

CATTLE CULTURE

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

The Modern Cowboy

*The toolbox of today's cattleman consists of more than just a hammer and nails
— it takes social media to thrive in the modern world.*

Social media is an easily accessible tool that perhaps we as an industry haven't fully embraced. Before you dismiss my comment as the ramblings of a young 21-year-old who is attached at the hip to her smartphone, bear with me for a moment.

I promise these social media platforms are not just for my generation — this tool is capable of adding value to your operation. Don't avoid the world of social media because it seems foreign.

Today's world centers around social media and instantaneous connection. The modern cowboy needs to be tough enough to wrangle calves and pesky media platforms.

This year, active social media users passed the 3.8-billion mark. Read that again. More than 3.8 billion people are utilizing social media. So why shouldn't cattle producers?

Livestock sales hosted entirely online are quickly gaining popularity. The use of videos to market cattle has proven effective and efficient.

Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn are connecting producers from every corner of the country to sell equipment and cattle as well as exchange tips and tricks of the trade.



We all acknowledge the necessity of

marketing our businesses, but we're guilty of not always embracing all the tools available. Social media is something we should embrace instead of dismiss.

Brett Spader, Angus Media president, says social media is a low-cost method of marketing

that both calls for audience engagement and can be easily shared. To be effective in our marketing, Spader says cattle producers need to balance print, digital and media strategies. To get more insight on balancing these strategies, watch Angus University's March Marketing Madness Webinar on the Angus TV YouTube channel.

According to Sprout Social, a social media management and optimization platform, roughly three-quarters of Facebook users visit the site on a daily

basis. More than 40% of Instagram users open the app more than once a day. And if you were worried about those people not being "your people," 66% of individuals living in a rural area report using Facebook in the United States.

As agriculturists, we proudly say every household in the country is touched by our industry in some way. So why shouldn't we be utilizing tools like social media to make sure more than just our products are reaching those households, too?

If you're looking to dip your toes into the world of social media, I recommend creating a list of your goals. Know what you want to get out of your newfound social media accounts. Then, look into research done by publishing platforms like Sprout Social or Social Media Today to perfect your marketing strategy. Other ranchers across the country are already using social media to reach new customers, so you shouldn't be afraid to reach out to them for advice either.

Social media provides a unique opportunity to broadcast our livestock and services to both consumers and fellow producers. It's time you added social media management to your toolbox. 

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