

How to Conduct a Social Media Audit

Overview

Many organizations approach social media from a platform-first perspective. That is, they jump on a social network first and develop their strategy later. As a result, they often find themselves in a situation where they have multiple accounts on various networks; no policies, processes, or content strategy in place; and no actionable goals.

In order to develop an integrated social media and digital strategy, organizations should start by conducting a social media audit of their platforms and benchmark that against competitors and industry best practices.

Begin by listening to the conversations your customers, suppliers, competitors, employees, and other stakeholders are having. Get a handle on the landscape and your place in it by developing a SWOT, and examining your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Then analyze the results and look for trends, insights, challenges, and opportunities.

From there, you can develop a strategic roadmap with actionable recommendations designed to help achieve your social and digital communication and engagement goals.

Where to begin

As a first step in a social media audit, here are some questions your organization should consider:

- Who are you trying to reach?
- What platforms do they use?
- What's your organization currently doing and what are you doing well?
- What are your competitors doing? Are they successful?
- Where are the gaps, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses?
- Are there internal barriers to change? How would you address them?
- Are your social media programs tied to your business goals?
- How do you measure results?
- Who's responsible for the strategy and managing the platforms?
- Is there a social media policy in place and has it been shared with employees?
- Is there a social media, community, or content manager?
- Has their role been defined?

A customized approach

Each audit requires a customized approach based on an organization's needs and objectives. That said, there are several steps and actions that are common to each.

These include:

- Establish goals and objectives for audit
- Review website, newsroom/blog, and marketing and communications materials (internal and external)
- Review social media properties, frequency of posting, content types, and level of engagement
- Identify conversations around keywords that could help the organization build engagement opportunities
- Review internal social media policies and processes
- Interview social media, communications, marketing, and other internal leaders and teams
- Interview key external influencers, customers, and stakeholders
- Environmental scan of competitors and/or other organizations to help understand what they're doing, successes, challenges, best practices, and opportunities
- Thorough analysis of findings and development of recommendations and a strategic plan including content development and management, communications, and measurable goals
- Presentation of plan