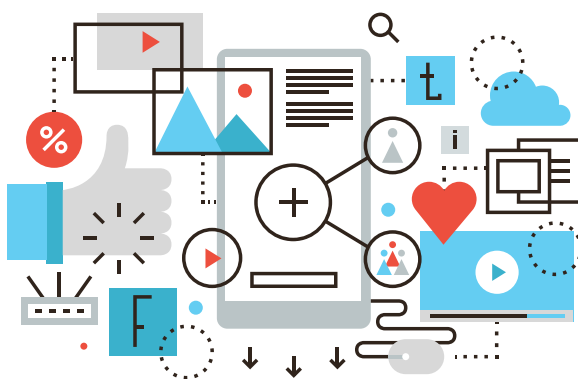


# Seven Savvy Social Media Strategies

*Complement print marketing efforts with extra reach through social media.*

*by Kindra Gordon, field editor*



Facebook. YouTube. Instagram. While these digital media sites are known as a means for sharing social connections, they can help boost your business credentials as well. Specifically, social media can help extend print marketing efforts, by offering a more personalized or “behind the scenes” insight into the business. In total, social media marketing strategies may help further inform ag customers — as well as provide ag education to the general public.

## **Strategy 1 — Utilize video.**

Amanda Kelly, who has worked with hundreds of business owners as director of small business training with the Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corporation, shares that YouTube is the No. 1 platform for reaching all age groups. A close second is Facebook Live.

She notes that people are often scared of using Facebook Live, but she says, “It gets the most engagement with customers.” Additionally, she shares that having the “location” turned on when posting can also boost views.

**Strategy 2 — Be less promotional and more informational.** Print and radio ads should focus on “selling” your product, while your social media focus is on “telling” about your product, Kelly suggests. For instance, she explains, you can’t sell over Facebook, but you can market,


and people can engage and ask questions. You can share animal care photos, recipes and shopping lists for a recipe, highlight photos of a meal you’ve prepared, as well as what you feed the animals. Ultimately, social media images should tell the story of your farm or business team.

**Strategy 3 — Use high-quality photos.** Kelly even advises hiring a photographer to take several great images that you might utilize and post throughout the year. These photos could also be used with print marketing campaigns as well.

**Strategy 4 — Consider format.** If using Facebook (or Instagram), make sure it is a business page and not a personal page. Why? Kelly explains personal pages are limited to 5,000 friends, while a business Facebook page allows unlimited followers and provides in-depth insight analytics to assess how many views posts receive as well as some age and gender demographics. You can also schedule content to be more efficient with your time. With that, Kelly notes that email newsletters can also be an effective marketing tool, and she points out, “You own your contacts.”

**Strategy 5 — Consider timing.** From social media research, Kelly reports that there are certain times that produce more engagement with viewers than others. In general, she says, the best post times tend to be 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 7 to 9 p.m. The worst time is 3 p.m. Additionally, Tuesdays and Thursdays tend to have the highest engagement, followed by the weekend.

**Strategy 6 — Conduct a survey.** The beauty of social media is that it allows for collecting input or feedback to help guide your business. Thus, Kelly advises it can be a great tool to conduct mini-surveys related to your business and gain insights from customers. She suggests asking just two or three questions and seeing what kind of input and ideas you receive. (Surveys can be developed for free in programs like Google or Survey Monkey with the link then shared on social media sites.)

**Strategy 7 — Give gratitude.** Express how thankful you are to customers by including photos or short features recognizing customers on your social media sites. Ultimately, gratitude is key to any long-lasting customer relationships, Kelly notes. 

*Editor’s note: Amanda Kelly is the lead developer and program manager for Be Boss Online — a digital marketing curriculum designed to improve online marketing of small business owners. Learn more at <https://bebossonline.com>.*