

Social Media

Social media is a great way to share news, views and information. Never before has there been so many ways to communicate with others – it's exciting, powerful and engaging, so if you're not already familiar with some of the social media platforms, give them a go.

Social media allows users to interact, comment, share videos, photos, to communicate and to collaborate. It's accessible on mobile technology – not just the home PC – and allows us to reach more and more people.

This is a (very) brief guide to social media; what to use; when to use it and hopefully some useful advice. Use the links below if you want to find out more.

Twitter... is a bit like text messaging but in a public forum, or micro-blogging. You decide who to follow and receive messages from. Users post short, snappy messages of up to 140 characters and updates are visible in a public timeline. Twitter allows you to alert people directly and links within tweets can take the user direct to the information source such as a website or blog. It's quick and simple to use but does take some time to update and to monitor feedback or send replies. Many people complain that most tweets are rubbish or boring so make sure you provide interesting, varied and short messages! Oh, and be human! Some Key Terms: A tweet is a message posted on Twitter // Retweet is when you repost something from someone else's account // Including @ (username) is a way of sending a public message to or about another Twitter user and a hashtag (# followed by a subject) is a way of categorising posts by subject.

Facebook... is the most popular social networking site with over 200m users. You create a profile and become 'friends' with people. Organisations can create groups, causes and fan pages. Postings such as status updates, photos and videos are visible in a public timeline. You can join groups and write on other user's walls. Facebook is simple to set up and maintain although there is a time commitment in terms of keeping your account updated regularly and responding to posts or messages left by others. Like Twitter though, your content needs to be interesting and varied, frequent and timely and also credible and authentic.

Blogging... the word Blog comes from the words 'web' and 'log' and is a bit like keeping an online diary where people can follow the bloggers thoughts. Many comment on news or particular subjects such as technology or sport. Blogs can include images, videos and links and readers can usually leave comments. Blogs need updated regularly and with millions of blogs out there already, your blog will need to be special to stand out.

Links

[Webtrends](#)

[Introduction to blogging](#)