

Three social media things for your "to do" list

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Unless you are totally isolated from the rest of the world, you should probably be involved in social media.

Social media is here to stay and it's growing like crazy.

There are all kinds of [statistics](#) about social media ... who does it, how it has grown, why it's wonderful, why it's horrible. The fact is: it's here to stay and it's growing like crazy. You might as well jump in.

For a while I thought that social media was an age-related thing. Shame on me for thinking that. The truth is, I know retirement-age people who are way more social media savvy than some 20-year-olds, and I know people in their 20s who have no idea how to tweet.

Social media things for your "to do" list

1. Explore at least three of the more popular social media outlets (e.g., [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Pinterest](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)). Snoop around a bit and check out what they do. Jump in and sign up, or make an informed decision not to participate.
2. Post on a regular basis (daily, weekly, or even monthly) on two or three different social media platforms so that you stay in the game.
3. Create a personal social media policy, setting up some rules for the ways you use social media.

What I use

I mainly use three social media forums. I started out with Facebook, drifted over to LinkedIn, and eventually, I surrendered to the Twitter world. Mind you, I have signed up for a few more social media options (Pinterest being one of them) but I don't use them. At least not yet. You can find me on social networking sites by searching for "Gretchen Roufs".

I use Facebook socially, and to keep up with family members. I set the privacy settings to allow only my Facebook friends to view my information. (I also have a [separate Facebook page](#) for my artwork -- which allows me to post and promote my whimsical watercolors. This page is available for public viewing. But I digress...)

LinkedIn is what I use for professional networking. It allows me to post career updates about myself and view professional updates that my friends and acquaintances post. I also use it as a resource. For instance, if I need to find somebody in the construction business, I search in my LinkedIn contacts for "construction".

Twitter for me is sort of a hybrid business/social thing. Mostly, I use Twitter to get information about things that are of interest to me. I follow the national public relations professional organization and its leadership. CNN for hot news. National Weather Service for local weather. Certain food trucks to see what they're serving today. And a bunch of individual thought leaders, like Tom Peters.

When I do my social networking

I try to engage in social media stuff at the beginning of the day, sort of as a way to wake up while waiting for the tea to brew. It's amazing the things I can learn in just a few minutes, such as [public speaking lessons from Mick Jagger](#). [Creating a memorable personal brand](#). And [tips for getting yourself to go to bed on time](#).

My personal social media policy

The other thing I've learned is that it's really important to have some sort of personal social media policy. Companies and organizations have social media policies and people need them too. A good rule-of-thumb is: ***if you don't want to see something on the front page of tomorrow's paper, don't post it on a social media page.*** I don't talk about personal things on LinkedIn. I never comment on work stuff on Facebook, nor do I ever post any less-than-flattering pictures of friends (or myself). I don't talk about much of anything on Twitter. And I never talk about anything controversial (like politics or religion) even if I am bursting with opinions.

I hope to see you on a social media site or two. Just jump in and do it.

All the best,

Gretchen

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