

# Social Media Platform Comparison



## Key channel trends & features to inform your story sharing process



PLATFORM	KEY FEATURES	DEMOGRAPHICS	PROS	CONS	STORY TIPS
 <b>FACEBOOK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subscribe feature allows users to follow people without becoming their friends; personalities (like ED, board president, etc.) can post content with a personal voice to complement organization's official page</li> <li>Emphasis on visuals: prime real estate on every profile is devoted to visual content, from the cover photo to ones within the timeline</li> <li>Hashtags (with unique URLs) allow for content and conversation aggregation</li> <li>Facebook Insights offers strong snapshot of user demographics and behavior</li> <li>"Donate Now" button currently being tested among large nonprofits</li> <li>Recent changes to the newsfeed make it harder to reach followers without promoted content/ads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highest usage among ages 45-54</li> <li>65% of users are age 35 or older</li> <li>Unlike Twitter, average age of users is getting older</li> <li>Among U.S. users - 53% female, 46% male</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go-to source of information for significant portion of key audience</li> <li>Rewards quality content (visuals, video) with higher engagement</li> <li>"Donate now" button—if widely deployed—can bridge gap between Likes and donations</li> <li>Analytics help take guesswork out of what types of content resonate and what times to post</li> <li>Relatively inexpensive ads and promoted content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brands and organizations compete with friends for attention in the newsfeed</li> <li>Difficult to keep up with rapidly changing rules for content</li> <li>Content only seen by a small percentage of followers when it's first posted, which can make serial storytelling difficult</li> <li>Most engagement happens on Facebook itself; users don't leave the platform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take advantage of visual opportunities—swap profile and cover pics often to reflect current stories and campaigns; share images with text calls-to-action overlaid</li> <li>When repurposing content, find a new angle (add a picture, link, etc.) to keep on top of newsfeed changes</li> <li>Shares (and visibility among friends of followers) are key to building reach; encourage people to tag themselves in pictures when possible and pay attention to data from Insights about what people like, share and comment on most</li> <li>When sharing stories from website, blog or newsletter, take the time to craft (and test!) multiple compelling headlines</li> <li>Disable auto-posting from newsletters, Twitter, Instagram, etc.; it's worth the extra time to customize the messaging</li> </ul>
 <b>TWITTER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>140 characters or less</li> <li>Powered by searchable/connected hashtags</li> <li>Drives people to external sites</li> <li>New redesign with emphasis on images (both in content and in profile design), pinned Tweets, and highlighting of most engaging Tweets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtually equal usage among genders</li> <li>Most popular among ages 18-29</li> <li>More urban/suburban users than rural</li> <li>High levels of usage among African Americans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Text-based (for easy on-the-go updating)</li> <li>Real-time engagement opportunities</li> <li>Hashtags are easy to create</li> <li>Trending topics are easy to tap into when relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast-paced, might be hard to follow a longer story told through several Tweets</li> <li>More anonymous; less authentic in some cases</li> <li>Fewer features for organizations (no events, apps, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn lingo/jargon (including memes and hashtags) to be a valued member of Twitter community (good nonprofit hashtags include: #nonprofit, #fundraising, #nptech, #sm4np, #philanthropy, #donors)</li> <li>Use URL-shorteners (like bit.ly) to save space and increase measurement power</li> <li>Share visual content</li> </ul>



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 <b>TWITTER</b> (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User in more control of how to view Tweets</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast-paced and works well with live events</li> <li>Movement toward more visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New pinned Tweets feature does downplay relevance of being in real time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor often and look for opportunities to engage with people</li> <li>Have a personal voice</li> </ul>
 <b>YOUTUBE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational channels allow you to create libraries of videos</li> <li>Videos can be grouped into themed “playlists”</li> <li>Nonprofit program gives customized and enhanced branding and fundraising opportunities, including ‘donate’ button on video, annotations that link to your website, campaign goal bars, and on-screen banners and calls-to-action, among other features</li> <li>Useful resources developed by YouTube include its “Playbook for Good”</li> <li>Easy to use, powerful analytics help pinpoint who viewers are and where they’re coming from, and how they’re engaging with your videos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the U.S.</li> <li>YouTube reaches more U.S. adults ages 18-34 than any cable network</li> <li>One billion viewers worldwide per month</li> <li>100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No limit to how many videos you can upload for free (but there is a 15-minute time limit on length)</li> <li>Nonprofit program has tons of useful, underutilized features for storytelling and measuring engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because the amount of content available is so large, your videos can be difficult to find</li> <li>Distracting advertisements, questionable related video links at the end of your video</li> <li>Any video can attract unwanted attention and/or comments from “trolls”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upload compelling thumbnail images for your videos (rather than using the default ones)</li> <li>Include a standard tagline in all video descriptions to highlight your mission</li> <li>Offer helpful links such as information about your organization, how viewers can get involved, &amp; where/how to donate</li> <li>Don’t forget to include a call-to-action to subscribe, share or like the video as a form of support</li> <li>Stay relevant by uploading videos consistently &amp; refreshing your channel’s programming on a regular basis</li> <li>Consider creating and sharing serial content—a series of videos around a particular issue related to your organization</li> <li>Have a policy for responding to negative comments</li> </ul>
 <b>INSTAGRAM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual storytelling via photo and short video creation and sharing with network of followers</li> <li>Fully integrated with Facebook, Twitter and other major platforms</li> <li>Unlimited photo uploads</li> <li>Video length: between 3 and 15 seconds (longer than Vine)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More popular among women</li> <li>Equal among Apple and Android smartphone users</li> <li>Ages 35 and under</li> <li>Most popular among urban users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for powerful showing (rather than telling) of impact</li> <li>Filters can make so-so images look more compelling</li> <li>Quick and easy to integrate with other platforms (and re-purpose content)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires an understanding of good visual content</li> <li>Optimized for mobile viewing; not suitable for printing or displaying in larger formats</li> <li>Gap in information dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As with Twitter, learn lingo/jargon (including memes and recurring hashtags) to be more easily found among existing Instagram users</li> <li>Import images you didn’t take with your phone for more content variety</li> <li>Experiment with uploading promotional photos to advertise events, fundraising campaigns, etc.</li> </ul>



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 <b>INSTAGRAM</b> (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement through Likes and comments</li> <li>Searchable within the community using hashtags</li> <li>Users favor quality over quantity; relatively smaller amount of daily photo uploads as compared to other sites</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-the-go posting via mobile phone good for behind the scenes stories, events, volunteer days, etc.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize at events, especially to show prep work/behind the scenes details</li> </ul>
 <b>BLOG / TUMBLR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blogs can be either hubs for content that can be syndicated outward, or as collectors that showcase content others have created</li> <li>Flexible storytelling platforms that allow you to pull in various other types of content (photos, videos, text, audio, etc.)</li> <li>Engagement is built in</li> <li>More casual storytelling voice; it's not your website, so language can show personality and authenticity</li> <li>Tumblr is a specific type of blogging community that features short bursts of content</li> <li>It's searchable within the community using hashtags on posts</li> <li>It's mobile-friendly for easy uploading via an app</li> <li>Among the most engaging social media sites, in terms of average time spent on the site and average page depth</li> <li>50% of content are photos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>77% of internet users read blogs</li> <li>75.8 million pieces of content are blogged each day on Tumblr</li> <li>Tumblr demographics: 67% of users are under age 35; skews slightly female (54% vs. 46%); nearly half of users have a college education; particularly popular among Hispanic internet users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement is built in (and expected)</li> <li>Easy to integrate blogs into your website</li> <li>Allows for versatile content</li> <li>Good for search engine optimization (companies that blog have 97% more inbound links, which is important in search engine rankings)</li> <li>Trustworthy source of content (81% of U.S. consumers trust advice/info from blogs)</li> <li>Tumblr allows for less intensive content – easier to curate or produce</li> <li>Easy to update on the go; excellent for behind-the-scenes type stories</li> <li>Searchable—people in the general Tumblr community can discover your content if you use good hashtags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bandwidth-intensive to plan for and develop consistent content</li> <li>Content can appear stale quickly (since everything is time-stamped)</li> <li>Readers need strong reasons to engage (and blogs look sad with no comments)</li> <li>Tumblr demographics are very specific; if your audiences don't intersect with them, you're better off having a regular blog</li> <li>Much Tumblr activity takes place on the platform itself; there's a strong community aspect, like Facebook. This can be isolating/confusing for non-native users.</li> <li>Need to integrate into your website to get over the barrier of user unfamiliarity with platform nuances—and this requires design support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan ahead for blog content; create an editorial calendar that ties in with themes, holidays, etc.</li> <li>Build “share this” feature into your blog—and then give readers a reason to share</li> <li>Take time to craft headlines that are shareable and Tweet-worthy</li> <li>Encourage conversation by posing questions</li> <li>Incorporate multiple perspectives into your blog—volunteers, staff, board, clients—to encourage variety and sharing within those individuals' networks.</li> </ul>