

**SIRXOSM003**

**USE SOCIAL  
MEDIA AND  
ONLINE  
TOOLS**

# **SIRXOSM003**

## **Use social media and online tools**

Release 1

## **Learner Guide**

Aspire Version 1.1



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SIRXOSM003 Use social media and online tools, Release 1

© 2021 Aspire Training & Consulting  
Level 1, 464 St Kilda Road  
MELBOURNE VIC 3004 AUSTRALIA  
Phone: (03) 9820 1300

First published April 2021

Cover design: Anne-Marie Reeves Design  
Printer: Doculink Australia Pty Ltd, 1d/28 Rogers Street, Port Melbourne VIC 3207

e-ISBN 978-1-922466-61-7 (PDF version)  
ISBN 978-1-922466-60-0

## Contact details

Participant
Name:
Start date:
Phone number:
Email:
Work location
Name:
Address:
Postal address:
Workplace supervisor name:
Phone number:
Fax:
Email:
Registered Training Organisation (RTO)
Name:
Address:
Postal address (if different):
Phone number:
Fax:
RTO contact name:
Mobile:
Email:

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## Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *SIRXOSM003 Use social media and online tools*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at:

[www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au).

### How to work through this Learner Guide

This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this Learner Guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice Tasks	Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Summaries	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning Checkpoints	There is a Learning Checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which Learning Checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

## Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table provides definitions for each foundation skill.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpret detailed familiar organisational guidelines, policies and procedures</li> <li>Interpret and use relevant content from organisation documents of varying complexity.</li> </ul>
Writing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create accurate and engaging content using language suitable for purpose and audience</li> </ul>
Initiative and enterprise skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities to engage customers and promote exposure of the organisation through online activities.</li> </ul>
Planning and organising skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use plans and schedules to guide work activities and meet deadlines.</li> </ul>

## What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Determine organisational and communication requirements	1A Access and interpret strategies and plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Select social media and online platforms	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Access or create a schedule for communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2: Prepare content	2A Source and create content	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Check content for accuracy, currency and relevance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3: Use platform functions	3A Use functions and templates to create active links	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Uploading different file types	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 4: Promote engagement with the organisation	4A Curate and post content	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4B Use posts during targeted campaigns	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 5: Monitor sites and engage with customers	5A Monitor customer activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	5B Communicate with customers	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident



## Topic 1 | Determine organisational and communication requirements

- 1A Access and interpret strategies and plans
- 1B Select social media and online platforms
- 1C Access or create a schedule for social media and online communication

# 1A Access and interpret strategies and plans

## Organisations develop strategies and plans to guide their communications.

Central to the success of any organisation is communication. All organisations need to communicate with clients, customers and other stakeholders (e.g. staff, suppliers, distributors, etc.). Communication can raise awareness of a brand or service, provide information about products and services, or help develop relationships with customers.

Social media and online communication tools have remarkable global reach and provide unique opportunities for customer engagement.

## Relevant strategies and plans

Communication strategies and plans provide staff with guidelines on how and when to use online platforms and for what purpose. Here are some examples of strategies and plans that might be relevant in a business.

Strategies and plans	Description
Communication strategies	These help organisations communicate successfully with customers and staff. They typically align with organisational objectives, such as to develop and maintain loyalty in their customers.
Social media strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social media strategies outline an organisation's:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– social media goals</li> <li>– target audience</li> <li>– objectives regarding what, where and when content will be shared.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Project plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ These are guides for managing and implementing all the tasks associated with a specific project. They typically include information about deliverables, due dates, milestones and risks associated with a project.</li> <li>▪ A project plan often has a section related to communication and a plan for how and when this will occur.</li> </ul>

Organisational strategies and plans are available online through an organisation's intranet or public website. Some organisations provide hard copies of documents stored in key locations that are accessible to staff.

## Identifying the audience

One of the first things to identify in a strategy or plan is the target audience. This will inform which social media and online platforms will be most suitable for each purpose.

The target audience might be the organisation's customer base: that is, the group of customers that purchase goods and services from a business on a regular basis. On the other hand, if the business wants to attract new customers, the target audience might be an entirely new group of people.

Communication and social media strategies might explicitly identify the target audiences for social media posts and online communications. A project plan might include information that will help you determine the target audience for social media content and online communications. For example, the goal of a project might be: *To develop a series of online resources to improve financial literacy among young adults.* If you are developing social media content related to this project, the target audience for the social media is young adults.

## Identifying organisational objectives

Objectives can be outlined in a company's communication or social media strategy. These might include:

- increasing brand awareness
- generating sales
- increasing community engagement
- increasing web traffic.

Objectives depend on the organisation's core activities. Your organisation's core activities are the functions, processes and resources used to produce value. These will vary according to the industry. For example, the core activities of a marketing company are to draw attention to a product or service by communicating with customers. The core activities of a design and manufacturing company focus on design, manufacturing, distribution and customer service. Industry groups will each have a set of core activities and objectives they strive to address.

The objectives for a specific project, initiative, campaign or team is often quite specific. For example, the objectives of a campaign might be to increase brand awareness on Facebook among women living in a 10km radius of the store location. Specific social media objectives should align with the overall social media objectives of the company.

## Reading strategies, policies and plans

Strategies and plans used by an organisation will vary in complexity. For example, a project plan could be two pages long, whereas a communications strategy for a large organisation may be extensive. How a document is written, structured and formatted influences how easy it is to read and interpret. You need to read and understand these types of documents to determine the organisation's communications strategy.

Here is a three-stage process that can be used to help you interpret a lengthy, complex document.

<b>Before reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skim the table of contents, headings and subheadings.</li> <li>Identify the sections of the document that are relevant to your task.</li> </ul>
<b>During reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make notes as you read and highlight key phrases and critical information.</li> <li>Pay attention to tables and charts.</li> </ul>
<b>After reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write a brief list of the key points within the document that are relevant to your task.</li> </ul>

### Example

#### Access and interpret strategies and plans

Imran works in a large state government organisation. His department has developed a financial literacy program for teenagers to help them prepare for life after school. As part of the program, Imran and his colleagues will be developing content and communicating and engaging with their target audience via social media.

To prepare for the task, Imran prints out a copy of the social media strategy for the financial literacy program. Prior to reading it in full, Imran skims the table of contents to get a sense of the content.

As he reads through the document, Imran highlights the information that is relevant to his task, including the following key points:

- The target audience is teenagers aged 14-16.
- The objectives of the social media strategy are to increase teens awareness of the financial literacy strategy and enhance their understanding of financial skills, such as financial management and budgeting.

## Practice Task 1

### Question 1

---

Which of the following plans and strategies should be reviewed prior to undertaking social media communications? Tick all that apply.

- The project budget
- The strategy to reach a specific target audience
- What type of social media will be used
- Minutes of meetings about communication projects
- The milestones of when communications need to occur

### Question 2

---

List two target audiences social media or online communications may seek out.

### Question 3

---

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- a) Sample objectives for social media include increasing brand awareness and generating sales. » Yes    » No
- b) Social media objectives for a specific project need to be broad and general to reach a wide target audience. » Yes    » No
- c) Organisational objectives highlight what the business wants to achieve. » Yes    » No
- d) Objectives depend on the organisation's core activities. » Yes    » No

# 1B Select social media and online platforms

Not all social media and online communication platforms are the same. Although many have similar functions, people use them in different ways.

Both Twitter and Facebook have functions that provide opportunities for conversation, but people who use Twitter typically use it to gain information rather than join a conversation. In fact, almost half of all people who use Twitter never tweet. In contrast, people tend to use Facebook for two-way communication: they share and receive information.

Understanding how people use social media helps to ensure organisations are using the platforms that allow them to fulfil their communication objectives and reach their target audience.

## Social media categories

There are a range of different categories of social media. Each category of social media provides a different type of service and experience. Here are some examples:

Category	Description	Examples of platforms	Suitable for
<b>Social networking sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow people to connect with family, friends and brands</li> <li>Encourage knowledge sharing</li> <li>Focused on person-to-person interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook</li> <li>Twitter</li> <li>LinkedIn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaching very specific audiences – “granular audience targeting”</li> <li>Engaging with clients / customers</li> <li>Understanding and meeting customer / client needs</li> </ul>
<b>Image sharing sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows users to create, curate and share images, infographics and illustrations</li> <li>Encourages bonding over shared interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instagram</li> <li>Snapchat</li> <li>Pinterest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running an advertising campaigns involving ‘photogenic’ products</li> <li>Inspiring and engaging people via visual content</li> </ul>
<b>Video hosting sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used for watching and sharing video content</li> <li>Optimised for streaming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YouTube</li> <li>Vimeo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing content</li> <li>Learning about target audience (through comments section)</li> </ul>

Category	Description	Examples of platforms	Suitable for
<b>Community blogs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a space for people to express their thoughts and connect with readers</li> <li>Provides options for customization and self-expression</li> <li>Allows users to share, re-purpose and re-post blog content from a self-hosted website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>Tumblr</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding a voice, building a group of followers and clarifying their vision</li> <li>Attracting new audiences (by re-purposing and re-posting content)</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed to spark conversation</li> <li>Provides users with opportunities to ask questions and make statements</li> <li>Brings together people with shared interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reddit</li> <li>Quora</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a reputation for 'thought leadership'</li> <li>Driving traffic to the website</li> </ul>

Source: <https://biteable.com/blog/the-7-different-types-of-social-media/>

## Social media platforms

The most popular social media platforms have a remarkable global reach.

Global figures indicate that 98% of people who use digital technology also use social media. On average, people who use social media have 8.5 social media accounts.

The relatively high number of accounts per person is the result of people using different social media platforms for different purposes. For example, someone might use Facebook to keep in touch with family and friends and use Twitter to comment on social issues and current affairs.

Many people also have multiple accounts on the same platform. For example, a person might have a personal Facebook account for communicating with family and friends and a Facebook account for their own small business.

Source: Michelle Carvill and Ian MacRae. 2020. *Myths of Social Media: Dismiss and misconceptions and use social media effectively in business*. KoganPage: London, UK.

The table below lists six of the most used social media platforms in the world – along with two popular and emerging social media platforms (TikTok and Twitch) – along with their key audiences and reach of each.

Platform	Key audiences	Reach
<b>Facebook</b> A platform enabling social connection & entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used more by females than males</li> <li>Popular among all age groups – cross-age appeal, ubiquitous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The world's largest social network</li> <li>Globally, 85% of internet users have a Facebook account*</li> </ul>
<b>Twitter<sup>1</sup></b> A simple and quick way for users to keep updated on issues of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal proportion of men and women use Twitter</li> <li>More commonly used by young rather than older people</li> <li>Popular among highly educated people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally, 59% of internet users have a Twitter account*</li> <li>326 million people use Twitter every month</li> <li>500 million tweets are sent every day</li> </ul>
<b>LinkedIn</b> Focused on business and professional connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly used by people aged 30-49 years</li> <li>Popular among university-educated people and those from high-income households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally, 43% of internet users have a LinkedIn account*</li> <li>600 million members in more than 200 countries and territories across the world</li> <li>40% of users log in daily</li> </ul>
<b>Instagram</b> A visual platform that allows users to share photos and videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More commonly used by females than males</li> <li>Most used by Gen Z, however among the top 5 most visited platforms across all generations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally, 69% of internet users have an Instagram account*</li> <li>A billion monthly active users</li> <li>500 million users access the platform every day</li> </ul>
<b>Snapchat</b> Provides people with opportunities to share pictures and videos 'in the moment'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More commonly used by females than males</li> <li>Mostly used by people aged 18-29 years</li> <li>Much less commonly used by those aged 30+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally, 39% of internet users have a Snapchat account*</li> <li>31% of Australians used Snapchat in 2020</li> </ul>
<b>YouTube</b> A video sharing platform – users can watch videos posted by other people or upload their own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More commonly used by males than females</li> <li>Slightly more popular among younger age groups but very popular among all age groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally, 82% of internet users have a YouTube account*</li> <li>In 2020, 1.78 billion people used YouTube</li> </ul>
<b>TikTok</b> An app that is used to make and share short videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popular among Gen Z<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Popular among parents with young children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the first quarter of 2020, 18% of all internet users (globally) were using TikTok*</li> <li>Significant increase in number of users between 2018 – 2020</li> </ul>

Platform	Key audiences	Reach
<b>Twitch</b> A live streaming platform – users can share their screen with audiences who can hear and watch them live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More popular among men than women</li> <li>More popular among people younger than 35</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twitch has an average 15 million daily active users</li> </ul>

\* Not including China

<sup>1</sup> A significant proportion of Twitter users use the platform to gain (rather than share) information

<sup>2</sup> Gen Z are people who were born between 1996 and the early – mid 2000s

Sources: Michelle Carvill and Ian MacRae. (2020). *Myths of Social Media: Dismiss and misconceptions and use social media effectively in business*. KoganPage: London, UK; GlobalWebIndex. (2020). Flagship report. Available at: <https://www.globalwebindex.com/reports/social>; <https://flint-group.com/blog/social-media-demographics/> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/805656/number-youtube-viewers-worldwide/> <https://mediakix.com/blog/top-twitch-statistics-live-streaming-game-platform/>

## Selecting social media and online platforms

Three key factors influence the choice of social media and online platforms.

1. **Communication objectives:** What do you want to achieve with social media? Do you want to provide customers with another avenue to ask questions? Do you want to engage new clients or customers? Do you want to learn more about your existing client base?

Clear communication objectives help you narrow down specific platforms.

2. **Target audience:** What platforms are your target audiences currently using?

It makes sense to target the platforms that your target audience is already using. Your organisation may already have data on this; otherwise, a number of reputable organisations provide data on the characteristics of people who use specific platforms, such as the age or gender of users:

- Global Web Index: [aspirelr.link/global-web-index](https://www.aspirelr.link/global-web-index)
- Pew Research Center: [aspirelr.link/pew-research-center](https://www.aspirelr.link/pew-research-center)

3. **Type of content:** What type of content will you be sharing? Text? Images? Videos?

The type of content you share will help you narrow down which platform to use.

## Example

### Select a type of platform

Nico is the owner of a small house painting business called The Brush Brothers. He decides to use social media to attract new customers to his business. His target audience is homeowners within his local neighbourhood, especially women aged 30–50 years of age. The content he intends to share will mostly be ‘before and after’ photos – as well as customer testimonials.

Nico decides that Facebook is a good fit for his business. It is very popular among women, and it gives him the opportunity to share photos of his work and text-based testimonials. He can also use the platform to answer customers questions about his availability and prices.

## Practice Task 2

### Question 1

Draw a line to match each social media platform to its likely key audience.

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| » Facebook | » More female users than males and has cross-age appeal  |
| » Twitter  | » Used by an equal proportion of men and women, preferred by younger people and popular among highly educated people |
| » LinkedIn | » Used mostly by people aged 30-49 years who are university-educated and come from high income households            |
| » TikTok   | » Used most by Gen Z and parents with young children   |

## Question 2

---

Which of the following questions can help select an appropriate platform that will meet communication objectives? Tick all that apply.

- What do you want to achieve?
- What type of content will you be sharing?
- Do you want to provide customers with way to ask questions?
- Do you want to engage new clients?
- Do you want to learn more about your existing client base?

# 1C Access or create a schedule for communication

Social media schedules typically include information about what content will be shared, when it will be shared and which platform will be used.

A schedule is used for efficiency and consistency. Planning and developing social media content makes it easier to ensure messages are consistent and align with the communication and organisational objectives set out by the business.

Social media schedules also include a record of the content has already been posted, thereby avoiding the risk of repetition.

## Access and interpret a schedule

Social media schedules are also referred to as 'social media content calendars', which need to include the following information:

- The day when content will be shared
- The date when content will be shared
- The time when content will be shared
- The platform(s) where content will be shared
- The message that will be shared
- The links that will be included with the post
- Information about visuals and images
- Any additional notes about the content

Here is a simple example of a social media schedule template that uses a table. The rows are used to record information about day, time and other notes. The columns are used to record the message, link and information about visuals, organised by platform.

			Twitter			Facebook		
			Message	Link	Visual	Message	Link	Visual
Date	Time	Notes						
Date	Time	Notes						
Date	Time	Notes						

Your organisation may require additional information to be included in the social media schedule, so make sure you check the relevant organisational guidelines, policies and procedures.

## Example

### Social media content schedule

This social media content calendar for an Instagram account was developed by Jibe – a small retail sales business that sells clothing, gifts and homeware.

Instagram updates						
Day	Date	Time	Message	Link	Image	Notes
Tuesday	03/04	12:00pm	Exclusive promotion on leisure wear! Easter is the time for leisure. 30% off women's leisure wear in April. Link in bio!	Link in bio	20190804_Product_Leisure_003	
Friday	06/04	12:00pm	We care a lot. All our products are sourced ethically from our partners in Central Africa. See the link in our bio to learn more about our partners	Link in bio	20180714_Partners_Mozam_012	
Tuesday	09/04	12:00pm	Style it, Queen! Lynette loved our hats so much, she bought one for Prince, her four-year old Boston Terrier. Send us a photo of your fur baby!	Link in bio	20191104_Testimo_Prince_004	

### Creating a schedule

Schedules are often developed using a spreadsheet, such as in Microsoft Excel. There are a range of templates available online that are designed specifically for this purpose. The following website developed by Microsoft outlines how to create a social media calendar:

- [aspirelr.link/microsoft-social-media-content-calendar](https://aspirelr.link/microsoft-social-media-content-calendar)

There are also apps that can schedule and automatically post social media content, such as:

- Sendible: [aspirelr.link/sendible](https://aspirelr.link/sendible)
- Hootsuite: [aspirelr.link/hootsuite](https://aspirelr.link/hootsuite)

These apps allow users to schedule posts on multiple platforms or to schedule posts on one specific platform, such as TweetDeck: [aspirelr.link/tweetdeck](https://aspirelr.link/tweetdeck)

### Example

#### Access or create a schedule for communication

Joss is a member of the Community Engagement and Advocacy Team at Second Chance, a not-for-profit organisation that provides sanctuary for rescued farm animals. Second Chance uses social media to raise awareness of issues relating to commercial farming, raise funds to support the organisation, attract volunteers and promote special events.

Second Chance has only recently started using social media, and they do not have a social media schedule. Joss downloads a template for a social media schedule. The schedule includes the date and time when content will be posted, as well as the message and information about links and visual content to be included in the post. Up until now posts have been made randomly by anyone in the team.

Joss discusses with her supervisor and other members of staff a draft social media schedule for the next three months. She then forwards this to her manager for approval.

## Practice Task 3

### Question 1

Which of the following information need to be included in a social media schedule?  
Tick all that apply.

- Description of the target audience
- The day, date and time when content will be shared
- The platform(s) where content will be shared
- The message that will be shared
- The cost of the platforms

## Question 2

---

Which of the following relate to social media schedules? Tick all that apply.

- They allow for planning and consistency of messages.
- They allow for new content to be developed every day.
- They avoid the use of boring and unimaginative messaging.
- The messages will align with communication and organisational objectives
- They avoid content being repeated.

## Summary

- Organisational strategies and plans relevant to online and social media communications include communication strategies, social media strategies and project plans.
- Two key factors to pay attention to when reviewing strategies and plans are the target audience and organisational objectives.
- When interpreting lengthy and complex documents, review the structure of the document beforehand, make notes as you read and compile a short list of key points once you're done.
- Different social media platforms provide different services and experiences.
- Social media provides businesses with significant opportunities for client and customer engagement because they have such a significant global reach.
- The three key factors to consider when selecting social media platforms are communication objectives, the target audience and content type.
- Social media schedules make the process of posting content more consistent and efficient.

## Learning Checkpoint 1

### Determine organisational and communication requirements

#### Part A

1. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a) Social media strategies typically align with organisational objectives.  | » Yes | » No |
| b) Social media strategies outline social media goals, the target audience and what, where and when content will be shared.                   | » Yes | » No |
| c) Project plans will be used to manage and implement all the tasks associated with a specific project, including social media communication. | » Yes | » No |
| d) Communication strategies are used to inform social media activities when the organisation is in crisis.                                    | » Yes | » No |

2. Draw a line to match each term used in a social media schedule to its example.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| » Message  | » Instagram   |
| » Platform | » 607_MothersDay_Floral_Cake_003  |
| » Link     | » Exclusive promotion on cakes ordered for Mother's Day! Perfect way to celebrate your mum with cake and flowers. 25% off full price floral cakes |
| » Visual   | » @mention Local Community Facebook page  |

#### Part B

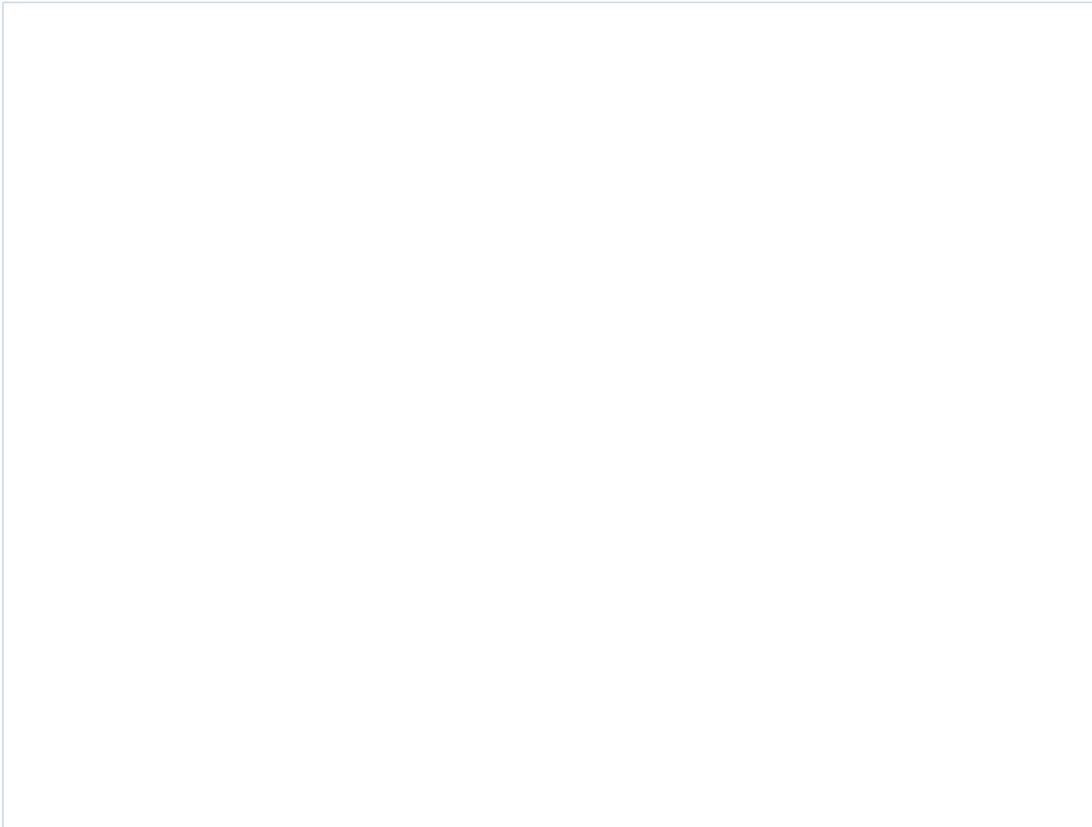
Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

#### Case Study

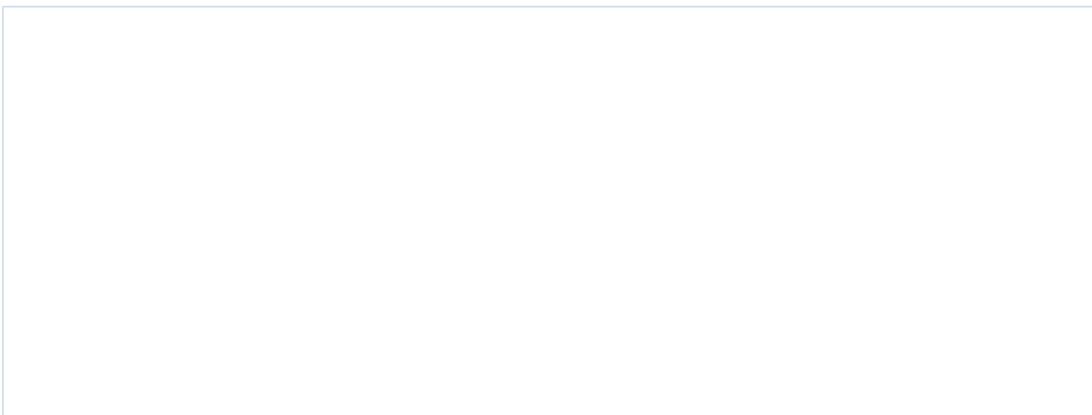
Catherine is the owner of a small cake decorating business called The Beautiful Cake. She wants to use social media to attract new customers to her business. Her target audience is adult women within 20 kilometres of her location, especially those aged 35–55 years of age. She plans to share mostly photos, prices and customer testimonials via social media.

Catherine decides that Facebook and Instagram are a good fit for her business. Both are very popular among women, and each platform allows her to share photos of her beautiful creations as well as text-based information and testimonials. She can also use the platform to answer customer questions about designs, availability and pricing.

1. Catherine wanted to use Snapchat and LinkedIn as her social media platforms. Briefly explain why she might have decided they were not suitable.



2. List two objectives that could drive incentive to increase social media communication for The Beautiful Cake.







## Topic 2 | Prepare content

- 2A Source and create content
- 2B Check content for accuracy, currency and relevance

## 2A Source and create content

Organisations need to 'stand out from the crowd' to get their message across.

Today, people across the world have access to vast amounts of information via the internet. Smartphones and apps have given access to information from almost any location at any time of day, and content, whether it be text, video or audio, is the key to effective communication online and on social media. Content should be engaging, high-quality and designed for a specific target audience. However, before you create the content for your communication, you need to clarify its purpose.

Organisations use social media and online platforms for a range of different purposes. Here are some examples.

Purpose of communication	Description of purpose
Exposure	To get noticed
Build brand awareness & customer loyalty	To make a connection and interact with customers
Build online communities	To build online communities that help to draw in new customers and clients
Marketing & advertising	To market and advertise their products and services
Information dissemination	To share information about products, services, goals, values, etc.
Promote special offers & events	To promote discounts, sales and other special offers as well as events, such as VIP nights, workshops and conferences, etc.

The information used to create content should be relevant to the purpose of the post. For example, if the purpose of the post is to promote a special event, specific information about an event is required, such as:

- the type of event (e.g. social gathering, networking, training, trade show, etc.)
- the venue
- notable attendees
- information about event activities (e.g. a schedule or run sheet).

Internal information required to create content may include:

- information about products (e.g. ingredients, materials, cost, availability)
- details about a special offer or event
- photos, videos, audio files.

External information required to create content may include:

- information about industry trends
- statistics collected by government that relate to your industry or sector
- information about a philanthropic enterprise that your organisation supports (e.g. a women's empowerment enterprise in India).

## Organisational guidelines

Your organisation will have a policy related to social media content and privacy. Make sure you understand this policy when you source and create content. For example, some information may be 'commercial in confidence', or your company may need to seek permission to post photos of staff, customers or clients.

When sourcing and creating content for social media and online platforms, note your responsibilities under the Privacy Act: this includes responsibilities relating to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

For example, if you take photos or videos of people that you are then going to post on your organisation's social media account – such as a conference or an event for VIP customers – you must take reasonable steps to inform people of this.

Similarly, if you ask followers to share personal information about themselves via social media, ask them to share that information through a private forum, such as email.

For more information about the Privacy Act, see: [aspirelr.link/oaic-privacy-act](https://aspirelr.link/oaic-privacy-act)

### Example

#### Sample social media policy

##### Policy Statement

- MrC recognises the rise in popularity of online media and the ways that employees, suppliers, clients and networks use social media to communicate. MrC recognises that social media platforms are continually evolving. While this creates new opportunities, it also creates new responsibilities.
- This policy provides guidance for workplace participants when they engage in conversations or interactions via social media for official, professional and personal use.

<b>Policy Statement</b> (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The policy should be read in conjunction with MrC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workplace Behaviour Policy</li> <li>- Code of Conduct</li> <li>- Disciplinary Action Policy</li> <li>- Your position description, and</li> <li>- The duties and obligations as set out in your employment agreement (if you are an employee)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Policy Application</b>	<p>This policy applies to all workplace participants at MrC, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ all employees, including full-time and ongoing employees, casual employees, fixed term/temporary and specified task employees, employees on probation, part-time employees, managers and employees working from home</li> <li>▪ contractors, freelancers, consultants and people providing services to MrC on a contract basis, even if they are only working at MrC on a temporary basis.</li> </ul> <p>The contents of this policy refer to your obligations are guidelines only and are not contractual terms, conditions or representations on which you may rely.</p>
<b>Definitions</b>	<p>Social Media includes websites and applications which allow users to create and share content or participate in social networking. Social Media may include (although is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ social, professional, and information networking sites</li> <li>▪ video, photo and audio content sharing websites and applications</li> <li>▪ blogs, including business, personal and news blogs</li> <li>▪ wikis and online collaborations</li> <li>▪ forums, discussion boards and groups</li> <li>▪ online multiplayer gaming platforms</li> <li>▪ instant messaging, including SMS</li> <li>▪ geo-spatial tagging.</li> </ul>
<b>MrC standards in relation to social media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When using social media for personal, professional, or official use, employees must be cognisant of the content they post, the audience their posts reach and the potential effects of improper usage. The following standards apply to MrC's workplace participant's use of social media at any time, when it has a clear and close connection with MrC.</li> </ul>

<p><b>MrC standards in relation to social media</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Management of MrC social media websites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All content published on MrC social media must be approved by the Sales &amp; Marketing Manager, the Executive Director, or in the absence of the Sales &amp; Marketing Manager or Executive Director, a representative designated by the Sales &amp; Marketing Manager.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General guidelines for use of social media</b></p>	<p>You are directed to comply with the following guidelines when using social media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must not make any comments or post any multimedia content which may damage the reputation or commercial interests of MrC or bring MrC into disrepute.</li> <li>You must not disclose confidential information of MrC to any external parties.</li> <li>You must not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity.</li> <li>If you are an employee of MrC, you must not do any other act which would be inconsistent with your duty of good faith as an employee or would amount to serious or wilful misconduct in breach of your contract of employment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reporting Inappropriate Use</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you notice inappropriate, unlawful, negative or disparaging content online relating to MrC or any of its employees or contractors, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you are requested to not personally respond to the content but report the circumstances to the</li> <li>Executive Director or a designated representative who will follow up on any issues.</li> </ul>

## Characteristics of appealing social media content

Here are some factors to consider when making social media content appealing.

<p><b>Engaging</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appealing content grabs the attention of the target audience.</li> <li>This could be done in many ways including using humour, visually appearance, interesting content or providing important information.</li> <li>Unique and original content will help to make a post stand out.</li> <li>Stories that evoke emotional responses are generally more effective than a straight sales message.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aspirational</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content should motivate your audience to aspire to a goal – whether that goal is to be prepared for the upcoming fashion trends or to plant more trees for the environment.</li> </ul>

<b>Actionable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content should include a 'call to action'.</li> <li>What do you want the target audience to do – Sign up to a newsletter? Go to a website? Share your content?</li> </ul>
<b>Creates a sense of belonging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People want more than just information on a service, brand or a product, they want a sense of community.</li> <li>Content is appealing if it generates a sense of belonging and community such as promoting events or describing a shared mission.</li> <li>Appealing content strengthens relationships: it invites dialogue and two-way communication.</li> </ul>
<b>Valuable / useful</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content should be valuable or useful to the audience. For example, it could solve a problem they are facing, educate them about an issue or make them smile.</li> </ul>

Not every post needs to incorporate *all* these characteristics; however, every post should incorporate at least one of these characteristics. If people find content appealing and engaging, they will likely share it, thus increasing your reach.

## Language, style and tone

Style refers to words, sentence structure and language complexity. For example, tweets usually have a short and simple style: the language is easy to understand and the statements are short and concise. On the other hand, a LinkedIn post for a professional audience working in a specific industry will most likely use more formal language and is more detailed and descriptive.

Tone refers to the attitude or mood of the content. For example, to celebrate an upcoming holiday, a company might post content that has a humorous tone. On the other hand, when they want to advocate for a not-for-profit initiative, they might post content that has a passionate tone.

When writing content ensure it aligns with organisational guidelines. For example, some organisations have guidelines on the tone and style for their social media posts. This may be outlined in a style guide, communication plan or strategy document.

### Appealing to your audience

To make your content appealing to the target audience, you need to know something about them, such as their:

- gender
- age
- social status
- occupation
- income and generation.

When you know something about your audience, you can customise the content so it appeals to them. For example, if you are writing for a Gen Z audience, you could use brief phrases, abbreviations and acronyms they are familiar with (e.g. smh: 'shaking my head'). If writing for an older audience, you may need to use full sentences and proper punctuation.

Although your content should reflect the language used by your audience, it needs to be consistent with your organisation's brand and image: it could be light-hearted, serious, adventurous or homely.

For example, an ice-cream company that has a playful and fun brand might post slightly different content for the youth market and for an older audience. The Instagram post for the youth market might include some slang, a few acronyms and a meme; whereas, the Facebook post for the older audience might include complete sentences, very little slang and more sophisticated images. The audience would receive inconsistent messaging if they started blogging about the highly technical aspects of ice-cream production when the brand and image is playful and fun, not intellectual and serious.

## Example

### Source and create content

Joss is sourcing and creating content to promote an upcoming tour of the Second Chance farm. The purpose of the communication is to encourage people to sign up for the tour. Joss intends to promote the tour on multiple social media platforms, including the Second Chance Facebook Page.

She begins by clarifying the details of the event, such as the date, time, duration and cost of the tour as well as information about what will happen on the day. She also sources photographs from previous tours and sources a brief, humorous video featuring one of the well-known animals at the farm: a rescued pig called Stanley.

The content Facebook is designed to appeal to a wide audience; therefore, Joss writes the post in plain English and avoids acronyms that some audiences might not understand. She goes for a compassionate but light-hearted tone, which aligns with the organisation's image, and uses the humorous video of Stanley to engage the audience and make them smile.

The 'call to action' is for people to click on the link to the website where they can register and pay for the tour.

## Practice Task 4

### Question 1

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Which of the following information are examples of content used to create social media content? Tick all that apply.

- Information about the material used in products
- Photos, videos, audio files
- Private information about customers
- Information on industry trends
- Statistics from a government department about an industry

### Question 2

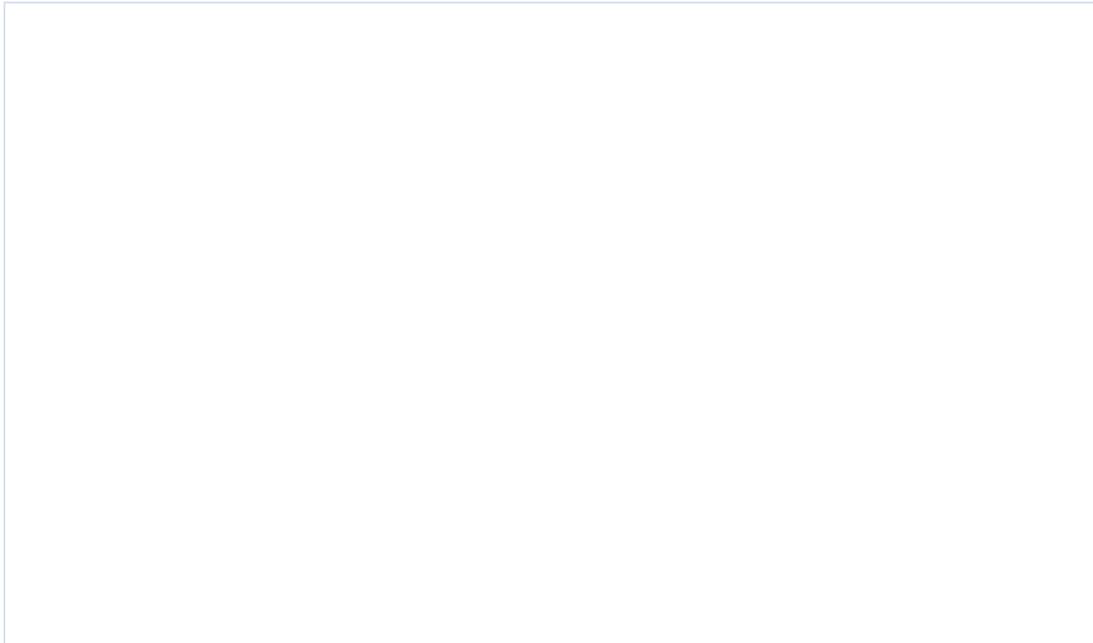
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List three reasons an organisation may want to post social media content.

### Question 3

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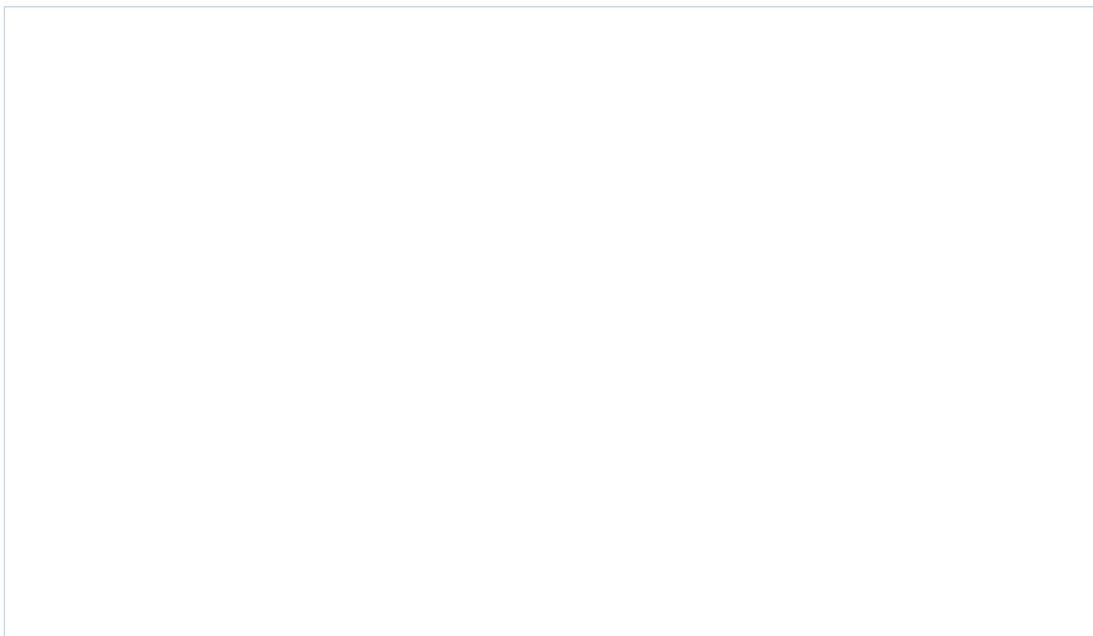
Briefly outline the language, style and tone suitable for a leisurewear company using Instagram to target females aged 16–35.



### Question 4

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List three characteristics of appealing content.



## 2B Check content for accuracy, currency and relevance

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It is easy to overlook spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and broken links in social media posts; this is why it pays to be thorough.

Many people use social media in their everyday life to express their opinions, stay updated on news and events, and check in with friends and family. But because social media is a fast-paced method of communication, it is easy to post content on social media without realising it contains mistakes or inaccurate information.

When you use social media in your workplace, be more careful than when using it in your personal life. If you post incorrect information, use outdated statistics or attribute a quote to the wrong person, you could damage the credibility of your message – or the company's reputation.

Before you post your content, you must check it is accurate, current and relevant. Organisational guidelines provide a framework to ensure this. Such guidelines may stipulate that information be checked by another person or approval be obtained from a supervisor prior to publication.

These documents might be part of a communication plan and outline the type of platform, messages or imagery to use in content. Your organisation may also provide a style guide specific for social media with details on:

- the layout and design of the text
- use of headings
- format of table
- use of corporate or brand colours
- placement of company logo.

### Accuracy and currency

Not every post you send on behalf of your organisation needs to be grammatically correct. In fact, *not* being grammatically correct may be intentional and acceptable on some platforms, especially if you are trying to appeal to a specific audience. However, any 'mistakes' in your post need to be justified and deliberate.

Keep in mind that on some platforms, spelling mistakes – whether accidental or deliberate – are not acceptable. For example, LinkedIn is a social media platform for professionals, therefore correct grammar and spelling are essential.

<b>Grammar &amp; spelling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Check for typos.</li> <li>▪ There may be some room for flexibility with grammar, depending upon the platform and the audience.</li> </ul>
<b>Numerical data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that any numerical data that you have included in your post is correct.</li> <li>▪ If you want to cite up-to-date statistics or financial information, cite the most current figures.</li> </ul>
<b>Quotes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Check that quotes are correct.</li> <li>▪ Attribute the quote to the correct person and make sure you spell their name correctly.</li> </ul>
<b>Dates &amp; times</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publish the correct date and time for an event and double check the details.</li> </ul>
<b>Links</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure every link takes you to the correct page.</li> </ul>
<b>Formatting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure the formatting aligns with organisational guidelines.</li> </ul>

It can be difficult to pick up errors in your own writing. Therefore, prior to seeking approval for the content, ask a colleague to read over it to ensure it is clear, logical and free from errors.

## Approval to post

**Approval processes are internal processes that ensure a senior person has reviewed and gives permission to proceed.**

You may need to seek approval from a relevant person within your organisation before you post content on social media or online. This may be a team leader or supervisor in charge of communications. Check with a colleague or supervisor if you are unsure if your work needs approval. There may be an approval processes to follow, such as how the information is shared and the lead time to allow the person to read over and consider the information. You might need to clarify:

- how you submit content for approval
- how long do you need to allow for the approval process
- who is responsible for approving the content
- how you will be made aware of approval (or amendments).

Some organisations will relax the approval process once employees have developed their skills and proved their ability to write content that aligns with the organisation's objectives

Additionally, some businesses may use an app to share social media content with others inside the organisation and to seek approval. For example, some apps allow approvers to review, edit and/or make suggestions around language and messaging. Here are some examples:

- Sprout Social: [aspirelr.link/sprout-social-insights](https://aspirelr.link/sprout-social-insights)
- Loomly: [aspirelr.link/loomly](https://aspirelr.link/loomly)

### Example

#### Check content

Joss double checks the post she has put together for the Second Chance Facebook Page. She checks the grammar, spelling and information before testing the links embedded in the post.

Joss notices a mistake in a date and thinks what might have happened if the incorrect date was sent out. She asks a colleague to read through the information she has written and double checks the weblinks. She then she sends it to her manager for approval.

## Practice Task 5

### Question 1

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Which of the following tasks ensure content is accurate, current and relevant?  
Tick all that apply.

- Check for spelling and punctuation.
- Check that numerical data has been correctly copied.
- Check that links work and are not broken.
- Ensure the style matches the organisations guidelines.
- Ensure the content appeals to both men and women.

## Question 2

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Suggest three pieces of information that you need to know about an approval process.



## Summary

- Organisations use online and social media platforms for a range of purposes, including exposure, marketing, adversity and building brand awareness.
- Appealing social media content creates a sense of belonging and is engaging, aspirational, actionable and useful.
- The language and tone of social media and online content should align with organisational guidelines and appeal to the target audience.
- It is easy to make mistakes when posting content online and on social media; when using these tools professionally, check the content is accurate and current before posting.

## Learning Checkpoint 2

### Prepare content

#### Part A

1. Draw a line to match each term about checking for accuracy and relevance to its definition.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| » Links              | » Check that it is correct and is the most up-to-date available.            |
| » Numerical data     | » Make sure the address is correct and has not changed.                     |
| » Formatting         | » Check for errors and style suits the platform and the audience.           |
| » Grammar & spelling | » Ensure structure of content is consistent with organisational guidelines. |

2. Draw a line to match each organisational purpose to either of the two social media choices. Think about the platform that will achieve each purpose most effectively.

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| » Exposure through social media activity                              | » Instagram |
| » Building brand awareness and loyalty                                | » Facebook  |
| » Building an online community  | » Instagram |
| » Marketing and advertising, including promotion of offers and events | » Facebook  |
| » Information dissemination   | » Facebook  |

3. Which of the following are characteristics of well written, appealing content? Tick all that apply.

- It is serious and provides accurate facts and figures.
- It is aspirational and inspires the audience to set a goal.
- It is actionable and asks audiences to do something.
- It creates a sense of belonging by inviting people to meet up.
- It is seen as a useful way to solve a problem.

## Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case Study

Nina works for an automotive repair centre that is highly regarded by customers. In an attempt to attract new customers, the owners ask Nina to create a Facebook page for the business and update it weekly with relevant content. They want posts to be light-hearted but also informative. Their target audience focuses chiefly local residents, both male and female aged 20–50. Given the broad age parameters, the owners propose the following content updates:

- » Week 1: At-home car care – targeted to all customers
- » Week 2: Child-proofing your car – to target parents
- » Week 3: High-performance tuning – to target younger males and car enthusiasts
- » Week 4: Car safety automations – to target females and older people in the area

1. Provide three examples of internal and/or external information Nina will need to source to create the weekly content.

2. Briefly outline the language, style and tone Nina should use in her posts.

3. Suggest who Nina will need to seek approval from prior to posting each week's social media content.

4. What privacy guidelines should Nina abide by when creating content for social media?



## Topic 3 | Use platform functions

- 3A Use functions and templates to create active links
- 3B Uploading different file types

## 3A Use functions and templates to create active links

Using social media in a business requires strategic thinking, an understanding of brand messaging and the ability to align content with business objectives.

Using social media in a professional context involves more than scheduling and uploading content. It requires knowledge of the functions and features that allow users to format text, upload files and create links.

Although commonalities exist among some platforms, there are also important differences in relation to certain functions and features.

### Functions for formatting text

Different platforms have varying levels of formatting support as the following table outlines:

Platform	Formatting functions
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'Format with Markdown' function can be used to format and preview your post as you write it.</li> </ul>
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not support rich-text formatting; however, you can use an online text generator to add HTML<sup>1</sup> to text.</li> </ul>
LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports rich-text formatting when writing a LinkedIn article – similar features to standard word processing software.</li> <li>Does not support rich-text formatting; however, you can use an online text generator to add HTML<sup>1</sup> to text.</li> </ul>
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not support formatting.</li> </ul>
Snapchat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bold, format and underline text by selecting the text and using your device's text formatting options.</li> <li>You can also:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>change the text style</li> <li>resize the text</li> <li>change the colour of the text.</li> </ul> </li> <li>For further information see: <a href="https://aspirelr.link/snapchat-creative-tools">aspirelr.link/snapchat-creative-tools</a></li> </ul>

Platform	Formatting functions
YouTube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Various symbols can be used to format the text in YouTube comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Use an asterisk to bold text (e.g. <i>*new*</i>).</li> <li>– Use underscores to italicize text (e.g. <i>_new_</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ For more information see: <a href="https://aspirelr.link/youtube-comment-formatting">aspirelr.link/youtube-comment-formatting</a></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) is the code used to create online content. For example, `<em>` is used to stress emphasis (usually italics)

## Functions for creating links

Providing links in a post is a good way to share additional information and increase traffic to a website. For example, if you are alerting your audience to a sale on women's clothing, you may want to include a link to the women's clothing page on your website. Or, if your organisation advocates for habitat conservation, you may post content that includes links to external sites that provide further information about protecting wildlife and planting native trees.

The following table includes information about how to create links on different social media platforms. However, please note that social media platforms are dynamic and features are constantly changing.

Platform	How to create links
Facebook	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Type or paste the URL into the text field.</li> <li>2. Press the spacebar and wait for Facebook to a preview image and paragraph.</li> <li>3. Click the blue 'Post' button.</li> </ol>
Twitter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Type or paste the URL into your Tweet; Twitter will automatically shorten it to 23 characters.</li> <li>2. Post the Tweet.</li> </ol>
LinkedIn	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click 'start a post'</li> <li>2. Type or paste the URL into the text field</li> <li>3. Wait for the preview image to display</li> <li>4. Add an optional comment</li> <li>5. Click 'Post'</li> </ol>
Instagram	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You cannot include links in the captions of an Instagram photo post; however, you can include a link in the Bio</li> <li>2. Link services such as LinkTree can be used to direct users to multiple sites (from a single link)</li> </ol>

Platform	How to create links
Snapchat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tap on the Preview screen.</li> <li>2. Add a link – you can paste a URL that you've copied, type one in or search for one.</li> <li>3. Tap "Attach to Snap".</li> <li>4. You can also use the paperclip icon to add a link to your Snap.</li> </ol>
YouTube	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Copy the full URL that you want to link to, and then paste it into the YouTube video description box.</li> <li>2. Make sure to hit "Save" afterwards.</li> </ol>

## Using Templates

Some platforms and web publishing software programs provide templates that help users arrange and format their content.

Facebook	<p>Facebook has three different types of pages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Profiles – used to share information about yourself such as your interests, photos and location</li> <li>2. Pages – used by businesses and organisations to connect with clients and customers</li> <li>3. Groups – used by groups of people to communicate about shared interests</li> </ol>
LinkedIn	<p>LinkedIn has a basic template for articles that includes space for a heading and the ability to add photos and images to your article.</p>
Instagram	<p>Instagram has three different profile types: personal, creator and business. Each profile type offers different features. For example, an Instagram business profile allows companies to share content with customers that include direct links to product pages.</p>
YouTube	<p>The layout of the YouTube homepage automatically includes three pre-populated sections: uploads, created playlists and subscriptions. You can add up to 10 different sections by using the Customization &gt; Layout function.</p>
Web publishing software	<p>Web publishing software usually include templates for different content. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Squarespace provides templates for Health &amp; Beauty websites, Interior Design websites and Photography websites</li> <li>▪ WordPress has a range of templates and layouts that can be used for different types of content including blogs, online stores and business sites.</li> </ul>

Here are some links to help pages with more information:

- [aspirelr.link/facebook-profile-page-group](https://aspirelr.link/facebook-profile-page-group)
- [aspirelr.link/squarespace-templates](https://aspirelr.link/squarespace-templates)
- [aspirelr.link/youtube-customise-layout](https://aspirelr.link/youtube-customise-layout)

### Example

#### Use functions and templates and create active links

In addition to setting up a Facebook Page, the owner of The Brush Brothers, Nico, wants to set up a website. He uses an existing template provided by the host to set up the website, which includes a gallery of completed work, customer testimonials, and information about the business and how it operates.

When the website is ready, Nico writes a brief post for The Brush Brothers Facebook business Page, using the relevant functions to post a link to the new website.

## Practice Task 6

### Question 1

Draw a line to match each platform to the formatting features it supports.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| » Facebook  | » Supports rich-text formatting with similar features to standard word processing software.                 |
| » Twitter   | » Does not support formatting.  |
| » LinkedIn  | » 'Format with Markdown' function can be used to format and preview a post as it is written.                |
| » Instagram | » Does not support rich-text formatting; however, you can use an online text generator to add HTML to text. |

## Question 2

---

List the steps required to create an active link for each of the following platforms:

- Facebook

- LinkedIn

## Question 3

---

Which of the following statements about templates are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a) The layout of the YouTube homepage automatically includes three pre-populated sections.  | » Yes | » No |
| b) LinkedIn has three types of profile: personal, creator and business, each with a different profile and features.                             | » Yes | » No |
| c) Facebook has three different types of pages: profiles, pages and groups.   | » Yes | » No |
| d) Facebook provides a basic template for articles which includes space for a heading and the ability to add photos and images to your article. | » Yes | » No |
| e) Web publishing software usually include templates for different content.   | » Yes | » No |

## 3B Uploading different file types

### Different social media platforms support different file types for different purposes.

Organisations often include photos and videos in their social media posts. This helps make their content more engaging and appealing. Most social media platforms also want to attract users to upload photos and videos, which is why they provide the functionality to do so in order to promote usage and reach.

Organisations might also upload documents via their social media and online platforms, such as annual reports or media releases. Not all platforms are designed to communicate or provide access to extensive text-based content, so be selective with which platform you use for each purpose.

### Text

Here are some tips on how to upload text to some of the most common social media platforms:

Platform	How to upload text
Facebook	When using a Facebook business Page, enter the text into the 'Write a Post' section and select 'Share now'. For more information, see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aspirelr.link/facebook-post-business-page</li> </ul>
Twitter	You can cut as paste text into the compose box. The maximum length of a tweet is 280 characters.
LinkedIn	You can cut and paste or write text in a LinkedIn post or LinkedIn article.
Instagram	You can include text in the comments section of Instagram; however, you may only use a limited number of characters.
Snapchat	You can include text in a Snap by tapping on the 'T' on the preview screen. You can also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set a timer for when you want the text to appear</li> <li>draw on a Snap</li> <li>add stickers to a Snap.</li> </ul>
YouTube	You can include text in the video description (the text below the video).

## PDF

Here are some tips on how to upload PDF documents to some of the most common social media platforms:

Platform	How to upload a PDF
Facebook	<p>You can upload PDF documents to Facebook groups and business pages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For business pages, click 'see more' on the left side of the page and click 'add menu' (Facebook treats PDF documents on business pages as a menu).</li> <li>For group pages, click on the 'More' button, select 'Add file' and choose the PDF document to upload.</li> </ul>
Twitter	You cannot tweet a PDF document, but you can provide a link to the webpage where the PDF document is hosted.
LinkedIn	Click the document icon, choose the PDF document you want to upload, then add a title and a description.
Instagram	You cannot post a PDF document on Instagram, nor can you send them via the direct messaging function.
Snapchat	You can attach a link to a PDF from a Snap by using the paper clip icon
YouTube	You can upload the PDF to Google Drive and provide a link to it in the video description

## Photographs

Photographs are a great way to generate an emotional response among your audience. Here are some tips on how to upload photographs to some of the most common social media platforms.

Platform	How to upload a photograph
Facebook	For Facebook business pages – in the 'write a post' section, click on the 'photo/video' button, select 'upload photo/video'.
Twitter	Tap the camera icon to add a new photo, or tap the photo icon to upload an existing photo.
LinkedIn	Tap the photo icon and choose which file(s) you want to upload.

Platform	How to upload a photograph
Instagram	<p>For existing photos: tap the '+' icon, select one or more photos you'd like to share, edit the photos add a caption and then post (you cannot take or upload photos on Instagram from your desktop computer).</p> <p>For new photos: tap the '+' icon, click on the camera icon, edit the photos, add a caption and then post.</p> <p>You can also add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effects and filters</li> <li>• your location.</li> </ul>
Snapchat <sup>1</sup>	<p>For a new photo: click on the button at the bottom of the screen to take a photo, click on the send icon and add to your story or send to specific people within your friends list.</p> <p>For an existing photo: Go to 'camera roll', choose the photo you want to add, click on the 3 dots at the top right of the screen to edit and then send.</p> <p>You can also add borders, text and stickers to your photo.</p>
YouTube	Click on the video camera icon and then click 'post' – write a caption, click on the picture icon, select the image you want and post.

<sup>1</sup> There are some differences in how to upload photos on Snapchat depending on whether you are using an iOS or Android smartphone

## Videos

Here are some tips on how to upload videos to some of the most common social media platforms:

Platform	How to upload a video
Facebook	For Facebook business pages: in the 'write a post' section, click on the 'photo/video' button, select 'upload photo/video'.
Twitter	Tap the camera icon to add a new video and tap the photo icon to upload an existing video.
LinkedIn	Tap the video icon and choose which file(s) you want to upload.
Instagram	<p>For existing photos: tap the '+' icon, select one or more photos you'd like to share, edit the photos, add a caption and then post (you cannot take or upload photos on Instagram from your desktop computer).</p> <p>For new photos: tap the + icon, click on the camera icon, edit the photos, add a caption and then post.</p>
Snapchat	For a new video: click and hold the button at the bottom of the screen to record a video, click on the send icon and add to your story or send to specific people within your friends list.

Platform	How to upload a video
YouTube	Click on the video camera icon and then click 'create video'.

## Audio files

Audiences are bombarded with visual media every day; audio content is an alternative option for capturing people's attention. Here are some tips on how to upload audio files to some of the most common social media platforms.

Platform	How to upload an audio file
Facebook	Facebook does not support audio uploads directly.
Twitter	iOS users can create voice tweets, but Twitter doesn't support other types of audio files. For more information about voice tweets, see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://aspirelr.link/twitter-voice-tweets">aspirelr.link/twitter-voice-tweets</a></li> </ul>
LinkedIn	LinkedIn does not support audio uploads directly; however, there are some online services that can create a video from an audio file that can then be posted on LinkedIn.
Instagram	There is no simple way of uploading audio files via Instagram – Instagram is a visual platform.
Snapchat	You can add music to a Snapchat video and send an audio message. For more information about how to send an audio message on Snapchat see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://aspirelr.link/wikihow-snapchat-audio-files">aspirelr.link/wikihow-snapchat-audio-files</a></li> </ul>
YouTube	You cannot upload audio files, such as MP3 or WAV files, directly to YouTube. However, you can turn an audio file into a video by using a video editing app, such as Veed. For more information on how to turn audio files into videos that can then be uploaded to YouTube, see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://aspirelr.link/youtube-audio-to-video">aspirelr.link/youtube-audio-to-video</a></li> </ul>

## Example

### Uploading different file types

Nico is learning how to upload different file types to his Facebook business page. He has uploaded multiple photos to the 'before and after' gallery page, as well as a few videos – one of which introduces some of the key members of the team and another that features valued customers providing testimonials.

## Practice Task 7

### Question 1

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Outline how to upload a PDF, photograph or audio files to Twitter.

### Question 2

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Explain how you would upload text, photograph or video to LinkedIn.

## Summary

- Different social media platforms have different levels of formatting support, and some provide templates to assist with the layout of content.
- The most popular social media platforms allow users to include links in posts.
- Some social media platforms are visual mediums and not designed for 'text heavy' posts.
- The most popular social media platforms allow users to upload photos and videos.
- Using social media platforms to post audio content is often more complicated than uploading visual content (such as photos).

## Learning Checkpoint 3

### Use platform functions

#### Part A

1. Draw a line to match each social media platform to the correct instructions for posting text.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| » YouTube   | » You can cut and paste text into the compose box. The maximum length of a tweet is 280 characters.                |
| » Twitter   | » You can cut and paste or write text in a post or in an article.  |
| » Instagram | » You can include text in the comments section; however, there is a limit on the number of characters you can use. |
| » LinkedIn  | » You can include text in the video description (the text below the video).  |

2. Which of the following platforms support the upload of audio files? Tick all that apply.

- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Snapchat

#### Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

#### Case Study

Nina is creating the content for 'Week 1: At-home car care'. She wants to upload a video and a series of photographs to go along with a PDF of step-by-step instructions. This will be uploaded to the organisation's Facebook business page.

1. Outline how Nina can upload the PDF, video and photographs to Facebook.

2. The owners have asked Nina to link to their car product page so customers can purchase the same products used by the business. Outline how Nina can create this link within the company's Facebook page.

3. Which template should Nina use to draft her social media post?

4. How can Nina format her social media post?



## Topic 4 | Promote engagement with the organisation

- 4A Curate and post content
- 4B Use posts during targeted campaigns

# 4A Curate and post content

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Content curation involves managing the demands of a social media presence by publishing appropriate, timely and relevant content.

Content curation involves pulling together, selecting and organizing high-quality content that is relevant to your audience. Constantly developing new and original content can be difficult and time-consuming, especially with limited resources. By curating content, organisations can ensure they are regularly posting a variety of content that is relevant and engaging to their target audiences.

## Curating content

Curated content should provide your audience with additional value or a unique insight that they cannot get elsewhere. For example, you might:

- pull together research from multiple sources and present it as an infographic
- comment on a story in the news
- provide a summary of highlights from a recent conference.

If you draw upon existing content from external sources, such as research, news items and conference presentations, you must credit the original author(s). For example, cite your source and/or provide a link to the relevant site.

When deciding which content to create in your own post, a well-known marketing influencer and author, Neil Patel, recommends using the following checklist:

- Does my audience need to solve this problem?
- Is there enough data here to support further analysis and discussion?
- Do I trust this information and where it came from?
- If I expand on this content, will it strengthen my brand?
- Do I have a unique perspective that hasn't been fully explored yet?

If the answers to all these questions are 'yes', then the content is worth using.

Sources: <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2014/12/how-to-curate-content/>; <https://neilpatel.com/blog/curate-content-will-help-grow-brand/> ; <https://neilpatel.com/blog/curate-content-will-help-grow-brand/>

## Posting frequency

When it comes to posting frequency, a general rule is to aim for consistency rather than frequency. For example, if you post to Facebook once a day, stick to that schedule. Don't saturate people with a lot of poor-quality content, but aim for quality rather than quantity.

If your organisation has a pre-existing social media schedule, it most likely includes guidelines regarding posting frequency. The following table provides some hints and tips about posting frequency.

<b>Twitter</b>	Tweets have an average lifespan of 18 minutes, so you may need to post several times a day to get noticed.
<b>LinkedIn</b>	LinkedIn has a slower pace than Twitter, so it may be better to post a few times a week rather than every day.
<b>Facebook</b>	Facebook is also less fast-paced than Twitter – posting 2-3 times per week is usually enough. Posting more than five times a week on Facebook may reduce engagement.
<b>Instagram</b>	Being consistent is the number one priority with Instagram – in other words, if you're going to post twice a week, you have to keep posting twice a week. Decide upon how frequently your organisation can reasonably post on Instagram, and then use that to decide upon the frequency of posts.
<b>Snapchat</b>	Snapchat posts disappear within 24 hours, so you may need to post several times a day.
<b>YouTube</b>	Posting once a week is the standard recommendation for YouTube. It is important to post regularly so you don't lose your audience.
<b>Blogs</b>	The frequency of blogs will depend upon the organisation; a smaller business might publish 2-3 per week, a larger business might publish multiple blogs per day

## Create opportunities to attract user generated content

User generated content enhances the credibility of a business and helps generate trust.

User generated content is created by individuals, rather than companies or organisations.

User generated content can include:

- text (such as comments or testimonials)
- videos
- images
- reviews.

User generated content enhances a company's credibility, because people view user generated content as more authentic and trustworthy than content generated by a company.

Here are some ways you can create opportunities to attract user generated content.

<b>Ask a question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your followers questions on social media to generate user content.</li> <li>• Ask questions that your target audience will find interesting, or intriguing.</li> <li>• Ask questions to demonstrate that your organisation is interested in your customers/clients; it also provides important insights into customer and brand sentiment.</li> </ul>
<b>Run a contest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A simple, consumer-focused contest that offers rewards or prizes can promote your business.</li> <li>• The theme of the contest should align with your company's values and appeal to your target audience. For example, if your company values diversity and inclusion, and your target audience is mothers of young children, you could run a contest on Instagram encouraging users to post photos that represent diverse families.</li> <li>• Hashtag contests are used by businesses to encourage followers to post content that includes a unique hashtag.</li> <li>• For more information about how to run a hashtag contest, see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/shortstack-hashtag-contest">aspirelr.link/shortstack-hashtag-contest</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Offer rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewarding users for generating content is an easy way to engage your audience.</li> <li>• Rewards don't have to be extravagant or expensive. The reward could simply be reposting the user's Tweet or featuring the user's blog on your company's website.</li> </ul>
<b>Support a cause</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a cause that aligns with your organisation's values. For example, if your business values gender equality, you could support an initiative that aims to empower women in third world countries to set up their own businesses.</li> <li>• By supporting a cause, you demonstrate that your organisation has a vision and purpose beyond simply selling products or providing services.</li> </ul>

Sources: <https://www.singlegrain.com/content-marketing-strategy-2/8-ways-to-encourage-more-user-generated-content-ugc/>; <https://neilpatel.com/blog/user-generated-content/>

If you plan to share user-generated content, make sure you get permission from the person who created it. You could do this by commenting on their post. For example, if someone has used Instagram to share a photo of a product, you could ask them in the comments field if you can share the photo on your company's social media channels.

If the user gives you permission to share the content, make sure you give them appropriate credit. For example, you could cite their username in the post.

### Example

#### Curate and post content

Imran is helping curate and post content for an initiative designed to enhance teenagers' understanding of financial literacy. Some of the curated content includes an infographic outlining common myths that young people have about budgeting, and this is supported by a collection of engaging images and quotes.

To encourage user generated content, Imran and his team regularly post questions on social media designed to engage and inspire their teenage target audience.

## Practice Task 8

### Question 1

---

Which of the following are ways of curating content? Tick all that apply.

- Collecting information and presenting it as an infographic
- Responding to customer queries
- Commenting on a story or article in the news
- Taking a photograph of an ideal holiday destination
- Providing a summary of highlights from a recent conference or event

## Question 2

---

Draw a line to match each social media platform to its ideal posting frequency.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| » Twitter  | » Post a few times a week rather than every day.                                    |
| » LinkedIn | » Posts may be required several times a day because they disappear within 24 hours. |
| » YouTube  | » Posts may be required several times a day to get noticed due to a short lifespan. |
| » Snapchat | » Posting once a week is recommended.   |

## Question 3

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List three opportunities that can attract user generated content.

## Question 4

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Which of the following are actions you would take to publish content produced by others?  
Tick all that apply.

- Use content without asking but give the creator credit.
- Ask the user if you can share their content.
- Consent and credit are not required, since anything published on social media is public.
- Once consent is acquired, publish the content and give credit to the creator.
- Seek consent from the creator before publishing, but do not give credit as the user already agreed to reposting.

## 4B Use posts during targeted campaigns

Targeted campaigns are used by businesses to reinforce information about a brand, product or service.

Targeted social media campaigns involve multiple planned social media activities designed to achieve a specific goal within a certain period. During a targeted campaign, an organisation might utilise one or multiple social media platforms.

Targeted social media campaigns need to:

- have a strategic focus – this includes a target audience, platform and message
- have measurable outcomes
- be designed in such a way that they encourage followers to feel or act in a particular way.

Sources: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-campaign-strategy/>;  
<https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-set-up-an-effective-facebook-ad-campaign/>

### A meaningful and authentic message

Targeted social media campaigns help improve awareness of an organisation's brand or initiative, connect with target audiences and increase traffic to their website. These might involve the use of paid social media advertising; however, some campaigns are run entirely via unpaid posts. One of the benefits of paid advertising on social media is that some platforms provide opportunities to target specific audiences.

Both for-profit and not-for-profit organisations use social media for targeted campaigns. For example, a cancer charity may use Twitter to run skin cancer prevention campaign, or a government agency may use social media to encourage people to stop smoking. Read more about these campaigns here:

- [aspirelr.link/ncbi-health-tweet-campaign](https://aspirelr.link/ncbi-health-tweet-campaign)
- [aspirelr.link/uk-social-targeted-campaigns](https://aspirelr.link/uk-social-targeted-campaigns)

### Developing posts for targeted social media campaigns

Successful targeted social media campaigns have meaningful and authentic messages that audiences can relate to. They encourage an emotional response, and they're original, timely and unique.

Here are some tips on developing posts for targeted campaigns on social media:

- Promote one message by sharing the same information on multiple platforms to help the audience retain the message.

- Set aside time to answer questions about the campaign to help build relationships with the target audience and followers.
- Stay true to the brand by making sure that the overall campaign, and every post associated with the campaign, aligns with the brand identity and values.
- Tailor content to the platform by using identical content across multiple platforms to make things easier. However, this approach won't be effective if you don't play to the strengths of each platform.
- Create a hashtag for your campaign that is unique and used consistently across all social media platforms.

### Example

#### Use posts during targeted campaigns

The Brush Brothers are running a targeted campaign to encourage homeowners in their local area to 'Spruce up for Spring' and get their houses repainted.

The small business has limited resources to run a big campaign, so they focus on one single social media platform. As part of the campaign, the business is offering a 10% discount on all jobs booked within the first two weeks of Spring.

With the help of a social media expert, the business owner creates a hashtag for the campaign which combines the campaign slogan and the name of the area where they operate their business. Two staff from The Brush Brothers also set aside time every evening to respond to questions about the campaign.

## Practice Task 9

### Question 1

Which of the following methods should be used when creating posts during targeted campaigns? Tick all that apply.

- Promote one message by sharing the same information on multiple platforms.
- Set aside time to answer questions about the campaign.
- Only use paid posts for specifically targeted audiences.
- Ensure that every post associated with the campaign aligns with the brand identity and values.
- Tailor content to the platform by playing to the strengths of each platform.

## Question 2

---

List three methods you could use to increase company exposure during a targeted campaign.

## Summary

- Content curation involves pulling together and organising content relevant to a specific audience.
- When you curate content, you provide your audience with something that is valuable and unique; content curation is not the same as sharing content.
- Consistent is better than frequency when it comes to posting content on social media – choose a schedule based on your resources and capacity and stick to it.
- User generated content can enhance an organisation's credibility; people are more likely to believe other customers than a company itself.
- Successful targeted social media campaigns have a meaningful and authentic message that people can relate to.

## Learning Checkpoint 4

### Promote engagement with the organisation

#### Part A

1. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a) During a targeted campaign, organisations should only use one social media platform.                               | » Yes | » No |
| b) Posts made during targeted campaigns need to carry a specific message.   | » Yes | » No |
| c) Posts made during targeted campaigns will benefit from paid social media advertising.                              | » Yes | » No |
| d) Posts made during targeted campaigns need to have a meaningful and authentic message that resonate with audiences. | » Yes | » No |
| e) Posts may contain the same key message, but should be tailored to the platform being used.                         | » Yes | » No |

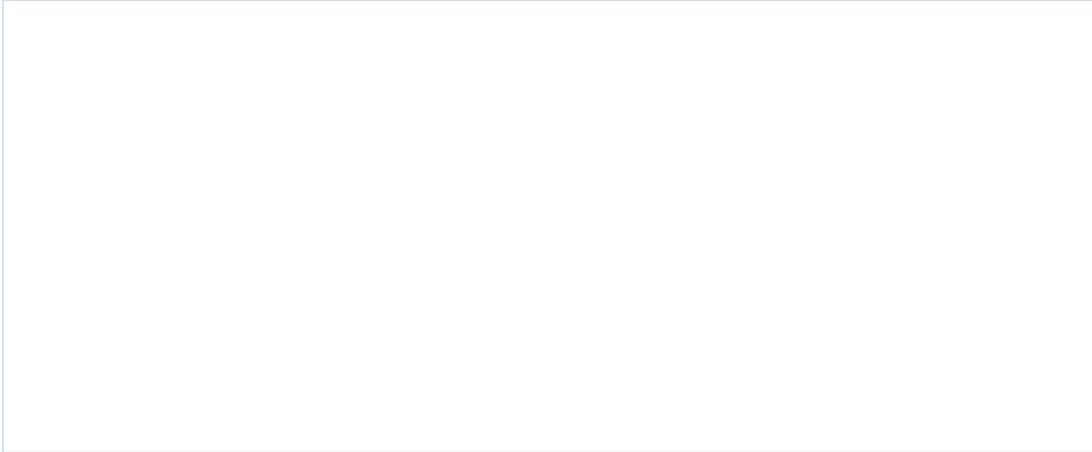
#### Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

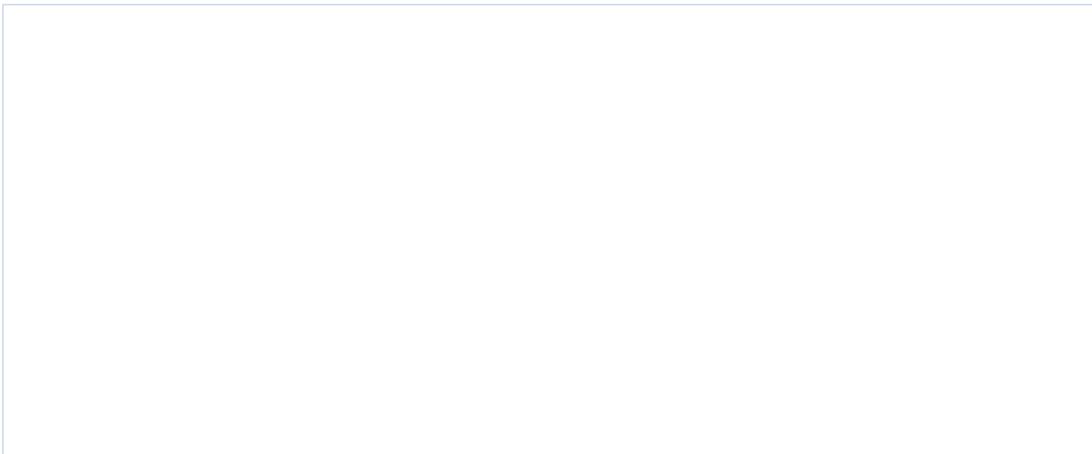
#### Case study

As per her social media calendar, Kalani has been posting three times a week to her business Instagram account where she promotes health and wellbeing initiatives and products. Over the past three months, she has worked tirelessly to produce original, interesting and informative content for her followers. However, Kalani knows that she cannot continue to produce new content at this pace and needs to find other ways of reaching her followers.

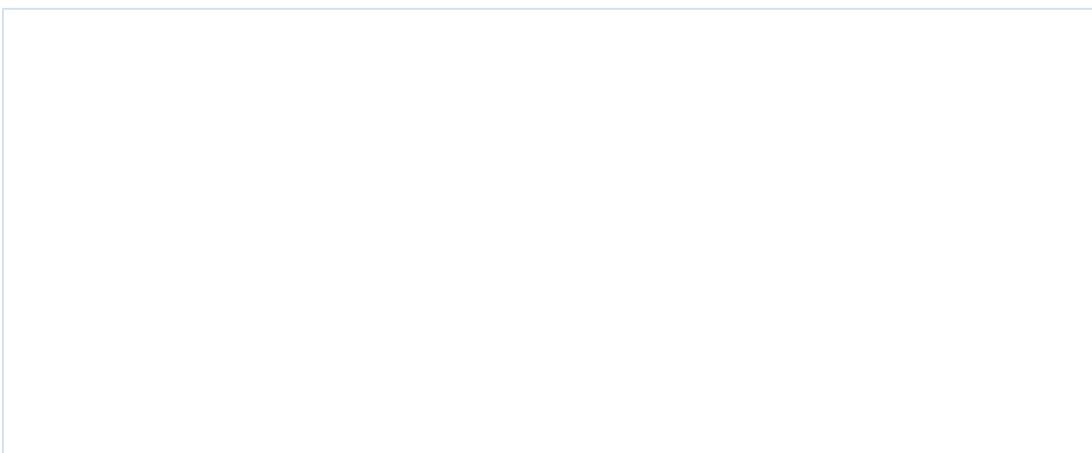
1. Outline two ways Kalani can curate content in order to continue posting regularly to her Instagram account.



2. Suggest three ways Kalani can create opportunities to attract user generated content.



3. Suggest two ways Kalani should gain consent to publish user generated content and how this should be documented.







## Topic 5 | Monitor sites and engage with customers

- 5A Monitor customer activity
- 5B Communicate with customers

# 5A Monitor customer activity

Monitoring customer activity involves observing what the public is saying about a brand, business or company.

When an organisation monitors customer activity, they typically look for reviews (both positive and negative), questions or complaints about a service or product. They might also be monitoring brand mentions, customer sentiments and competitor perceptions.

When companies have an effective and efficient method for monitoring customer activity, they are more responsive to customers, which helps to create brand loyalty and customer appreciation.

## Organisational guidelines for monitoring customer activity

Organisational guidelines for monitoring customer activity can cover:

- when, where and how to respond to conversations and enquiries
- how to respond to inappropriate content
- who is responsible for monitoring customer activity
- responding to customer activity after hours
- the use of social media monitoring tools
- prioritising mentions based on urgency.

Always be aware of your organisation's guidelines around monitoring customer activity.

## Monitoring customer activity

Different social media platforms have different functions for monitoring customer activity:

 <p>Twitter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Twitter Activity Dashboard gives users a detailed view of retweets, replies, likes, follows and clicks.</li> <li>• For more information, see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/twitter-analytics">aspirelr.link/twitter-analytics</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p>LinkedIn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LinkedIn Company Page analytics helps users identify which updates drive engagement, ascertain demographic data about followers and compare your organisation's follower base to similar companies.</li> <li>• For more information about LinkedIn Company Page analytics, see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/linkedin-analytics">aspirelr.link/linkedin-analytics</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

 <p>Facebook</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook Analytics provides information about active users, the revenue users are generating and the actions they're taking in relation to specific products.</li> <li>For more information about Facebook Analytics, see:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/facebook-analytics">aspirelr.link/facebook-analytics</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p>Instagram</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instagram Insights allows users to review the demographics of their audience, what their audience is clicking on (e.g. profile, website, etc.) and what their audience likes.</li> <li>Source: <a href="https://aspirelr.link/hootsuite-instagram-analytics">aspirelr.link/hootsuite-instagram-analytics</a></li> </ul>
 <p>Google</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Google Alert will let you know about any online mentions of your organisation. Google Alert can monitor mentions online as well as social media impressions.</li> <li>For more information about managing your notifications on Google Alert, see             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/google-alert">aspirelr.link/google-alert</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Example

### Monitor customer activity

Imran is one of the staff members responsible for monitoring activity relating to the program his department developed to improve teenagers' financial literacy. His main objective is to answer questions and respond to comments; however, he also tracks what people are saying about the initiative and how it's being received.

## Practice Task 10

### Question 1

---

Draw a line to match each social media platform to its method of monitoring customer activity.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| » Twitter   | » Allows users to find out about the demographics of their audience, what their audience is clicking on (e.g. profile, website) and what their audience likes           |
| » Facebook  | » Allows users to identify which updates drive engagement, ascertain demographic data about followers and compare an organisation's follower base to similar businesses |
| » Instagram | » Offers a dashboard with a detailed view of retweets, replies, likes, follows and clicks   |
| » LinkedIn  | » Provides information about active users, the revenue users are generating and the actions they're taking in relation to specific products                             |

### Question 2

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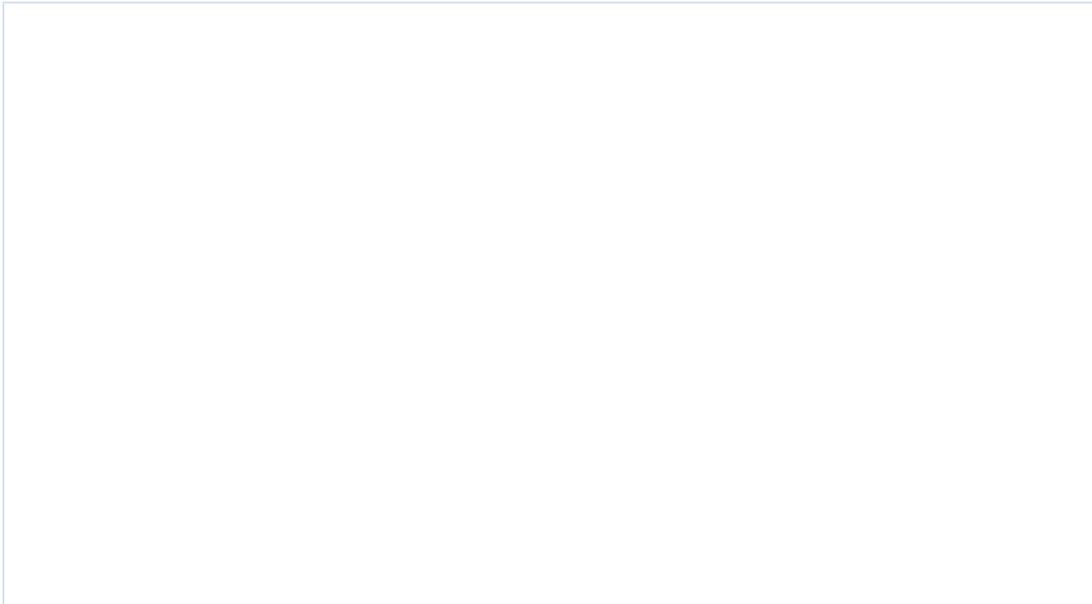
Which of the following alerts or notifications can you enable on Twitter? Tick all that apply.

- Mentions of your account
- Retweets of your Tweets
- Shared common interests
- Direct messages
- Replies

### Question 3

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List the steps required to activate notifications on Facebook that alert you to comments, questions and complaints.



## 5B Communicate with customers

The rise of social media has shifted the balance of power to the consumer.

Social media has given consumers a louder, more public voice. Interactions between customers and companies play out in real time, and customers often harness the power of social media to escalate concerns and complaints. Some companies have learnt the hard way about the risks of bad customer service on social media: viral customer complaints can cause significant financial and reputational damage.

For these reasons, remember to communicate with customers in a timely, professional and positive manner through social media. This will help to protect and enhance the reputation of your organisation.

### Timely responses

Because social media is a fast-moving platform, organisations need to respond quickly to complaints and negative comments.

More and more customers are turning to social media to get support from organisations, and timely responses help create brand loyalty. Responding to customer comments quickly helps to distinguish a brand for its peers. Even in the most responsive industries, most companies respond to less than 30% of their customer's social media comments.

Because different social media platforms have different functions for responding to customers, the table below provides some examples for each platform:

<b>Facebook</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The 'activity tab' on a Facebook page provides a single place for you to view and respond to customer comments.</li> <li>▪ The page inbox provides information about the customer who has messaged your organisation – including past interactions on the page as well as information that the person has shared on their profile.</li> <li>▪ The Facebook 'instant replies' function allows you to provide standard responses to common questions and comments from customers/clients.</li> </ul>
<b>Twitter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You can respond to customer comments by clicking on the 'insert reply' icon ('Reply') icon.</li> <li>▪ You can use the Message function on Twitter to communicate directly with a customer: click on the 'insert envelope' ('Message') icon and search for the user's name. This function is useful when your response requires more words the Twitter character limit allows, or when the customer has a complex complaint</li> <li>▪ For more information about the Message function on Twitter, see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="https://aspirelr.link/twitter-direct-message">aspirelr.link/twitter-direct-message</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>LinkedIn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can respond to comments on LinkedIn by clicking 'Reply' below the comment or in the 'Add a reply' field.</li> <li>Remember that LinkedIn is a professional social media platform – use simple but professional language and make sure you check your grammar and spelling</li> </ul>
<b>Instagram</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can respond to comments on Instagram by tapping 'Reply' beneath the comment.</li> <li>You can set up standard responses to common questions from customers on an Instagram business profile by using the 'New Quick Reply' function.</li> <li>For more information on the 'New Quick Reply' function, see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://aspirelr.link/instagram-business-communicate-customers">aspirelr.link/instagram-business-communicate-customers</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Sources: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-customer-service/> <https://www.falcon.io/insights-hub/topics/social-media-management/how-to-reply-to-social-media-comments/>

## Standard customer responses

A set of standard responses (also known as scripts or templates) can make the process of responding to customers more efficient, as customers likely have common questions and comments about your organisation's products and services. For example, perhaps customers regularly ask about warranties, prices or specific product features. Cutting and pasting these standard responses may not always be the best approach. In some cases, you may need to amend the response slightly to make it more personalised.

Response	When to use it
Thanks for your question about our <i>[insert name of product/type of service]</i> . You can find all details on our offers here <i>[link]</i> .	When a customer has a question about a service or product
Thank you for your interest in our <i>[type of event]</i> . It will take place on <i>[insert date]</i> in our office at <i>[insert address]</i> .	When a customer has a question about an upcoming event
You can purchase a ticket for the <i>[name of event]</i> from our website <i>[insert link]</i>	When a customer has a question about purchasing tickets for an event
Our hours are <i>[insert day]</i> – <i>[insert day]</i> from <i>[insert time]</i> – <i>[insert time]</i> .	When a customer has a question about operating hours
Our shop is located at <i>[insert address]</i> , next to the <i>[insert name of well-known landmark]</i> .	When a customer has a question about the location of a shop or office
You can set up an appointment by going to <i>[insert link]</i> and finding a time that works for you.	When a customer has a query about how to set up an appointment

Response	When to use it
We're so glad you were happy with our service. If you'd like you can leave a review <a href="#">[here]</a> .	When a customer leaves positive feedback on your business or organisation
We are very sorry that you were not satisfied with our service. We place great importance on the quality of our services and the satisfaction of our customers. This is why we will reach out to you personally to discuss a solution to your problem.	When a customer leaves negative feedback on your business or organisation
Thank you for your inquiry. We will look into your problem and get back to you within <i>[insert number of hours/days]</i> .	When a customer has a question that requires a detailed response

Sources: <https://www.agorapulse.com/blog/saved-replies/>; <https://swat.io/en/engage/20-social-media-response-templates/>

## Respond to negative comments and complaints

Not every interaction that an organisation has with their customers/clients on social media will be positive; it's imperative that you navigate these circumstances professionally.

Rather than viewing complaints from customers and clients negatively, treat them as an opportunity to recognise, address and solve problems.

Before responding to customer complaints on social media, refer to your organisation's policies and procedures. For example, you may need to forward some complaints to specific personnel, teams or departments. When responding, demonstrate sensitivity and respect to the customer/client by paying careful attention to their grievance. What is (or what was) their desired outcome? For example, do they want:

- a replacement for a faulty product
- better customer service
- more information about a product or service?

In most cases, you can go a long way towards solving a customer's problem by:

- apologising
- offering a solution
- outlining concrete steps towards resolution.

If you promise to fix or investigate a customer's problem, always follow up, and ensure your promise comes to fruition. Promising something and then not delivering will likely inflame the situation.

In some cases, it is better to use a private forum to solve a customer's complaint, rather than exploring the issue on social media. For example, if a customer has taken to Facebook because they are very frustrated about multiple attempts to resolve a problem with your company, give them an email address or phone number so they can correspond with you directly about the problem. Don't let the conversation become a "war of words" for all the world to see.

In some cases, a customer will seek a resolution impossible for you to deliver. For example, they may be over-reacting to an issue because of other problems in their life and demand too much in return. The best approach in this situation is to quietly let the person move on.

If a customer is sharing inaccurate information on social media about your business or organisation, respond to them by correcting the information. If you do this, provide facts to support what you are saying. And always be polite – most people simply won't realise that the information they posted is incorrect.

If the person making negative comments is aligned with or speaking on behalf of a community activist group which has a broader agenda, it is wise not to respond.

If an interaction with a customer becomes heated, or if you find it hard to control your emotions, take a break and calm down before responding. Alternatively, ask someone else to help you with the customer or take over the conversation for you.

## Referring feedback to others

Most companies have a policy regarding when to refer negative feedback to other people within the organisation. For example, companies will typically have a policy for managing customers harassing or abusing staff online – this might include escalating the complaint to senior personnel. When in doubt, review your company's policies and procedures about how to approach this.

## Positive language

One way you can demonstrate a positive attitude when communicating with customers is to use positive language:

	Example of a good response	Example of a poor response
<b>Use a friendly and professional tone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use language which shows the customer that you are happy to help.</li> </ul>	✓ Hi Jake. I've sent a replacement for you. The parcel should arrive in the next 24 hours. Have a great time at the formal!	✗ Hello. I will try and find out if we can send you a replacement. It might take a few days.

	Example of a good response	Example of a poor response
<p><b>Avoid words like 'don't', 'can't' and 'won't'</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These words convey negativity and they usually don't help to resolve the customer's problem.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ Our subscription service begins again after the Christmas break. You'll receive the first edition in mid-January. I hope you enjoy it!</p>	<p>✗ We're a small business with limited resources so we don't deliver our magazine over the Christmas break.</p>
<p><b>Express certainty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers ask for help because they expect you to be able to help them. Using phrases like "I'm pretty sure..." or "If I recall correctly..." are not helpful.</li> <li>You're not expected to know everything but if you don't know the answer to a question, tell the customer that let them know you'll find the answer for them.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ That's a great question. I'll find out the answer for you and get back to you asap.</p>	<p>✗ I'm pretty sure we don't have that product in stock.</p>
<p><b>Use 'we' instead of 'you'</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convey to the customer that you are working on their problem as a team. This helps personalise your response.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ We'll need to make sure we have a copy of the receipt, then we can sort out the refund.</p>	<p>✗ You'll need a copy of the receipt before I can go ahead with the refund.</p>
<p><b>Use you first name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your organisation's guidelines and policies allow it, use your first name when responding to negative comments.</li> <li>It is easier for people to attack an organisation than an individual.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ I've forwarded your feedback to our Customer Support team. Thanks for letting us know about the problem - Rajith.</p>	<p>✗ I've forwarded your feedback to our Customer Support team. Thanks for letting us know about the problem - The ABC Company</p>
<p><b>Thank the customer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you've successfully managed a customer's problem or complaint, make sure you thank them.</li> <li>The customer took the time to let your company know about an issue, so acknowledge their contribution by extending thanks.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ Thanks so much for letting us know about the problem, Jake. We hope to see you back at the store soon!</p>	<p>✗ Okay, glad the problem is sorted now, Jake.</p>

Sources: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/positive-language-customer-service-starter-guide-olga-zhovtiak/>

## Example

### Communicate with customers

Although The Brush Brothers is a small business, Nico and his staff recognise the importance of communicating with customers in a professional way and responding to negative comments with sensitivity, courtesy and respect. The company strives to instil these values in every interaction, whether they be in-person, online or via social media.

To save time, Nico's Operations Manager, Dom, has developed a set of standard responses to customer queries that are posted on their Facebook Page. However, wherever possible, Dom also personalises responses by including the first name of the customer and includes a positive sign-off, such as 'We're looking forward to hearing from you soon, Jill!' or 'Thanks so much for your feedback, Damian. It was great to meet you last week.'

## Practice Task 11

### Question 1

Which of the following are examples of positive language and approaches that can be used when dealing with negative situations or issues? Tick all that apply.

- Use 'you' instead of 'we' to convey to the customer that you alone are working on their problem.
- Avoid words like 'don't', 'can't' and 'won't', as they convey negativity and won't help resolve the customer's problem.
- Use language which shows the customer that you are happy to help.
- Express certainty so the customer feels reassured that you can expertly offer viable solutions.
- Thank the customer for taking the time to inform your company of an issue.

## Question 2

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Draw a line to match each situation to the applicable customer response.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| » When a customer leaves positive feedback regarding your business or organisation | » We are very sorry that you were not satisfied with our service. We place great importance on the quality of our services and the satisfaction of our customers, and we will reach out to you personally to discuss a solution to your problem. |
| » When a customer leaves negative feedback on your business or organisation        | » Thanks for your question about our product. You can find all details on our offers here [link].  |
| » When a customer has a question about a service or product                        | » Thank you for your inquiry. We will look into your problem and get back to you within 24 hours.  |
| » When a customer has a question that requires a detailed response                 | » We're so glad you were happy with our service. If you'd like you can leave a review [here].  |

## Question 3

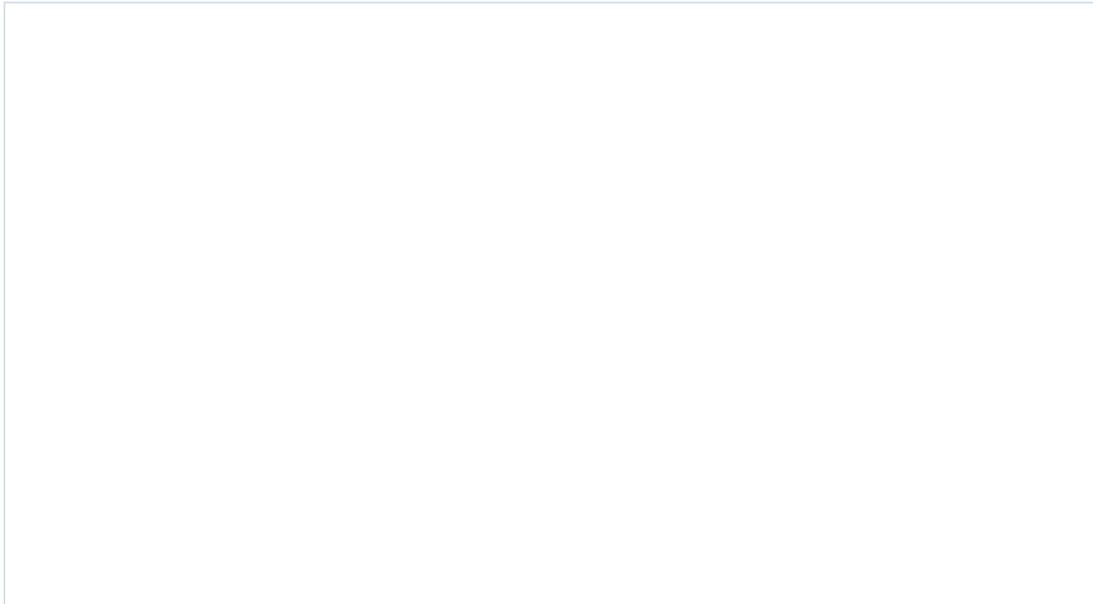
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Provide three examples of organisational guidelines you could refer to respond to complaints and negative feedback in a positive and professional manner.

## Question 4

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Explain how an organisation can set up, or use, their Facebook page to better respond to customer comments and questions.



## Summary

- An effective and efficient system for monitoring customer activity can have a positive influence on customer loyalty.
- Customers appreciate organisations that listen to and support them.
- Organisations need to respond quickly to complaints and negative comments.
- The functions available to social media platforms can help monitor activity.
- Setting up standard customer responses can help to improve efficiency.
- When resolving a customer complaint, apologise and offer a solution by outlining concrete steps towards resolution.
- When communicating with customers, you can convey a positive attitude through the language that you use: speak in a friendly and professional tone, avoid words that convey negativity and thank the customer for their feedback.

## Learning Checkpoint 5

### Monitor sites and engage with customers

#### Part A

1. Which of the following are actions to respond to complaints or negative customer feedback?  
Tick all that apply.

- Ensure complaints and negative feedback are addressed as soon as possible.
- Use positive language, such as thanking the customer for highlighting the issue.
- Escalate complaints to a supervisor to ensure a solution meets the customer's expectations.
- Apologise to the customer experiencing issues and offering them a solution.
- Ensure complaints and negative feedback made by influencers are prioritised.

2. Briefly outline three tips for enhancing customer engagement and the reputation of the organisation through the use of positive and professional online communication.

## Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case Study

Gideon works for a local swim centre that provides lessons for people of all ages. The swim centre has a Facebook page and Twitter account, which Gideon oversees. They update their customers regularly and notify them of important information as soon as possible. Company policy dictates that employees respond to all enquiries and complaints within 24 hours.

During the term, these accounts receive a steady stream of questions and comments which Gideon is able to respond to in a timely manner. However, at the start and end of term, these accounts are inundated with enrolment enquiries for the next term or year. Due to the high volume of communications during this period, many customer comments and questions go unanswered. Not only does this result in possible loss of revenue, but it looks unprofessional and reflects poorly on the swim centre's brand and image.

1. Outline how Gideon can activate web notifications on Twitter to ensure he is aware of all comments and questions being sent by customers.

2. Outline how Gideon can use Twitter functions to respond to customer commentary.

3. Suggest a standard response that could be used to address all customer enrolment enquiries.



4. Suggest two ways Gideon can keep reply to all customer queries on Twitter and Facebook within 24 hours.

