

# Social Media Optimization Taking the First Step

---

*Author: Independent Producers of America – <http://www.ipafamily.com>*

# About this whitepaper

---

Copyright 2011 Independent Producers of America, LLC – [www.ipafamily.com](http://www.ipafamily.com). This document may be freely distributed subject to inclusion of this copyright notice and our World Wide Web URL <http://www.ipafamily.com>. All content within this document must be kept intact.

# Introduction

---

There is no doubt a very real benefit to using Social Media for B2B (Business to Business) and B2C (Business to Consumer) efforts. The fact that Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn have nearly become household names can not be ignored.

Before we take a look at getting started using social media for your own business needs, let's take a look at a few statistics for the three major social outlets that were just mentioned, as we will begin our focus on them.

# Facebook Statistics

---

500+ million users.

50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day.

Average user has 130 friends.

People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook.

*Source: <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>*

# Twitter Statistics

---

175 million users.

180 million unique visitors

600 million search queries per day

95 millions tweets per day

*Source: [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/just\\_the\\_facts\\_statistics\\_from\\_twitter\\_chirp.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/just_the_facts_statistics_from_twitter_chirp.php)*

*Source: <http://twitter.com/about>*

# LinkedIn Statistics

---

90+ million users.

1 million new members every 12 days.

More than 1 million company pages.

*Source: <http://press.linkedin.com/about/>*

# Introduction

---

At the time of this writing, these three social networks have a combined user base of 765 million people.

Facebook estimates that 50% of their active user base logs on in any given day.

Twitter users send out 95 million tweets per day.

LinkedIn averages a new member signing on every second of every day.

Being able to reach this staggering amount of people seems to be a dream come true for businesses of any size. Whether you're a one man show or a Fortune 500 company, having this kind of reach available is a critical resource in today's business world.

# Introduction

---

What I've prepared for you is not only a step by step guide to set up your social media profiles but also an introduction into Social Media Optimization.

Having social media accounts gets your foot in the door. The next step is creating the opportunity to sit at the kitchen table.

Before we jump into optimization, let's first walk through setting up your accounts. If you have already done this, please feel free to skip to the section on optimizing your account on page 16.

# Signing Up

---

As mentioned in the introduction, there are three major social networking sites out there (at the time of this writing) - Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Since I've shared some statistics already, I'm going to jump right into the exact steps you need to create to get started.

Before we create our accounts, I want to advise you to use the same email address for every account. If you don't have a business address, please go to a free service like Gmail or Yahoo and create a professional personal address. Use your name if it's available or a combination of your name and business name.

# Signing up with Facebook

---

**1. Go to Facebook.com** - <http://www.facebook.com>

**2. Enter your First Name**

Use your real first name or the name that you prefer to be called as long as it is professional.

**3. Enter your Last Name**

Use your real last name.

**4. Enter your email address**

Use your business email address or a professional personal address.

**5. Re-Enter your email**

# Signing up with Facebook

---

## **6. Create and enter a password**

You may want to write your password down and save it somewhere private.

## **7. Enter your gender**

## **8. Enter your birth date**

Be honest with this one. When your business becomes a household name, you don't want anybody to question why you lied about your age on Facebook.

## **9. Click Sign Up**

A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you used to sign up. Follow the directions in this email to activate your account.

# Signing up with Twitter

---

**1. Go to Twitter.com** - <https://twitter.com/signup>

**2. Enter your full name**

This shows up in your profile so make sure to enter your real name or a name that you prefer to be called as long as it is professional.

**3. Create a username**

I recommend this being a derivative of your real name. If you can use your full name, that is ideal. If you don't want to use your real name, you could use a combination of your name and business name or simply use your business name if it is available.

**4. Create and enter a password**

You may want to write your password down and save it somewhere private.

# Signing up with Twitter

---

## **5. Enter your email address**

Use your business email address or a professional personal address.

## **6. Check to allow people to find you by email**

## **7. Check whether you want to be updated via email on Twitter news.**

This is optional but can be helpful if you want to keep up to date with how Twitter works and current topical information.

## **8. Click Create My Account**

A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you used to sign up. Follow the directions in this email to activate your account.

# Signing up with LinkedIn

---

**1. Go to LinkedIn.com** - <http://www.linkedin.com/>

**2. Enter your First Name**

Use Your real first name or the name that you prefer to be called as long as it is professional.

**3. Enter your Last Name**

Use your real last name.

**4. Enter your email address**

Use your business email address or a professional personal address.

**5. Create and enter a password**

You may want to write your password down and save it somewhere private.

# Signing up with LinkedIn

---

## **6. Click Join Now**

A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you used to sign up. Follow the directions in that email to activate your account.

# Optimizing your Social Media Profiles

---

Now that you are signed up to the three major networks and you've activated your accounts, let's take a look at how you can optimize your accounts to get the most value from these resources.

Some of the work that you are about to do is repetitive. It may seem tedious but the benefit is that you can do the bulk of the work once and reap the rewards.

We're going to go in the same order that we did signing up. So let's head back over to Facebook and get started.

# Optimizing your Social Media Profiles

---

As you go through the optimization process with this guide, you will notice recommendations to add “keywords” related to your business. It can be tempting to list out as many keywords as you can think of in hopes to maximize your reach.

I strongly advise against this practice as many people will view it as “spamming” your social profile.

When I mention keywords, I want you to use them as naturally as possible. Include them if they make sense in context.

# Optimizing your Facebook Account

---

Log in to your Facebook account.

When you log in, you may see a screen with three steps to update your account info, similar to this:



The screenshot shows a three-step process for updating account information. Step 1 is 'Email Address', Step 2 is 'Phone Number', and Step 3 is 'Security Question', which is currently active. The main content area is titled 'Update Your Security Information' and includes a progress indicator for 'Overall Protection' set to 'Low'. Below this, there is a message explaining the purpose of the security question and a form to select a question from a dropdown menu and enter an answer.

**Step 1**  
Email Address

**Step 2**  
Phone Number

**Step 3**  
Security Question

**Update Your Security Information** Overall Protection:  Low [?]

If there is ever a problem with your account, this information will make it easier for you to log back in and connect with your friends.

**Security Question**

 Choose a security question that only you can answer.

Choose A Security Question

**Save and Continue**

# Optimizing your Facebook Account

---

I advise that you fill this out with at least 1 phone number and one alternate email address.

Once you fill out this set of information, you'll be taken to your main page.

If this is a new account for you, then you most likely don't have a photo yet but you should have a default user avatar to the top left of your page.

Click the [Edit Profile](#) link to get to your profile information. This is where a big portion of your optimization will be done so let's walk through this step by step.

# Facebook – Basic Information

---

## 1. **Click Basic Information**

The following are optional settings that won't benefit your organization much so you can skip these if you'd like.

- i. Show my sex in my profile.
- ii. Display options for your birth date.
- iii. Interested in: Men / Women

### **a. Current City**

Enter the city that you reside in and are doing business in.

### **b. Hometown**

Enter your city of birth or the city that you consider to be your hometown.

### **c. I Am**

If your gender is not populated, select it now.

# Facebook – Basic Information

---

## **d. Birthday:**

If your date of birth is not populated, select it now.

## **e. Languages:**

If you are bilingual or multilingual, list all of the languages that you speak. This is a great way to find customers whose first language may not be the national language.

## **f. About Me:**

Enter the nature of your business and your business name if you have one. Try to use keywords related to your business and/or explain the services that you or your business offers. You may also enter a link to your Company's website.

## **g. Click Save Changes.**

# Facebook – Profile Pictures

---

1. **Upload a professional photo of yourself.**

It can be a casual photo but a photo showing your face works best.

Even if your account is a mixture of personal and business, it is best to use a professional or friendly photo. You may also choose to use your webcam to take a photo of yourself.

If you choose to do so, please be sure to use a neutral background.

# Facebook – Featured People

---

## 1. **Click Featured People**

All of the information in this section is optional with the exception of your featured friends.

Under featured friends, you have the option to create lists. This is a great way to segment the people that you connect with on Facebook into recognizable groups.

By sorting your connections into lists, it's easier to contact and interact with specific sets of your connections.

### **a. Click Create New List.**

You should see a pop up window with the option to create a new list.

# Facebook – Featured People

---

## **b. Enter a name for your new list.**

Create a name using keywords that describe how you want to segment your connections. If you are going to use this list to group connections related specifically to your business, enter the name of your business or target market. You have the option to select people to add to the list. Select those that you want to add to your list.

## **c. Click Create List**

## **d. Click Save Changes**

# Facebook – Education and Work

---

## 1. Click Employer

Fill this section out with your employer information. If you are self employed, enter your business name. If you are a sub-contractor, list that you are a sub-contractor with the company that you are contracting for.

Enter the position you occupy at your place of employment.

Enter the City/Town from which you conduct business.

Enter a description of your current position and or business. You can include a link in the description. I recommend you add a link to your website or the website of the company you contract with if you are a contractor.

Entering your education information is optional. It may help to connect with alumni from your high school and/or college so you can include it for those reasons. The main focus in this section is the employment information so if you've added that, let's move on.

# Facebook – Philosophy

---

Fill this section out as desired but I do recommend that you keep this section as professional as possible. It can be damaging to be overtly biased in any one direction. Unless your business is explicitly tied to your religious or political views, I would even recommend that you leave this section alone for now.

# Facebook – Arts and Entertainment

---

I offer the same advice on this section as the Philosophy section.

# Facebook – Sports

---

Fill out as desired. You may be able to make connections with other athletes or sports fans out there so this one doesn't hurt but it is optional.

# Facebook – Activities and Interests

---

## **a. Activities**

List as many activities related to your business that you are honestly participating in. There are groups with the same interests that you can benefit from joining.

## **b. Interests**

List as many interests related to your business that you are honestly interested in. Add your company name to your interests.

## **c. Click Save Changes**

# Facebook – Contact Information

---

## **a. Emails**

You can add more than one email address as a point of contact, however, I recommend keeping the email address that you created your account with.

## **b. IM Screen Name**

If you plan to maintain contact with people using Instant Messaging, add the IM screen names here.

## **c. Phones**

Just like your email, you can add and maintain more than one phone number. I offer the same advice on this option.

## **d. Address, City/Town, Zip and Neighborhood**

Adding your business address can be good for local optimization efforts. If you have a business address, fill this section out. You can also use your home address if you do business from home and are comfortable with putting it on the web.

# Facebook – Contact Information

---

## **a. Website**

Add a list of websites that you wish to promote for your business.

If you have your own web address, add it here. If you have an employer, or a company that you sub-contract for, add those websites here.

# Facebook – Vanity URL

---

Once you're logged into facebook, you can create a vanity url with your name or your business name.

Go to this URL: <http://www.facebook.com/username>

Choose the username that you would like. If you are using Facebook for a mixture of business and personal, then it would be best to use your real name, ideally first and last name.

# Optimizing Twitter

---

Log in to your Twitter account.

If you aren't already, opt to use the new Twitter.

You should see a bar across the top of your page. Click the down arrow next to your username in the top right corner.

This will expand your options menu.

Click Settings to begin optimizing your account.

# Twitter - Account

---

## 1. Account

Keep all of this information as is with the exception of one optional feature. If you would like to include your location with each tweet, you can click the checkbox next to "add a location to your tweets". This can help if you want to target your general area and you tweet messages that are local and timely. For example, you may run a contest for your business that is only happening in your neighborhood.

Adding locations to your tweets may increase your turn out.

# Twitter - Notifications

---

## **2. Notifications**

Click the notifications tab. Check the checkboxes for each option on this page. If you do not want to receive updates from Twitter, you may uncheck this one.

# Twitter - Profile

---

## 3. Click the Profile tab

### a. Picture

Upload either a professional picture of yourself or a company logo. If you decided to use a picture of yourself, I recommend that you upload the same picture that you used while optimizing your Facebook account.

### b. Name

Enter your real name or your business name. Entering your name in your profile will help people find you specifically.

### c. Location

Enter the city and state in which you are conducting business. If you want to target your neighborhood specifically, you can enter that as well. I would also recommend that you include a zip code.

# Twitter - Profile

---

## **d. Bio**

Enter a short bio about you and or your business. Try to use keywords related to your business that describe what you do or the industry that you work in.

# Twitter - Design

---

## 4. Design

Create a professional background for your Twitter account. If you're comfortable with it, use a professional picture of yourself for your background. Include a website URL for each of your professional social media profile pages.

### a. Change Background Image:

Upload your professional background image.

### b. Change design colors:

Change the default theme design colors to match your professional background image.

That's it for your Twitter account optimization. One of the big tasks here is to make sure that you have a professional background created for Twitter. If you are comfortable using an image of yourself, I would recommend it. A friendly face does very well for conversion.

# Twitter - Design

---

If you aren't comfortable using an image of yourself, I would recommend using a company logo if you have one. If you don't, create a short slogan regarding what you offer as a professional service.

Be sure that your Twitter background image contains the URL text for your social media profiles. Twitter doesn't allow clickable links in the background image but if a potential contact finds your Twitter account interesting enough, they often don't mind typing in the text that they see as a link replacement.

# Optimizing LinkedIn

---

Log in to your LinkedIn account. Before we start optimizing LinkedIn, this site has the most data of the three social media outlets we are working with. I recommend that you fill out enough data to bring your profile to a 100% completion rate if you can. I personally feel comfortable with my profile at a 90% completion rate but it would be optimal if I added the few items that would take it up to 100%.

One good thing is LinkedIn will give you tips on how to bring your profile up to 100%. If you follow those tips, you can have your 100% completion rate pretty easily.

I want to focus on the major optimization points in this guide. So, let's get started.

Click Profile in the top navigation menu. This will open your Edit Profile tab.

# LinkedIn - Name

---

## **1. Edit Name** (Click edit link next to Name)

### **a. First Name**

Use Your real first name or the name that you prefer to be called as long as it is professional.

### **b. Last Name**

Enter your real last name.

### **c. Former/Maiden Name**

If you would like to be found by a former/maiden name, enter that name here.

### **d. Professional Headline**

Enter a headline that relates to your company position or a keyword that relates to you and your business.

# LinkedIn - Name

---

## **e. Country**

Select the country in which you reside

## **f. Zip Code**

Enter the zip code in which you conduct business from.

## **g. Industry**

Select the industry that most closely matches the industry in which you are conducting business.

## **h. Click Save Changes**

# LinkedIn - Photo

---

Next to your name, you should see either a default icon for your photo or your current photo if you already have a LinkedIn account.

Click the "Add Photo" link under this image to upload a professional photo of yourself. I recommend that you use the same photo that you have used for your Facebook and Twitter accounts.

**a. Upload your photo**

**b. Click Save Changes**

# LinkedIn - Current

---

## **a. Company Name**

Click the edit button next to current to add your company name. On the page that opens, add a Company Name. If you are self employed, add your name here. If you are sub-contracting, add your name and the name of the company that you are contracting for.

## **b. Title**

Enter the title of your current position.

## **c. Time Period**

Check that you currently work here and enter the dates that you started.

## **d. Description**

Be as descriptive as possible about your business and the services that you or your employer offers. Try to use keywords related to your business and services.

## **e. Click Update**



# LinkedIn - Recommendations

---

## **a. Company Name**

Click the edit button next to current to add your company name. On the page that opens, add a Company Name. If you are self employed, add your name here. If you are sub-contracting, add your name and the name of the company that you are contracting for.

## **b. Title**

Enter the title of your current position.

## **c. Time Period**

Check that you currently work here and enter the dates that you started.

## **d. Description**

Be as descriptive as possible about your business and the services that you or your employer offers. Try to use keywords related to your business and services.

## **e. Click Update**

# LinkedIn - Websites

---

Click the edit link next to websites to edit your website information.

## **a. Websites**

You are allowed to add 3 types of websites. I recommend that you add all three if you can. If you have a personal blog, add it. If you are employed full time, add your employer's website. If you are self employed, add your business website.

## **b. Interests**

Add as many topics as you are honestly interested that relate to your business. Try to include some keywords related to your business.

## **c. Groups and Associations**

If you belong to any recognizable groups or associations, add those groups here. You should also add your business name.

# LinkedIn - Websites

---

## **d. Honors and Awards**

This section can be filled out based on your judgement. If you have certifications or awards related to your business, add them here.

## **e. Click Save Changes**

# LinkedIn - Twitter

---

LinkedIn allows you to add your Twitter account to your profile to help integrate your social profiles. Click the edit link next to “Twitter” to add a twitter account.

## **a. Enter your Twitter account**

LinkedIn will attempt to contact Twitter and will open a new window. When this new window opens, it will connect with Twitter and ask you to log in if you aren't already. If you're not logged in, once you log in you will be asked to "Allow" LinkedIn to access your account or "Deny". Click "Allow".

## **b. Click Save Changes**

# LinkedIn – Public Profile

---

One of the great things about LinkedIn is that you are allowed to set what people will see when they view your profile. Back on the Profile page click the edit link next to Public Profile.

## **a. Customize Your Public Profile**

In the box to the right, check "Make my public profile visible to everyone". Check all of the checkboxes that make sense to your business. This will display these sections on your public profile. Past Positions is OK to leave off if it doesn't improve or relate to your current business reputation.

As you check these options, the profile will change to provide an example of what visitors will see.

## **b. Your public profile URL**

Click the "Customize your public profile URL" link.

In the window that pops up, enter a name that is identifiable to you, preferably your first and last name with no spaces or special characters.



# LinkedIn – Summary

---

Your Summary is a great way to include organic keywords that relate to your business. Click on the edit link next to Summary on your main profile page.

## **a. Professional Experience and Goals**

Fill out your professional experience and goals. If possible, try to include keywords that relate to your business and or company.

## **b. Specialties**

Add a list of your specialties related to your business. Again, adding keywords here helps.

# LinkedIn – Experience

---

Add your professional experience from the point where you entered your career path.

This isn't the place to list part time jobs when you were in high school. If your past experience doesn't coincide with your current business goal and you feel it may actually be counter-productive, you may leave this section blank.

# LinkedIn – Education

---

Fill this section out as you deem appropriate. Like the earlier education sections that we came across while optimizing our other accounts, adding an educational institute may bring alumni contacts your way.

# LinkedIn – Completion

---

That's it for the LinkedIn portion of this guide.

As mentioned before we started this section, LinkedIn offers you a completion rate view of your profile as you can see in this screenshot:



Try to get this to 100% or as close as possible. Follow the tips that the site offers on how to do so and you will be fully optimized in no time.

# Usage Guidelines

---

Now that you have created your accounts and have optimized them for maximum results, there are a few guidelines that you should follow while using them. Though you may be using these accounts for business purposes, social media has changed the way marketing and selling works online.

No longer is selling done by blasting your information to as many people as you can and inundating them with the "Always Be Closing" push method.

Social media has shifted the power to the people. Today's marketers and salesmen are learning that the best way to convert is by using the "pull" method.

The pull method focuses on offering value to your potential customers to create and pique their interest and continuing to do so over and over again.

# Usage Guidelines

---

If you're ready to jump into social media, the biggest lesson to learn is that you need to share. It may seem like you're sacrificing a dollar for every valuable piece of material you share but in the long run, you're building loyalty and creating a desire to become a customer.

When you log in to Twitter to send out a tweet or log in to Facebook to update your status, make sure that if it's business related that you share something of value 3 out of every 5 posts.

If you turn every post into a sales pitch, your connections are going to notice. That's a great way to to lose your audience. People are actually using these social media outlets to find valuable information.

# Usage Guidelines

---

Another must when posting on social networks is to be mindful of your language and personality, especially if you're using these resources for business. Unless your business is explicitly tied to being a brass personality, you don't want to take that approach. It would be a shame to lose one customer over one curse word. Especially with the old adage that 1 person will tell 11 more people and so on.

With all that being said, the number one rule in using Social Media is to be yourself. There is nothing easier than being you. You can try your best to be a persona on these outlets but at some point the facade will crack and the real you will break through.

# Usage Guidelines

---

The general rule of thumb to successfully integrate into the world of social media is to be the best you you can be. Share as much as you can before you try to sell. Share because you care. Share what you find interesting. Share what others have shared. Socialize. Become part of the community. Integrate rather than inundate.

Now you're ready to get out there and optimize.

# Thank You

---

You can find out more about Independent Producers of America, LLC and download more whitepapers at:

<http://www.ipafamily.com>

Copyright Independent Producers of America, LLC

