

# Top **10** Tortoise-paced Tips



for *Effective* Social Media  
(THEY'LL HELP YOU WIN EVERY TIME)

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In keeping with this issue's theme of "slowing down," I'm reminded of how overwhelming the effort is/can be. Can you really keep up with the 15,492 people on Twitter that you signed up to follow? Seriously?

Although most U.S. companies use social networks – 66 percent have a Facebook page, 51 percent have a Twitter account, and 44 percent have a LinkedIn page – only 16 percent say their social marketing efforts are fully integrated across the organization, according to a study by InSites Consulting ([www.insites.eu](http://www.insites.eu)).

There are a couple obvious benefits of integrating social media into a company strategy. It allows you to:

- » Engage the entire company in the effort so your time isn't entirely consumed by the process. After all, as a marketer, it's your job to generate leads, and social media might not be cutting it in the lead generation department on its own.
- » Get buy-in from the various teams (leadership, sales, customer service, and more) on the strategy and incorporate their goals as well as the goals of the marketing team. In addition to generating leads, goals might include a stronger connection to existing customers (benefit: referrals, testimonials, and case studies for your website) and building your brand with press releases, blog posts, Facebook fans, and a page 1 Google listing (benefit: your company is the "go to" Partner for ERP and CRM).

We already know many of the advantages and disadvantages of social media. So how do you slow down the onslaught of too much, all day, every day, in-your-face social media, yet still be effective in the time allocated to it?

1. **Use the tools.** Simply search for "tools to save time on social media" and you'll find a staggering assortment. HootSuite ([www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com)) is probably one that you're already using (or have heard of) that will help you schedule tweets and posts in advance so you can easily allocate a block of time to social media one day a week instead of every day. Buffer (<http://bufferapp.com>) is another tool that helps save time. Similar to HootSuite, you can add posts to Buffer, and it will spread them throughout the day, posting them at times you have predetermined and allowing you to pick which sites to update and the number of times to update. I confess – I didn't know what "Buffer" was, but I do now!
2. **Connect your Twitter account to your LinkedIn account so they're both updated at the same time.** Also, use a similar topic or post (not identical) on your blog so you don't need to write unique content for each social media site.
3. **Work on your social media "degree."** There's no shortage of information on social media. Set aside your Thursday lunch hour on the second and fourth week of the month to read two articles. Or attend one webcast per month on the topic from Microsoft, MarketingProfs, HubSpot, or others in the industry. If you find it hard to discipline yourself, share your goal with a friend to keep you on task. Just like weight loss or a new workout program, when you "buddy up" with a friend, it can help you reach your goal. At The Partner Marketing Group team meetings, we have a roundtable topic called "What I Learned About Marketing This Week." This forces each of us to come up with a tip, a synopsis on a webcast we attended, or a summary of an interesting article to share with the team.
4. **Prioritize.** Do prospects visit your website when you blog? If so, add that activity to the top of your priority list. Do prospects visit your website from your Facebook page? If not, it goes to the bottom of the list. I'm not saying don't update your Facebook page – just recognize where it stands in terms of importance.  
P.S. If you don't know where your website visitors come from, sign up for a free Google Analytics account ([www.google.com/analytics/](http://www.google.com/analytics/)), install the code, and start monitoring the reports. For example, we know that most of our visitors come from LinkedIn, so we pay close attention to our company profile, personal profiles, and activity on that site.
5. **Create a social media idea file.** Create a file on your computer or on a company Microsoft SharePoint® site where you can host ideas for social media and blog posts. Once you have created this folder, ask your support, customer service, and sales departments for topics that are hot points for customers and prospects. You will find a great amount of knowledge within these departments that will fill this folder quickly and allow you to create a calendar of hot topics to post online.

6. **Install the LinkedIn Outlook Social Connector.** While this tip is only for LinkedIn, it will certainly save you time in building your network from the comfort of Microsoft Outlook. To install this free tool, go to [www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com), and click on "Tools" at the bottom of the screen on the home page, and download the Outlook Social Connector. With this tool in Outlook, you can add people to your network, email your connections directly from Outlook, and manage your current LinkedIn network connections.
7. **Add your social media icons to everything.** You do not want your efforts to be lost in the blur. By simply adding your social media icons to items like your email signature, website, newsletter, brochures, advertisements, and so on, you will help ensure that you and your company's deeds will not go unnoticed. Check out <http://dryicons.com/free-icons/> for free, fun social media icons.
8. **Read a book.** Okay, that's a little old-fashioned. Read an e-book. Read "Word of Mouth Marketing" by Andy Sernovitz, and you'll quickly remember that social media isn't new. It's simply an extension of something we've all known for years: that word-of-mouth marketing works, is effective, and drives the most qualified leads that close in the shortest amount of time. My yellow highlighter was in need of replacement when I finished my copy; it was that good.
9. **Blog.** Yes, I know it can be intimidating if you're new to it. But think of it this way: if you don't have seven to 10 sentences in you about your industry expertise, the challenges your clients experience, or how you helped a customer out of a compliance mess, you might have a much bigger problem than just finding time for social media.
10. **If all else fails, just say "no".** Don't abandon social media completely, but please...don't spend all day reading the Twitter feeds from the 15,492 people you follow!

To wrap it all up, you can use great, mostly free tools to help manage your social media strategy, you can prioritize, and you can learn more about it (that said, we all can

learn more), but in the end, it comes down to your audience. What do they want from you? Ten tweets, four Facebook posts, and seven LinkedIn updates a day? Probably not. Take the tortoise-paced approach to sharing valuable and relevant ideas, tips, advice, and recommendations that help your followers save time and money. Remember who won the race between the tortoise and the hare. When it comes to your social media strategy, it might seem as if you need to race like the hare, but in the end, the steady and consistent tortoise will win the race. 🐢

*Cheryl Strege is old enough to remember that children's tale about the tortoise and the hare but young enough to still join the race! For help with your marketing initiatives and the creation of blogs, newsletters, customer case studies, website content, and much more, contact Cheryl at 605-574-9432 or [Cheryl@ThePartnerMarketingGroup.com](mailto:Cheryl@ThePartnerMarketingGroup.com).*

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