out with exact titles at the start of each month. I did this when I took part in the 30 Day Blog Your Brand challenge. It worked wonders. No matter how rushed I was, it was easy to create content, and it allowed me to pre-schedule blogs as well. In the past, when I blogged 5x per week, I used a more general outline. I didn't have an exact title for each day of the week, but I did have a plan for each day.

It went something like this:

Monday – Ingredient Information Blog Post

Tuesday – DIY Kitchen Chemistry video

Wednesday – Wordless Wednesday Image

Thursday – Motivational Blog Post

Friday – Employee Spotlight

For this, you can use a template, a white board, a calendar or whatever will work for you. An editorial calendar helps you stay consistent, gives you an easy strategy to follow and makes your blogging intentional.

Have a Strong “About Us” Page

80% of visitors on your blog will click through to your “about” page. This is a place where you can share the heart of your blog. It is where readers connect with you and get to know what you are passionate about. Take the time to do a good one, and update it along the way.

Your “About” page should have:

1. Images
2. The who, what, why of your brand.
3. Social proof, such as press mentions, published books, testimonials, reviews and so forth.
4. A call to action to dig deeper into your blog.
5. An email sign up.

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Chapter 2

The Basics of Facebook

Social media is about person to person contact that is sincere, personal and transparent. The intimate atmosphere that naturally occurs within social networking creates abundant opportunities to influence untapped readers.

An important step in setting up your social media empire is to add your picture and bio during the set up phase. Too many people postpone this step and lose potential followers because of it. The Twitter egg profile picture and the Facebook silhouette make it look like no one is home and tells consumers that you must not care about your brand. As of June 2016 Facebook had over 1.591 billion active users and 1.25 billion mobile active users.¹

Social media moves fast, so stay engaged to keep up with it as it changes. What is great about social media is that we are no longer slaves of the once most important factor in business, “location, location, location.” Authors are no longer forced to use brick-and-mortar stores to sell their books. I sell far more books online than I sell in brick and mortar bookstores, and my profit margin is larger online as well.

In a room full of small businesses or authors, the most common excuse I have heard is, “I don’t have time for social networking.” With the culture of consumers changing every single day to the online community at an alarming rate, every company *must* make the time to follow their customers to the Internet. The time issue can easily be solved with the mobile social media apps. The majority of my social media time is spent while waiting in line, waiting to pick up kids and, in general, during time that otherwise was spent spinning my wheels. I don’t spend countless hours on social media each day. I spend the *in between* times on there and some planned time.

The excuse that comes in at a close second is, “We don’t know how to use social networking.” That is what this ebook is about. I am going to walk you through it all. With social media, consumers are readily available for direct one-on-one contact with authors and businesses. Join the conversation and use the open door social media provides to send people to your website. Promotion of your book should start long before you finish it. Talk about your project, research, writers block, breakthroughs, defeats and triumphs as you work on your book. Engage people on your blog and social media campaigns in the process of writing your book. Track and share your word count progress.

Being transparent in your writing process will not only generate interest in your book, but it will also make others feel personally invested in your book because they have been “with you” every step of the way. You shouldn’t show up one day on social media and surprise everyone with a finished book. Tell people about it as you work on it. That makes it more personal, and not only a promotion tool. When I run into friends at the supermarket who I haven’t seen in a while, they often will ask, “How’s the kitten? How’s your puppy?” and then go on to engage me in a conversation about what project I’ve been blogging about.

Facebook Fundamentals

Facebook has 5x the active users as Twitter. Most people already have a Facebook profile, but if you don’t, then signing up for a Facebook account is step number one for you. Your Facebook profile is not going to be your business page. A Facebook profile only allows you to have 5000 friends, which may seem like a lot now, but down the road, it will limit you. Here are several reasons why you need to have a separate Facebook page to use for your business:

Benefits of a Business Facebook Page

- Number of “Likes” is limitless.
- Run ads.
- Boost updates.
- Track traffic, including: organic, paid and viral reach.
- Track trends, including: “Likes,” people talking about your posts and weekly total reach.
- Helps you make business decisions based on traffic.
- Legitimizes the author when link goes to a business page instead of a personal page from website.
- Easily managed from your computer and/or “pages” app on smart phones.
- Use a Facebook widget on your website.
- Vanity Facebook URLs are available.

Setting up Your Facebook Business Page

Facebook changes and updates how it works all the time, so I’m going to give you a general roadmap that should get you to the right section.

- Looking to the top right hand side of your profile page, you should see an upside down arrow. Click on that, and then choose **Create Page**. Several categories will come up. The choices right now include: Local Business or Place; Company, Organization or Institution; Brand or Product; Artist, Band or Public Figure; Entertainment; Cause or Community.
- You want to choose “Artist, Band or Public Figure” or whatever category they have at the moment that fits an author.
- Next click on **Category** and then **Author**.
- Put in your name, thinking carefully about the name you choose—you only get to change it once if Facebook approves your request. Then hit **Get Started**.
- In this section, you will see a window where you can write a few sentences to tell people about your page. It is important that you include your website here. This is something you can come back to and fill out thoughtfully. Remember to use keywords that will help people find you.
- Create a unique web address for you Facebook page. If it is taken, you will have to try others.
- Upload your profile picture.
- Choose to add to favorites. This will make it easy for you to navigate. Once you see the value of a Facebook page you may create others. Also, Facebook creates pages for you when something is talked about a lot. When I published my book [*Puffy & Blue: The Chronicles of Nine Lives Together*](#), Facebook created a page because people were talking about it. So as you go, you will end up with multiple pages.
- The next section is **Preferred Page Audience** You can choose geographical locations you want to reach, age ranges, gender and interests. This helps you reach a targeted audience.
- Once redirected to your new page, hit **Like** to like your own page. But if you are not ready for visitors on your page, don't hit *Like* yet because people will see the page once you like it.
- You should add a cover photo. You can choose a picture that represents your branding or build a banner. I like to use banners because it is just another way to highlight what is currently important to you. I often have my graphic gal create new ones for me, and it is a service Selah Press offers. But you can build your own by using Canva.com. This is a very user friendly photo editing free service. I use it all the time to create social media and printed media for our company Red Cedar Bison. I am not a graphic designer, but Canva helps me look like I am. Another indispensable free tool is PicMonkey.com.
- After this, you are prepared to start adding content, building an audience and creating ads.

- Good first steps include: adding events and milestones, and putting up photo albums from the status update box.
- Select your preferred method and frequency of notifications by going to **Account Settings** and then clicking on **Notifications**. Open up each device method and make your selections.

I have found that having the Facebook app and Facebook Pages app on my phone helps me significantly. Take advantage of the simplicity of the apps. You can now schedule Facebook Ads and posts on Facebook pages. When you start a status update, a blue box will show up just to the bottom right of your update. You can schedule, backdate or save it as a draft. Backdating allows you to build a good profile before you start inviting people to like your page.

Let me just take a moment to talk about hot topics like politics and religion. Unless your brand is about politics or religion, your Facebook page is not the place to argue either. You can live your faith, especially if that is what your book is about, but watch your tone with everyone. Winning hearts and minds is not going to happen with some of the harsh arguments people get into on Facebook, and it won't help your brand.

You are your brand. Remember that in all that you do and say on Facebook—even from your private page. Nothing is private once you say it on Facebook.

Converse with others on Facebook. *Like* other people's content. *Share* the content of others. Give your audience exclusive information and deals on occasion. Use pictures to engage people in your content. This is where getting really familiar with Canva.com will make your life easy. You can create graphics easily.

In some ways you will find Facebook pages limiting, and in others, it gives you quite a bit of control. Once upon a time, people saw the majority of what was posted, but not anymore. The most recent information I could find was from 2015. So as of then, your organic reach on a page was 2.6%, but with boosted ads, went up to 14.6%

Currently, engagement numbers on those you reach are:

- Video engagement was 13.92%
- Pictures 13.7%
- Links 7.9%
- Status updates 2.56%

The organic reach numbers started tumbling quickly when Facebook started selling ads. But Facebook is a business, so you can't really be mad. You just have to adjust. Their organic reach plummeted in direct correlation to their stock prices rising. Research showed a significant drop in organic reach between February 2012 (16%) and March 2014 (6.51%). According to more recent research by Social@Ogilvy, this number has dropped to just 2% for pages with more than 500,000 likes. With more users on Facebook, you have more content to compete with.

The way the News Feed works is constantly evolving. Rather than showing people all possible content, News Feed is designed to show each person on Facebook the content that has been deemed most relevant to them by Facebook. Of the 1,500+ stories a person might see organically when they log onto Facebook, News Feed only displays approximately 300 of them. And my theory, is that this number is dropping. I have over 3000 friends on Facebook, but keep seeing the same posts over and over again—like as if no one else had anything fresh to say today. Facebook ranks each possible story to choose which stories to show you. Facebooks likes to show high-quality content, trending content and hot topics so make your content quality.

I share from my business page and my personal profile page, and I find that I get more reach on my personal one. Part of that is because I have been on Facebook for a long time, and in the early years, I accepted everyone's friend request, so I have 3,451 friends. I started later on my author Facebook page where I have 1,123 page likes. I've never promoted my page, but there are ways to grow your reach with a business page that aren't available to personal pages. Ads are good—but great content is better. The article I told you about that was 20 months old and still trending on Facebook was never advertised.

Facebook Ads

I know you hear people complaining about seeing ads on Facebook, but they must not mind all that much because Facebook ads work. Whenever I run a month long \$50 ad for one of my books on Facebook, I see the sales for that book double for the month. That more than pays for itself, gives me exposure and more potential for word-of-mouth advertising. The free ride is over—but that is okay.

Ads are easy to create once you have your author page set up. Simply go back up to the upside down triangle and click Create Ads and get started. You can choose your target market specifically to age group, location, gender, precise interests, broad categories, connections, language, workplace,

relationship status and education level. You can set your campaign budget with either a per-day cap or a lifetime budget. Facebook will suggest a bid to pay per CPM (which stands for Costs per Mile, but really just means clicks), but I always bid lower. I never put in a campaign budget higher than \$50 because I want to see if it works and tweak it based on what I learn.

Promote Updates

You can promote your updates for a nominal charge. I have tried it out a few times with \$1 and \$5 bids to promote an update. It is worth it if your update either increases your traffic on your blog or helps you sell more books. You need enough Likes to promote posts. Last time I checked it was 100.

Tracking Trends and Traffic

Facebook makes it easy to track trends. From your personal page, you can see how many people Liked or commented on your update, but that doesn't really tell you how many people you reached. Lots of people are Facebook lurkers.

They just watch what happens on Facebook, but never hit Like or leave a comment. I often meet people who tell me that they love my updates about my pets, but I thought that they weren't even hanging out on Facebook since I never saw them update, comment or Like. Lurkers are good, but, on a personal page, hard to track.

On your business page, you can see how many people saw your update, including how many were organic, viral or paid. An organic view of your Facebook posts tells you how many people who Liked your page saw your update. Viral views of your Facebook posts are viewers who do not Like your page but saw your post because someone they know shared, Liked or commented on your update. Paid views lets you know how many views you received from promoting your update. I have found this tool to be immensely helpful.

Facebook Live

Facebook Live is a relatively new feature on Facebook. It allows live streaming broadcasts on Facebook. Facebook's advice for best using this new feature is listed in the following seven steps.

1. Tell people ahead of time when you're going to broadcast. Build anticipation by letting people know when you'll be broadcasting live.

2. Go live when you have a strong connection. Check to make sure that you have a strong signal before going live. WiFi tends to work best, but if you can't find a nearby network, you'll want a 4G connection. If you have weak signal, the 'Go Live' button will be grayed out.
3. Write a compelling description before going live. A great description will capture fans' attention and help them understand what your broadcast is about.
4. Ask your viewers to follow you and receive notifications when you go live. Call out that your audience can tap on the Follow button on live videos and videos that were live and then opt-in to get notifications the next time you go live.
5. Say hello to commenters by name and to respond to their comments. Your audience will be thrilled to hear you mention their name and answer their questions when you are live. Call out that your audience can tap on the Follow button on live videos and videos that were live and then opt-in to get notifications the next time you go live.
6. Broadcast for longer periods of time to reach more people. The longer you broadcast, the more likely people are to discover and invite their friends on Facebook to watch the video. We recommend that you go live for at least 10 minutes, and you can stay live for up to 90 minutes.
7. Be creative and go live often! Try different types of broadcasts - and go live frequently - to keep your audience engaged.²

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Chapter 3

Twitter Fundamentals

As of July 2016, Twitter has more than 313 million active users and over 500 million Tweets sent per day.¹ This was bad news because, a year ago, they still only had 320 million active users. They are stalling and not growing. According to Twitter, “[I]ts service is still not intuitive to use, and it comes with quirks that newcomers find difficult to grasp.”²

“Twitter is live: it is basically live commentary, live conversations, live connections,”—things spread quickly on Twitter.³ According to Twitter, your Tweets reach 30% of your audience. This is generally due to the speed of Twitter. Originally Twitter did not filter messages or use an algorithm. It just moved fast. But that has changed. In March 2016 an algorithm was fully implemented on Twitter as a default setting. You can go into your “account settings” and click on “show me the best Tweets first” and to change the feature. But no matter what has happened with algorithms, you have extra power with hashtags that allow you to reach outside your audience and more. Joining Twitter can be like trying to drink water out of a fire hose. It is fast paced microblogging. Twitter has changed over the years from when they first started to make some things easier and other things harder.

When I first joined twitter as @EssentialU, it was very easy to quickly get over 10,000 followers. Gaining followers is one of the things Twitter has made harder. When I sold my company, the @EssentialU Twitter handle went with it, and I started building a following @KaylaFioravanti from scratch. You could easily build a following by following a ton of people who would follow you back. But now, Twitter requires that your following to follower ratio not go above a certain threshold.

I am constantly seeing people ask, “Why can’t I follow more than 2000 people?” The answer is that you can’t go over 2000 until your ratio of followers is tighter. This leaves you forced to unfollow people who don’t follow you back, which is why, as you build an audience, make sure you follow back. I am merciless when it comes to unfollowing people who don’t follow back. I have to be because, otherwise, I am blocked from following more people. Proper Twitter etiquette is to follow back everyone and anyone who follows you. If you don’t follow back, you will eventually lose that follower when they get annoyed that your relationship is only one sided, or they hit the follower/following ratio window.

Social media is a relationship based building block for your business. If you don't have the time or inclination to follow people back, then you are simply using it as a "me, me, me" tool to promote you and only you. When someone addresses you on Twitter, always be sure to send a reply. You can see who is talking to or about you on Twitter by clicking on the @Connect button. Direct messaging has become cluttered with automated messages saying things like, "Thanks for following me, click here to ___." It all reads like impersonal spam, and most people on Twitter don't even check their Direct Messages anymore.

If you want to start a conversation with someone, use their Twitter handle when you compose a Tweet. Retweeting is another easy way to win friends on Twitter. When you read content that you like, simply hit the Retweet button that appears when you hover the mouse anywhere over that specific Tweet, or click the box that looks like a rectangular recycling arrow.

How to build your Following

- Use Twitter Advertising for Promoted Tweets and Promoted Accounts.
- Run contests from your blog for Twitter followers—even amazon has some great ways to use Amazon Giveaways to promote books and gain followers.
- Add yourself to directories like Twiends, WeFollow and Twellow.
- Add a Twitter Widget to your website.
- Retweet and interact with the people you follow.
- Use #Hashtags.
- Follow people in your field.

What to Tweet

Now that you are on Twitter, you will master the art of speaking in 140 characters or less. To successfully use Twitter, you need to learn how to keep it short. Tweet about your day, what you just read, notable quotes, pictures, other people's tweets and, above all, use hashtags. Research shows that the best length for a tweet is 100 characters. This allows for endless RTs and added hashtags.

Unlike Facebook, you can be somewhat repetitive on Twitter because the content is constantly moving every minute. To promote my website, I will often schedule a tweet that has a link to a specific blog post up to four times in a month or year. Twitter policy now makes it against their policy to tweet the exact same tweet repeatedly without just a touch of editing. You can reword a tweet and schedule it to tweet out later that day or another day. A study was done by Wiselytics to

see how repeated information does on Twitter. They identified all the tweets with repetition, and for each repetition, they normalized its performance with the performance of the first tweet.

What they found was that 55% of the twitter accounts are repeating their tweets. And now here is the interesting part: On average, the second tweet got 86% as much performance as the first one. After 6 repetitions a tweet reaches 67% of the first tweet. But only 14% of your audience will see it the second time, so you aren't overwhelming your audience with a repeat.⁴

On Twitter you can share photographs and video. Video can be uploaded, edited and shared directly on Twitter now. Videos that are native to Twitter or come from Periscope or Vine will autoplay on Twitter.

Hashtags

The use of hashtags has changed Twitter significantly over the years. In case you don't know, a hashtag is the pound symbol (#), followed immediately by a word or group of words. For example, #foodie or #whatwasithinking.

The trends of hashtags are constantly changing. One day the biggest hashtag might be #presidentialdebates, and the next day it might be #justinbieber. These hashtags are used to categorize tweets and follow tweeters that you are interested in. You can see what is trending on the left hand side of the screen when you are on Twitter.

If you have something to say on a trending topic, speak up. This is a great way to get followers and engage with people. Or, simply sit back, and watch how they work. Hashtags are used on Facebook as well, but they are not as effective. They are most effective on Twitter and Instagram.

Hashtags are used to engage in Twitter conversations, find relevant people to follow, gain valuable social media insight and engage in Trending Topics. You can look up current hashtags, find hashtags to follow and even define a hashtag by going to Hashtags.org or Twubs.com. You can also simply plug ideas into the Twitter search box.

For instance, when I was doing the #blogyourbrand challenge, I could just plug that into the search box, and Twitter would organize the information into Top tweets, live tweets, accounts using it, photos, videos, and it even has a drop down menu if you need to be more specific. Part of being in a challenge like that together is sharing each other's content, so I could just retweet it all from there at the end of the day.

Hashtags can be used in the middle of a tweet, at the end of a tweet or both. Using one to two hashtags per tweet is plenty. You can test out other hashtags by tweeting your message again later

with new ones. You can empower your tribe to promote your content by creating a brand-able media-rich landing page when you register your own hashtag, using Twubs.com. Use a combination of your customized and trending hashtags to get the widest audience.

To write a tweet, simply start writing. If you want to include a link (which is wise), it is best to shorten that URL so it doesn't take up your entire 140 characters. I use TinyURL because it is simple and free. Just plug in your long URL, and it will kick out a shortened version. You can also use Bitly.com

Scheduling Tweets

You can use third-party platforms to schedule and manage your tweets. I like to use Twuffer to schedule tweets of quotes and blogs that I've written in the past. Enter the words, "how to schedule a tweet" into your search engine, and you will also find Hootsuite, Buffer, FutureTweets, Tweetdeck, 14blocks, Dynamictweets, Autotweeter, LaterBro, Tweetsqueue, and many others apps that will allow you to do this same thing.

Using third-party platforms for Twitter won't reduce your visibility at this point in history, but on Facebook it could. Facebook is constantly changing what information you see from your friends and companies that you have Liked. I suggest always using Facebook from Facebook.

Some of these third-party tools only do future tweets, and some can manage your Twitter or social media empire. Spend some time looking around, and find a tool that works best for you. Just be sure that you don't rely so heavily on that tool that you forget to follow people back. Some tools are free, some are free to a point and others have a charge, but also have added features.

On Twitter, it is good business practice to Retweet, Reply, Follow Back and Favorite tweets. Interact. There are live Twitter Chats and Twitter Parties you can take part in. Those are fascinating and connect you to new people. Social media isn't meant to eat up your time. It offers you great opportunities—but only if you use it as a tool, and not a time suck away from writing.

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Chapter 4

Guide to Google+

Google+ has 375 million monthly active users and is growing. The majority of Google+ users are male at 74%. Only 28% of people, 15-34 years old, are on Google+.¹ Many experts say that the demographics of Google+ are a bit elusive to track, but that the SEO value of being on Google+ is worth it alone. It is designed to be used for relationship marketing was created as an attempt to be the best of both worlds from Facebook and Twitter.

There are three good reasons to have a Google+ account.

1. Facebook keeps updating and changing which is annoying to consumers. I read updates all the time from people complaining about the most recent update. Most stay on Facebook, but there are some who go. If consumers really make good on their threats to leave Facebook for Google+, you'll want to be there already.
2. Google also owns YouTube, so if you don't have a Gmail account or Google account already, you are going to need them anyway, as you set up other social media platforms. And as you know, Google is the largest search engine—take advantage of their social media platforms.
3. And thirdly, as I've stated before, you should own your name on every social media site.

Google+ makes it easy to navigate to Google for searches, maps, images, your calendar, your Gmail, YouTube and more. On Google+, you can write long updates, embed video, share photographs, create a hangout, follow trends, join communities, find people, play games and share events. The ability to write long updates has inspired some people to use Google+ as their blogging platform, but I don't recommend doing this. You need to own your own platform.

From Google+ you can share status updates, pictures, links, video, events and take polls. Visually, Google+ is unique. It shares big, rich photographs in the shape you upload them, and the layout is 3 columns wide, so the reader is hit with a lot of content at once—so make it stand out with beautiful pictures.

I have a Google+ account, but I mostly use it to directly share new blog posts. If you are blogging regularly, then you can be on Google+ just enough to keep up with any comments,

conversations and so forth that take place on your page. You can't hang out everywhere, but as you post new blog posts to all the social media platforms, you can be there just enough to be active.

Here is how you set up a Google+ account if you don't have one already:

- Go to plus.google.com and click Create an Account on the top right.
- Fill in your info and click Next Step.
- At this point, you can add a profile photo.
- Use the same profile photo across all of your platforms (your website, Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Once you've selected and adjusted your profile photo, click Next Step.
- You now have a Google+ account!

Set Up Your Profile

On the top right of the next page, you'll see a notifications bar. To navigate to your Google+ profile, click on your picture in the notification bar, then click View Profile on the dropdown menu. You will come to a bar across with About as one of the options. Click on it and fill in your information. You can build a custom banner for Google+ using Canva.com, or use a picture that works well. Just don't leave it blank.

A useful part of Google+ is your Circles, which allow you to categorize. For instance, when you add a relative of yours on Google+, you can add them to your "Family" circle. Likewise, you can add your coworkers to your "Work" circle, and so on. To add people to your circles, select People in the left navigation panel. You can connect your address book from other email accounts to Google+ to see if any of your friends already have G+ profiles, search for friends by entering your company or school name, or just type someone's name into the search bar. If you find someone, select Following.

If you've filled out your profile info, you can click on Suggestions, and it will show you a list of people that Google+ thinks you will likely add as friends. There's a difference between adding friends on Google+ and adding friends on Facebook. On Facebook, both parties must confirm a friend request. Google+, on the other hand, allows for one-sided following, similar to Twitter. When you add someone to your circles, they don't have to add you back.

If you have Gmail, then you can navigate easily over to Google Plus, via a drop down menu, located on the navigation bar at the top right hand side of your screen. To post content, click the

What's new with you? box on the left side of the page. Then, just start typing. Unlike Twitter, there is no character limit to what you type—you can type as much as you want! In addition, you can add some basic formatting to your text. Once you click **Share**, the formatting will be applied. In the share box, you can share text, photos, links, videos, and events. Play around with it to see everything it can do!

Once you've added whatever content you want to your post, it's time to share it. Click the box next to the word *To*, to select which friends you'd like to share your post with. You can select individual circles or people, share to friend in all your circles, or share publicly. Once you decide, hit share. It's pretty simple.

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Chapter 5

Picture Perfect on Pinterest & Instagram

Pinterest

I let out a big sigh when I started getting invites to join Pinterest. I thought, “Oh please not another social media site to manage!” But I went ahead and reserved my name on the next new-fangled social media when it arrived on the scene. As I have said, it is better that you own it, put up a bio and pictures and then park on it, then have someone else using it for something totally unrelated to what you do.

Pinterest is used to share photographs, ideas, craft projects, recipes and so forth. When you set up your account, you create boards that are interesting to you and are part of your branding. Pinterest will grab the photograph used in your blog posts, and will use it as a link, so if someone is really interested in the recipe you just blogged, they can click through to your website. The point of Pinterest is to pin, repin, follow and share. There are over 70 million users of Pinterest, of which 80 percent are women and 20 percent are men. Over 9 million users have connected their accounts to Facebook. 88% of Pinterest users purchase a product they pin. 42% of all online women use Pinterest.

The age demographics cross generations.

- 34% of adults, 18–29 years old, use Pinterest.
- 28% of adults, 30–49 years old, use Pinterest.
- 27% of adults, 50–64 years old, use Pinterest.
- 17% of adults, 65 and over, use Pinterest.¹

It is important to note that Pinterest is a search platform more than it is a social media platform. You won't be using hashtags on Pinterest. It is basically a visual search engine where people go for quality, not quantity—so create evergreen content. As an author, you could even use it to make some images with quotes from your book.

I recently listened to a speaker whose entire business is Pinterest. She runs the Pinterest accounts for several brands. Her talk simplified Pinterest for me. Her advice to have one Pinterest

account with separate boards for each business, brand or book you are trying to market changed my life. Before, the school of thought I had followed was to have a separate Pinterest page for every business, but now I own those names, but don't use them. I manage everything from my Kayla Fioravanti account through separate boards. Another good key takeaway that I got from her was the importance of the size of your picture for Pinterest. It should be 736x1190 pixels, and include the title and headline in the image. Now, the easy thing is that if you use Canva.com, they already have them sized for you. Pictures you create should be *repin* and *click* worthy. Meaning, that they should inspire people—for writers, that could be from using a beautiful image with a great quote. Users repin what they like, which saves a post for later. When you set up your profile, use keywords in your bio, because it will help the search-ability on Pinterest.

How to set up a Pinterest account:

First, decide whether to set it up as a business account or a personal account. If you set it up as a business account, you can tag every image that gets pinned from your website, whether you put it up or not, and have web analytics in Pinterest analytics. This will help you know how things are working for you.

If you want to set up a personal account, then go to pinterest.com and sign up. It is super simple. If you want to set up a business account, then go to <https://business.pinterest.com/en/set-your-business-account>

Pinterest Site Verification for Business Accounts

1. Log in at <http://pinterest.com/> with your Pinterest account.
2. Go to your profile and click the **Edit Profile** button.
3. Enter your website address if you haven't already.
4. Click the **Verify Website** button.
5. On the next page, next to **How to verify**, copy the meta tag. You'll need to enter this on WordPress.com.
6. Leave the verification page open, and go to your blog dashboard (in a new tab/window).
7. Open the **Tools → Available Tools** page, and paste the string from the **How to Verify** field of the Pinterest verification page in the **Pinterest Site Verification** field of your blog dashboard.
8. Click on **Save Changes**.

9. Go back to the verification page and click the **Complete Verification** button.²

If you already have a Pinterest account and want to convert it to a business account, it is super simple. Just sign in and go to the top right side where you see a button with 3 lines—click on it and choose **Business** at the very bottom of the drop down menu (after the list). On a new screen, you will see a prompt to **Convert now**. Choose your category, add your website and then verify your website. From there, just set up your boards and start pinning.

Instagram

Instagram is a powerful tool to share visual stories. There are more than 300 million monthly active users on Instagram, of which 75 million are daily active users. Instagram was purchased by Facebook, and has grown significantly. The audience you will reach is mostly under the age of 35. Instagram is widely being used for business marketing.³ Like Twitter, Instagram is powered by hashtags, of which, you can use an unlimited number. Whether people follow you or not on Instagram, they can find your post by using hashtags to narrow their search. Instagram can only be run from your smart phone. Just recently, Instagram made it possible to manage multiple accounts from one app without signing in and out.

How to set up Instagram

Download the app from your app store to your smartphone. Tap to download it. Tap to sign up. Enter your email address, or you can log in using your Facebook account. Create a user name and password.

Make sure you do not set your account to private—double check privacy to make sure you have it off. Use the same profile picture you use for all of your other platforms, and add your profile information, including a link to your website. Do not skip the link to your website, because you cannot create links in Instagram posts. If someone likes what you are posting about, they will come visit your profile and check your website out from there. While Instagram is powered by hashtags, do not use them in your bio.

Best practices for Instagram Hashtags are:

1. Use up to 10 hashtags. Specific hashtags are used to search. Consumers scroll through the image feed that is organized under their hashtag search. They will hit like if they like what you

posted and even better yet, they might check you out further and start following you. Hashtags help you reach an audience bigger than your own circle of influence on Instagram.

2. Create custom hashtags, and register them on Twubs.com.
3. Remember those SEO keywords. Use them as hashtags when they are relevant to the image. Your hashtags should be used correctly. They need to be searchable, and they should be relevant to your picture. Don't jump on a popular hashtag just to get views if your picture has nothing to do with it. You can be reported for abuse for misusing hashtags.
4. Use some of the basic Instagram hashtags when they fit your image.

These include:

#regram – used when you post something that a fan posted about you.

#latergram – used when you post a picture from something that happened a few days ago—instead of live from the event.

#throwbackthursday or #tbt – when you post old memories and old pictures. This is a popular hashtag across all social media.

#nofilter – when you post a picture without using any of the filters available on Instagram. This hashtag is one of the most popular on Instagram.

From Instagram, you can share on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr. The cross over from Instagram works better than most social media cross over sharing. Quality of quantity matters with Instagram. Make sure that you post high quality pictures. Instagram has awesome filters you can use, but a low quality picture can't really be saved.

Preston from Sudz by Studz spoke about Instagram at an event we were both speaking at last year (Instagram has been a huge tool for Sudz by Studz), and one of the things I noticed about the Sudz for Studz profile is that it doesn't only include a website, but it also includes the company email address and phone number. That step optimizes their profile, and has opened a lot of doors for them in the media and with customers. I looked at their post from yesterday and was reminded of two tips Preston mentioned when he spoke.

“First, leave your hashtags in the comments. If you're a small brand, building an audience, hashtags are pretty much a must. With hashtags, you can reach a bigger audience, expose yourself to more people and therefore get better results. But, what's the deal with hashtags in a comment? Why do some brands and users put them there? Hashtags in a comment have the *exact* same function as those in a photo description. They are *discoverable* for people searching those same hashtags. So if you

post a photo with a normal photo description, and later put the important hashtags in a comment, it is as if you're posting a photo with those same hashtags in the photo description. When you want to use a whole bunch of hashtags, it just looks better to put them in the comments than in the photo description. You should *definitely* post hashtags in a comment section when you use multiple hashtags for reaching a broader audience. Keep your photo description as *clean* of hashtags as possible, and instead exploit the power of Instagram hashtags in the comment section. This is much easier on the eye when it comes to sharing those same photos on other social media—such as Facebook or Twitter. Second, give a call to action. The comment they left said, 'Steady hands make stupendous Sudz! Tag a friend who's good with their hands.'"⁴ That is brilliant! Engage with your customers. If they leave a comment you need to comment back.

Preston's advice for creating pictures for Instagram: "First, begin with your end goal in mind and make sure it is relevant to your brand audience. Ask yourself, "What do I intend to communicate with this photo and how can I best do that?" As with most things in life, once you know where you're going, it's much easier to get there. Second, gather everything necessary, whether it is lighting or complementary props, to get the perfect shot. Third, accept what tools you have to work with and make them work for you; we used a cellphone camera for our first two years of business (no shame!). Last, once everything is set up to your liking, take photos and review them to see if they are capturing your desired results. Be prepared to try new orientations, reset props, find different types of lighting, and so on. Once you believe you have the perfect shot, take at least five more frames to ensure you've got it. Like making soap, capturing the perfect photo relies on a delicate balance of variables – all of which you have control over if you're willing to try, make mistakes, and learn from them."⁵

Check out Sudz by Studz to see a well done Instagram account.

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Chapter 6

Link in with Other Experts

According to Small Business Trends, “LinkedIn helps to build professional networks and engagement with other users. It is the world’s largest professional network being used for this purpose. Today, it has over 332 million users and each second adds two new members, all of which attracts marketers.”¹ LinkedIn markets itself as one of the only mainstream social media sites that is geared mainly towards business.

LinkedIn is to cyberspace, what networking groups once were to local business communities. It’s great for meeting customers, getting in touch with vendors, recruiting new employees, and keeping up with the latest in business or industry news.

LinkedIn is the place to connect with people who can help you, and who you can help in return. LinkedIn is the grandfather of social media sites. It was founded in 2002 and nothing compares to it in the professional social media segment. LinkedIn now has both free access and premium subscriptions.

Tips for LinkedIn

1. Filling out your profile is the best way to leave your new, and potential, connections with positive thoughts of you. In LinkedIn, there is more to setting up your profile than adding a picture and a short bio.
2. You are your brand, always, and especially on LinkedIn. Keep all your LinkedIn updates and shares professional only. It is not the place to talk about having a bad day. Go to Facebook for that.
3. There is a great deal of power in the LinkedIn Groups. Sign up to be a part of groups that make sense for your market, and participate in threads. This creates warm contacts and not just the cold connections that messaging strangers on LinkedIn conveys.

How to set up an account in LinkedIn.

Choose *Join Today at LinkedIn.com*. You can set up a basic account which is free, or try premium. The premium ad says that after the first month you can use premium for as little as \$47.99—which I

think is high for a social media platform, so I stick with the basic. Put in your first name, last name and email and then choose a password. You are ready to add your picture and set up your profile.

The fundamentals of a good LinkedIn profile are to:

- Customize your profile URL so it's not just a series of random letters and numbers. It is an option you will come across in the set up process.
- Fill out your profile with as much detailed information as you can without becoming long-winded and boastful
- Include personal recommendations from others, if possible. With time people will recommend you and vouch for you on LinkedIn. On LinkedIn, people will endorse you for your skills. My top skill on LinkedIn continues to be skin care 4 years after I've sold my business, because people read my books and come over to my LinkedIn page and endorse me. In fact, my top 4 endorsements are based on my first 3 books. My 5th endorsement is as an author. The best way to get endorsements is to endorse others.
- Choose a good headline in LinkedIn. It will come up in a variety of places, including a Google search, a LinkedIn search, in invitation to connect with other members, in suggestions for other people to follow you, in the About You snippet when you answer questions on LinkedIn and in a pop-up if someone hovers their mouse over your name.
- You can add 3 websites to your LinkedIn profile. They don't have SEO value, but they offer a way for people to click from LinkedIn to your website.
- Add your Twitter accounts in manage your Twitter settings. This allows some browsing on LinkedIn for a really a big Twitter user to follow you in their preferred network.
- Fill in your summary, which is a section where you can write a paragraph or two about your overall professional experience.
- Fill in your experience. Current and past job titles also help in optimizing your LinkedIn profile for particular keywords, since LinkedIn is built to allow people to search others by profession. Hence, if you want to have your profile come up for "Author", then be sure that you include author in at least one of your current and/or past job titles—even if it is self-employment.
- Fill in your education. Add the schools you have attended, as well as any additional details about your degree, field of study, activities, societies, and additional notes—especially if they relate to your industry.

- Choose your skills and expertise. This section allows you to add keywords to your profile, regarding your professional skills. You can add up to 50 keywords on your profile. As you start typing in each skill, you will get a dropdown menu. Be sure to select the closest match from the dropdown. This will give you the opportunity to further optimize your profile for particular keywords, as well as be listed as one of the top professionals for a particular skillset.

At any time, you can add sections. If you have filled in all of the above, but you haven't updated your LinkedIn profile in a while, you might be missing out on the new sections they have added for even more professional details. When you edit your profile, look for *Add sections*. You will get some additional section options for certifications, courses, publications, and more. Publications are important to include.

You can set your contact preferences, and add personal information if you want. Once you are done, the most important step is to be sure that you have it set to public, by going to edit your profile and clicking on the **Edit** link next to your **Public Profile** link. In this area, you will want to customize your public profile URL so it can be *http://www.linkedin.com/in/yourname* vs *http://www.linkedin.com/in/pub/your-name/72a/893/93* or similar. You can also customize your profile settings as you would like them to appear in public search.

I suggest allowing as much information as possible to be publicly visible. This way, people can find your profile, both in regular search results, and in LinkedIn search results. They will also be able to learn more about you before they connect with you, which should lead them to want to connect.

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Chapter 7

Newsletters, Tumblr, StumbleUpon, Reddit, Disqus & Snapchat

The basic trick of newsletters is that you should have one. Whether you are actively writing a regular newsletter or not, you should be collecting subscribers while they are on your website. Capture your audience while they are visiting you. Email newsletters are a key marketing tool, because they allow you to have a little black book of past, present and potential clients.

Getting an email address from a customer is huge, because they have invited you into their lives, via their most precious inbox. A newsletter should be sent on a regular schedule. When you are starting out, 1 to 2 times per month is plenty. You don't want to be cluttering up their inboxes with daily or weekly newsletters until you have something to offer them every week.

You can use pictures (linked to the blog posts of your last newsletter) and share your progress on your newest project. You can create, send and track email newsletters using MailChimp, Constant Contact, Emma, iContact, AWeber, or other newsletter platforms. Each of these platforms is totally different, so I can't really walk you through setting one up. Check them out. Find a free one that will serve your needs as you grow, but has a reasonable price for their service when your list grows.

I used to use Constant Contact when my list was gigantic for Essential Wholesale. Now that I have started over, and am growing newsletter lists, I used MailChimp. The point of a newsletter is to redirect customers from their inbox to your website for news, updates, sales and so forth.

During the summer of 2016 Google announced websites that use pop-ups and interstitial ads will get worse search results and ranking than websites without them. An interstitial ad is a full screen advertisement that covers what you were reading or interrupts content. Reasonable banner ads will not cause poor ranking, but popup and interrupting ads will. This is relevant to the topic of newsletters because many bloggers and websites use pop-ups to encourage people to sign up for their newsletter.

According to Google, "Here are some examples of techniques that make content less accessible to a user:

- Showing a popup that covers the main content, either immediately after the user navigates to a page from the search results, or while they are looking through the page.

- Displaying a standalone interstitial that the user has to dismiss before accessing the main content.
- Using a layout where the above-the-fold portion of the page appears similar to a standalone interstitial, but the original content has been inlined underneath the fold.

Google goes on to explain, “By contrast, here are some examples of techniques that, used responsibly, would not be affected by the new signal:

- Interstitials that appear to be in response to a legal obligation, such as for cookie usage or for age verification.
- Login dialogs on sites where content is not publicly indexable. For example, this would include private content such as email or unindexable content that is behind a paywall.
- Banners that use a reasonable amount of screen space and are easily dismissible. For example, the app install banners provided by Safari and Chrome are examples of banners that use a reasonable amount of screen space.”¹

Tumblr

This microblogging platform is used for sharing photos, videos, audio, quotes, links, audio, text or anything that you’d like to market. It has more than 500 million users and 280 million Tumblr blogs created. 69% of the audience are millennials and 28% teens.²

The blogs on Tumblr are filled with multimedia—such as images and short video clips. On Tumblr memes, GIF’s, and other forms of viral content are common. A good example that many may have seen passed around on other platforms include the top viral blog of 2013, “Reasons my son is crying.” Pet shaming started in Tumblr, which is sharing pictures of your pet with a sign saying what naughty thing they did. Tumblr is perfect for you if you have a young audience or a trending brand. If not, just reserve your name and enjoy the pet shaming pictures.

How to Use Tumblr

First set up an account.

If you like the content on someone’s blog you can reblog it and make it your own by adding commentary. You don’t only want likes, but on Tumblr you want people to reblog your content. Once you sign up with a username and password, you can customize your blog. You can either look

for the gear icon to go to settings to customize your blog or click edit theme from the top right hand corner of your blog. You can customize your appearance, themes or change your description. Tumblr does a great job of making everything self-explanatory once you.

While I like Tumblr as a social media platform, it should not replace your own branded blog. It is marketed and designed to be a microblog, but you absolutely should be using social media to send people to your own piece of real estate on the Internet.

The Basics of StumbleUpon

One of the most recent discoveries for me was the power of the StumbleUpon social media platform. It is easy to set up an account at StumbleUpon.com. The key to making StumbleUpon useful to you is to have a widget on your website that allows StumbleUpon users to easily *stumble* your content.

It is frowned upon to *stumble* your own content. You don't have to work too hard to be *stumbled upon*, but you do have to make it easy for those who love to Stumble to do it from your site. So, find the right widget to make it easy for readers to StumbleUpon your content. I use SumoMe and love it. The easier you make it for readers to StumbleUpon your content, the more chances you have of having your content *stumbled*.

There are a few secrets to using StumbleUpon.

1. Don't StumbleUpon your own stuff like you would on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. It is designed for others to use and share your content.
2. Create great content that people want to share. Unlike other platforms, StumbleUpon has a dislike thumbs down button. As StumbleUpon puts it, "The nutritional value of the internet depends on the kind of content we create and distribute online. There's a reason it's called a media 'diet.'"³
3. Follow others, Stumble for others and build a following. There is no automatic follow back function on StumbleUpon. You have to find users to follow, follow them, and hope that they follow you back. The more people you follow, who have like interests, the better your chances. And creating a great StumbleUpon profile increases your odds even more.
4. Nearly 70% of StumbleUpon's audience are Millennials.⁴
5. StumbleUpon has a paid advertising program. Check it out to see if it is right for you.

6. Whether you set up a StumbleUpon profile or not, you should have the StumbleUpon widget on your website or blog, no matter if the idea of joining another social media platform overwhelms you. There are already 30 million people who are using it, so you might as well make it easy for them to StumbleUpon your content.

Creating an account on StumbleUpon is simple. You can set your own user name and password or use Facebook or Google to sign up. If you register using Facebook or Google much of your registration form will be automatically filled in. Once you click the join button you are in, but it is worthwhile taking a moment to selection several interest to follow.

Reddit

Reddit is a social networking site used for entertainment purposes, where registered members share content and direct links. It has 234 million monthly unique users. It is the scariest place on the web, because Reddit users can up vote or down vote your content. The average daily votes on Reddit is 25 million.⁵

Reddit is the self-styled “front page of the Internet.” The community of Reddit users are called “Redditors.” Sharing is the important part of the Reddit platform. What you need to know is that this community exists—that people are using it, and they will want to Reddit from your blog. So, grab your name on Reddit and check it out.

In Reddit, you post content, leave comments, post things you find interesting, strange, and “up vote” and “down vote” things you either like, or dislike. You may join a subreddit community that is centered around a topic you find interesting. These subreddit communities might be broad or niche topics. Your personalized front page of the internet is created on Reddit by subscribing and unsubscribing to various subreddits.

To sign up on Reddit look on the top right hand side of the page for “want to joi?,” and click “sign up. Unlike most social media sites Reddit does not require that you pick one username and stick to it or even provide an email address to verify your account.

Disqus

Disqus isn’t actually a social media platform, so much as a social engagement platform, but it can definitely help you improve your social engagement. You use it as a tool for commenting, managing feedback on your own website (or other Disqus-enabled websites), and managing spam/troll type

messages. It's invaluable. When you set up your website, install Disqus as a widget, and it will become your commenting system. 3.5 million websites use Disqus to *attract* readers and *power* comments.⁶ When commenting is easy for readers, they will comment more. The good news is, this service is already supported by almost all the blog platforms, so you just need to install it and set up a Disqus account.

Snapchat

Snapchat is what many consider to be an addictive app that gives you the ability to take a picture, add art and text if you'd like, and then send to recipients for a set amount of time. Once the viewer opens the picture, it deletes itself from the Snapchat servers. Snapchat has over 100 million daily active users, 400 million snaps per day, and is one of the fastest-growing social networks. 73% of Snapchat's U.S. users fall into the 18 to 34 age range.⁷

The thing to keep in mind is that you are not creating evergreen material. A snap chat only lasts seconds, but they also have storyboards which last 24 hours. They are a string of snaps used to create a video narrative. Brands and content creators are using Snapchat to produce these daily stories to engage and excite audiences. There are over 1 billion views of Snapchat stories each day.

You can use filters, geofilters, text, emojis, music and more—all from within Snapchat. Snapchat is a real-time platform that can make an impact with your followers—especially if they fit the demographics of Snapchat. Grab a teenager and try out Snapchat. I guarantee that if you play with the filters your afternoon will be filled with deep belly laughs.

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Chapter 8

YouTube, Vimeo, Vine & Periscope

Video Content

Social media is not only about pictures and status updates, but it is also more and more about video content. Worldwide 51.9% of marketing professional list video as the number one form of online content with the best ROI (return on investment.) Did you know that shoppers who view video are 1.81 times more likely to make a purchase from you than non-viewers? Also, if you use the word *video* in the subject line of an email the open rates by are increase by 19%, click-through rates by 65% and unsubscribes are reduced by 26%.¹

Video content has made an impact across the social media platforms. According to Hubspot, “Between April 2015 and November 2015, the amount of average daily video views on Facebook doubled from 4 billion video views per day to 8 billion. In July 2015, Periscope users were watching 40 years’ worth of videos every day. Syndacast predicts that 74% of all internet traffic in 2017 will be video.”² If you aren’t ready to incorporate video today, start paving the way for 2017. Currently, YouTube is the biggest video sharing service on the web. And as the biggest fish in the video pond—their catalog of billions of videos has become known as “the world’s second-largest search engine.” No surprises here—YouTube is owned by Google—the largest search engine.

Users have the ability to share, rate, and comment on what they see on YouTube.

- There are 1,300,000,000 billion people who use YouTube.
- Every minute 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube!
- Every single day nearly 5 billion videos are watched on Youtube.
- 900 million hours of video are watched on YouTube each month.
- Only 9% of U.S small businesses use Youtube.³

Pause on that last statistic. Only 9% of small businesses harness the power of YouTube. There are a huge number of people on YouTube making it worth considering, though, and YouTube viewers are loyal. I used to have a channel called *DIY Kitchen Chemistry with Kayla*. I still get regular emails, asking for the shows. Thankfully, I wrote a book that includes all of those recipes that I can redirect them to—but they are still bummed that the videos are no longer on YouTube. They liked

watching the videos. Because Google owns YouTube, their universal search gets your content noticed. According to a study done by Advanced Web Ranking the value of Google results position is vital. They found that a whopping 71.33%% of all Google searchers click on the first 10 organic results.⁴ You can embed YouTube into your blog, and others can embed your videos, as well—it increases sharing. In fact, right now we have a Chef Ramsey video embedded on our bison website while we prepare to launch a series on cooking bison using YouTube.

YouTube gets shared a lot, and your content is evergreen. So, you can set up a channel, name it, and it will never die unless you take it down. The downside of Youtube is that the site has intense competition for users' attention. But, sharing on YouTube is super easy. You can video something from your phone, and have it loaded within minutes. Or you can do a whole production channel. My friend The Soap Queen is a wonderful example of a high production YouTube channel. YouTube is very user friendly but there are other channels, as well.

Vimeo

Vimeo is quite a bit smaller than YouTube, but it has a niche audience. It also has the highest quality videos, and a site catering to users who are looking for quality content. If you market niche hangs out on Vimeo then follow your audience. Currently there are 170 million Vimeo users and 715 million monthly views.⁵ There are some disadvantages to Vimeo that YouTube users don't have to deal with. As an SEO tool Vimeo is not as powerful since the community is significantly smaller. Not all services on Vimeo are free. You need to get Vimeo Plus, PRO or Business if you want the highest quality Vimeo products. And videos can take longer to load on Vimeo—especially if you have the free basic account.

Vine

Vine is used to share and view short video loops. The content has a heavy focus on entertainment, rather than how-to videos. Much like Tumblr, Vine has a bigger focus on *viral* and *meme* clips that are easy to share. There are 100 million users watching videos on Vine each month and 71% of Vine users are Millennials.⁶ Originally Vine showed a feedline of videos that were up to a 6 seconds long—creating snippets which is then played in a loop. On June 21, 2016 Vine introduced #beyondtheVine which would allow creators to make videos that are up to 140 seconds in length. They will continue looping previews and roll out a “watch more” feature to allow viewers to see the new full length videos. Vine is not crowded, but is increasing in popularity. It is a community based

platform, they love creativity and Vine is embeddable. One big negative for many users is that Vine does not restrict nudity so you may see more than you planned on seeing.

Periscope

Before Periscope ever launched it was purchased by Twitter in February 2015 for a reported \$86.6 million. Periscope is a live-streaming smart phone app that makes it easy to broadcast video. Using Periscope is like having your very own broadcasting station to go live to share news, tips, rants and raves. You can make your Periscope messages public or private.

If you set your account to public, anyone who joins your broadcast is able to see your live video. Viewers are able to interact by sharing hearts and typing messages that you and the viewers are able to see. Once you are done broadcasting the video can be replayed for up to 24 hours before it is automatically removed from the Periscope app. But your Periscope content can still become evergreen content because your videos are automatically saved to your phone. You can use the saved video to publish on any other social media platform that supports video or embed them into your website. Periscope videos can be short or long. Short, live how-to videos are great for periscope. I've seen public speakers get on periscope while they are speaking just to show their Periscope audience *the live audience* they are talking to right now.

As of July 2016 Periscope had 10 million users and 2 million active users. 75% of Periscope users are between the age of 16-34. Periscope is growing which can be seen by the dramatic increase of usage in less than a year with reported average amount of video users watching 40 years worth of video in August 2015 with a jump up to 110 years worth of video in March 2016.⁷

Resources

- 1 Mawhinney, Jesse. "37 Visual Content Marketing Statistics You Should Know in 2016." *HubSpot*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.0000xyidlcdoxde410qrvvz9746yj>>.
- 2 Mawhinney, Jesse. "37 Visual Content Marketing Statistics You Should Know in 2016." *HubSpot*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.0000xyidlcdoxde410qrvvz9746yj>>.
- 3 "27 Mind Blowing YouTube Facts, Figures and Statistics – 2016." *Fortune Lords*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://fortunelords.com/27-mind-blowing-youtube-facts-figures-and-statistics-backed-by-data/>>.
- 4 "Http://marketingland.com/new-click-rate-study-google-organic-results-102149." *Marketing Land*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://marketingland.com/new-click-rate-study-google-organic-results-102149>>.
- 5 2 Smith, Craig. "By the Numbers: 10 Interesting Statistics." *DMR*. N.p., 14 July 2016. Web. <<http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/vimeo-statistics/>>.
- 6 Smith, Craig. "By the Numbers: 27 Amazing Vine Statistics." *DMR*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/vine-statistics/>>.
- 7 Smith, Craig. "Periscope Statistics. (July 2016)" *DMR*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/periscope-statistics/>>.

Final Thoughts

Are you overwhelmed yet? The good news is that many of these social media platforms can be operated from smart phones. There are also sites that help you schedule posts on one or multiple platforms place. I've included resources to help you on the next few pages.

I know I shared a lot of information. My hope is for you to become familiar with the perks of social media, stalk people a little bit, and see where you will fit in best. You don't have to be like anyone else and follow an exact social media plan. You have to find where you fit, and invest your time and energy into it. Creating a successful social media presence is all about doing what works for you. It's all about being true to who you are, and not what everyone else is telling you to do.

Your social media platform should include what works for you and your lifestyle. Your season in life can impact many decisions. For instance, while Periscope is all the rage right now, I live in the country with limited connectivity, so I have only ventured in to reserve my name and do research. When I fix my data and connectivity issues, though, I may jump in with both feet.

Resources

Social Media Networks

Facebook
Goodreads
Google+
Instagram
LinkedIn
MySpace
Ning
Periscope
Pheed
Pinterest
SnapChat
StumbleUpon
Reddit
Tumblr
Twitter
YouTube
Vine
Vimeo

Image Focused Social Media

Instagram
Pinterest
SnapChat
Tumblr

Free Photo Tools

Canva
Picmonkey

Video Focused Social Media

Periscope
YouTube
Vine
Vimeo

Live Streaming Social Media

Facebook
Periscope
SnapChat
Twitter

Hashtag Practices

Facebook—1 to 2
Google+—3 to 5
Instagram—11+ in comments
Pinterest—1 to 2
Tumblr—1 to 5 tags
Twitter—1 to 2
YouTube—2 to 3
Vine—1 to 2

Social Media Stats as of March 2015

Facebook—Over 1.44 billion active users.
Twitter—More than 302 million active users, & 500 million Tweets sent per day.
LinkedIn—364 million total users.
Pinterest—47 million users.
Google Plus—2.2 billion profiles.
Goodreads—30 million users.
Instagram—300 million active users & 75 million daily users.

Adult Internet Users:

Facebook 72%
Pinterest 31%
Instagram 28%
LinkedIn 25%
Twitter 23%

Life Span of a Post

On Twitter—8 minutes
On Facebook—2 hours
LinkedIn—24 hours
Pinterest—weeks, months and even years.

Instagram—48 hours.

Focused Conversations

Twitter is mostly about *what you are doing*

Facebook is about *who you are*

Pinterest is about who *you want to be*.

Social Media Tools

Agora Pulse

Bitly

Buffer

Crowd Booster

Disqus

Edgerank Checker

EveryPost

Hashtags.org

Hibari

Hootsuite

IFTTT

MeetEdgar

Oktopost

Socedo

SocialBro

SocialFlow

SocialOomph

Sprout Social

Tailwind

TinyURL

Tweepi

TweetDeck

Tweriod

Twitter Advertising

Twubs

Twuffer

Google Tools

Google Adwords Keyword Tool

Google Alerts

Google Analytics

Google Reader for RSS feeds

Google Trends

Author Platform Building

Selah Press—Selah-Press.com

Author Hashtags

Connect By Book Genre

#ACFW (American Christian Fiction Writers)
#Biopic
#Book
#Cats
#Comedy
#Cookbooks
#Cooking
#Crime
#DIY
#Dogs
#Dystopian
#FanFic
#Fantasy
#Fiction
#FlashFic
#Food
#Foodie
#HistFic
#HistNovel
#Historical
#History
#Horror
#HowTo
#KidLit
#KidLitChat
#LitChat
#Literature
#LitFic
#MemoirChat
#MGLit (Middle Grade Lit)
#Mystery
#NonFiction
#Novel
#Paperbacks
#Paranormal
#Poetry
#PoetryMonth

#Recipes
#Romance
#RomanceWriter
#Romantic
#RomanticSuspense
#RWA (Romance Writers of America)
#SCBWI (Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators)
#Science #Fiction
#ScienceFiction
#SciFi
#ScriptChat
#Short
#Short #Stories
#ShortReads
#ShortStories
#ShortStory
#SteamPunk
#Suspense
#TrueStories
#UrbanFantasy
#WomensFiction
#YA
#YALit
#YALitChat

Connect With Readers

#99c
#99cents
#Amazon
#AmazonKindle
#AmazonLikes
#AmazonPrime
#AmReading
#author
#AuthorRT
#Authors
#ASMSG - Authors Social Media Group

Social Media: Platform Building Blocks for Both the Savvy & the Shy

#BestRead	#Novel
#BookBoost	#Novelines
#BookBuzz	#Novelists
#BookBuzzr	#Novels
#BookGiveaway	#Paperbacks
#BookMarketing	#poem
#BookPlugs	#poet
#BookReview	#Poetry
#Books	#PoetryMonth
#BookWorm	#poets
#Borrow	#twitterfiction (Tweet your latest story 140 characters at a time)
#eBook	#Pubit
#editing	#pubwrite
#emergingauthors	#Read
#eReaders	#reader
#FictionFridays	#Reader
#FollowFriday or #ff	#Readers
#fRead0 (that's a zero at the end – not a lower case oh)	#Reading
#Free	#reviews
#Freebie	#Reviews
#FreebieFriday	#Romance
#FreeBook	#RT
#FreeDownload	#SampleSunday
#FreeReads	#Share
#Goodread	#ShortReads
#FridayFlash (flash fiction on Friday)	#Smashwords
#FridayReads	#Sony
#GoodReads	#Special
#greatbooks	#StoryFriday
#GreatRead	#StoryTelling
#indie	#TeaserTues
#indiepub	#TeaserTuesday
#IndieThursday	#GreatReads
#IndieTuesday	#WhatToRead
#iPad	#WeekendReader
#Kobo	#WriteQuote
#LitChat	
#MustRead	Connect with Bloggers
#New	#Books
#Nook	#BookWorm

#BookReview
#GreatReads
#IndieThursday
#MustRead
#Novel
#Paperbacks
#Storytelling
#WhatToRead
#WriterWednesday
#WW

Get or Give Industry Information

#WritingTip
#WriteTip
#GetPublished
#BookMarket
#BookMarketing
#PromoTip
#SelfPublishing
#SelfPub
#Publishing
#AskAgent
#AskAuthor
#AskEditor
#Ebooks
#IndiePub
#IndiePublishing
#BookMarketing
#PubTip

To Discuss the Writing Process

#1K1H
#AmWriting
#AmEditing
#CopyWriting
#Creativity
#EditGoal
#Editing
#IndieAuthor
#RomanceWriter
#StoryStarter

#WIP
#WordAThon
#WordCount
#WriteChat
#WriteGoal
#WriteMotivation
#WriteTip
#WritersLife
#Writing
#WritingBlitz
#WritingParty
#WritingPrompt
#WritersBlock
#WroteToday

To Announce Book Launches

#Amazon
#eBook
#eReaders
#iPad
#Kindle
#KindleBargain
#Kobo
#KPD
#Nook
#Pubit
#SmashWords
#Sony
#WebFic

To Discuss Indie Publishing

#AskAuthor
#AskEditor
#BookMarketing
#EBooks
#GetPublished
#IndiePub
#PromoTip
#Publishing
#PubTip
#SelfPub

#SelfPublishing
#MondayBlogs

Indie Book Group Promotion

#IARTG (Indie Author Retweet Group:
Simply follow to join, then add #IARTG
#RT #indie #author #retweet #group
@retweet_groups in any tweet you want to be
re-tweeted.)
#IFNRTG (ReTweets for Fantasy Indie
Authors via @IFNRTG)
#IAN or #IAN1 (Independent Author
Networking)
#Indie
#IndieAuthor
#IndiePub
#IndiePublishing
#Indiepubchat
#BYNR (Book Your Next Read)

Connect With Other Authors

#140Poem
#1K1H or #1K1HR (One Thousand Words
In One Hour)
#AmEditing
#AmRevising
#AmWriting
#AuthorLife
#ASMSG (Authors Social Media Group)
#BookMarket (Thursday's at 4 pm ET)
#CopyWriting
#EditGoal
#Editing
#IndieAuthors
#LitChat (every M/W/F)
#MemoirChat (every other Wednesday at 8
pm ET)
#NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing
Month – in November)
#PBLitChat (Picture books only)
#PoetTues

#ScriptChat (Screenwriters)
#WANA (We Are Not Alone community)
#wip (Work In Progress)
#WordCount
#WriteChat
#WriteGoal
#WriteGoodNews
#WriteMotivation
#Writer
#Writers
#WritersBlock
#WritersLife
#WritersRoad
#WriterWednesday or #WW
#WriteTip
#Writing
#WritingBlitz
#WritingParty
#WritingPrompt
#WritingSprint
#WritingTip
#WroteToday
#YALitChat
#ZineChat
#MyWANA (A writer's community)

Connect with Publishing Industry

#AskAgent
#AskAuthor
#AskEditor
#BookMarketing
#EBooks
#ePub
#ePublishing
#GetPublished
#HowTo
#IAN or #IAN1 (Independent Author
Networking)
#Indie
#IndieAuthor
#IndiePub or #IndiePublishing

Social Media: Platform Building Blocks for Both the Savvy & the Shy

#MSWL (Manuscript Wish List)

#PromoTip

#Publishing

#Pubtip

#PubWrite

#querytip

#SelfPub

#SelfPublishing

#VSS (Very Short Story)

#WebFic

#WebLit

#WriteTip

Connect with Amazon/Kindle Readers

#Amazon

#AmazonKindle

#Amazonlikes

#AmazonPrime

#borrow

#KDP

#KDPSelect

#Kindle

#KindleBargain

#KindleBooks

#KindleeBooks

#KindleFire

#KindleTouch

#KindleTweet

#lendinglibrary

About the Author

Kayla Fioravanti is a wife, mother and award-winning author. She lives in Franklin, Tennessee with her serial entrepreneur husband Dennis, her three kids, three cats, ten chickens, two dogs, one duck and a herd of bison.

Kayla's writing is a sincere reflection of who she is. She writes everything from poetry to textbooks used in natural medicine programs. Kayla loves to research complex problems, dissect the information to its smallest component and then write it to her readers in every day English. Kayla teaches Author-preneur University through Selah-Press.com.

Kayla's natural product, soap and aromatherapy books exemplify her easy-breezy style that makes learning fun:

- *DIY Kitchen Chemistry: Simple Homemade Bath & Body Projects*
- *The Art, Science & Business of Aromatherapy: Your Guide for Personal Aromatherapy and Entrepreneurship*
- *How to Make Melt & Pour Soap Base from Scratch: A Beginner's Guide to Melt & Pour Soap Base Manufacturing*
- *The Art & Science of Aromatherapy: Your Personal Guide to Aromatherapy, Abridged*

Kayla Fioravanti is living proof that the mind of a scientist can live concurrently with the heart of a poet in one body. Her honest non-fiction books invite the reader into her heart and mind:

- *Puffy & Blue: The Chronicles of Nine Lives Together*
- *When I was Young I Flew the Sun Like a Kite*
- *360 Degrees of Grief: Reflections of Hope*

Kayla loves to teach, share and encourage other writers on their journey. These desires lead to the ultimate how-to book for authors:

- *How to Self-Publish: A Guide for Author-Preneurs, 2nd Edition*

Kayla is also a business and author coach. In 1998, Kayla co-founded Essential Wholesale, which was listed as an *INC Magazine 5000 Fastest Growing Companies in America* three years in a row.

Social Media: Platform Building Blocks for Both the Savvy & the Shy

Essential Wholesale began in her kitchen with a \$50 investment in 1998 and sold for millions in 2011. Through Essential Wholesale, private consultations, publications and public speaking Kayla has literally been involved in thousands of businesses. The root of Essential Wholesale's success was its involvement in helping thousands of other small business owners to succeed. Through Selah Press and coaching, Kayla enjoys having her success fully dependent on the success of the authors and small business owners she coaches. Kayla's author and business coaching is based on nearly 20 years of writing, speaking and business experience.