



IUCN Social Media Best Practice Guidelines

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 5 |
| 1. Who is this guide for? | 5 |
| 2. What will it help you achieve? | 5 |
| 3. Which social media platforms are covered?..... | 5 |
| Best Practices | 6 |
| 4. Getting started | 6 |
| 4.1 Strategy | 6 |
| 4.2 Planning and Posting..... | 6 |
| 4.3 Monitoring | 6 |
| 5. Composition 101 | 6 |
| 5.1 Text..... | 6 |
| 5.1.1 Twitter..... | 7 |
| 5.1.2 Facebook | 8 |
| 5.2 Images and infographics | 10 |
| 5.2.1 Image size specs..... | 12 |
| 5.3 Video | 13 |
| 5.3.1 Video specs | 13 |
| 5.4 Links | 14 |
| 5.5 Other assets | 15 |
| 5.6 Hashtags and Tagging | 16 |
| 5.6.1 Hashtags..... | 16 |
| 5.6.2 Tagging..... | 18 |
| 6 Scheduling and Timing Posts..... | 18 |
| 6.1 Choosing the right time to post | 19 |
| 6.2 How often should you post?..... | 19 |
| 7 Sharing non-IUCN content | 20 |
| 8 Engaging in conversations and managing comments..... | 20 |
| 8.1 When to engage in conversations..... | 21 |
| 8.2 Managing negative comments..... | 21 |
| Analytics | 22 |
| 9 Why use analytics?..... | 22 |
| 10 Key metrics explained | 22 |
| 10.1 Twitter..... | 22 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 10.2 Facebook | 23 |
| 11 Setting targets and benchmarks | 23 |
| 11.1 Twitter Analytics Dashboard | 23 |
| 11.1.1 Exporting raw data | 24 |
| 11.2 Facebook Insights Dashboard | 24 |
| 11.2.1 Exporting raw data | 25 |
| Useful Resources | 27 |
| 12 Images | 27 |
| 12.1 Paid..... | 27 |
| 12.2 Free | 27 |
| 13 Video | 27 |
| 13.1 Paid..... | 27 |
| 13.2 Free | 27 |
| 14 More Reading..... | 27 |

Introduction

1. Who is this guide for?



The best practice guidelines have been developed for IUCN staff (the 'Users') who post content to IUCN Social Media Accounts. It can also be used by volunteers working for the Secretariat, individuals subcontracted as consultants and individuals seconded by other organisations to the Secretariat who have a responsibility for managing social media accounts.

2. What will it help you achieve?

Social media platforms can play important roles in reaching your communications and programmatic objectives by filling unique niches in your communications mix. This guide combines advice on social media post composition, image and video design, and much more to help you reach your objectives for social media and drive the most engagement from those that see your content – whether they are followers or potential followers.

3. Which social media platforms are covered?

Every social media platform has different guidelines and post types. This guide covers Twitter and Facebook only. These are the platforms most commonly used by IUCN to reach its target audiences. Other platforms such as Instagram and LinkedIn have different best practices. This [useful resource](#) can help you get started if you would like to learn some more about general best practices by platform.

| | |
|--|--|
|  <h2>FACEBOOK</h2> <h3>GENERAL</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geared towards lighter news and informal storytelling• Future outlook places strong emphasis on video content• Conversations are extremely important: Facebook rewards posts that start them <h3>WHAT IT OFFERS IUCN</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A platform to unwrap big picture conservation issues• The largest social media reach of any network• The opportunity to target key audiences through paid promotion |  <h2>TWITTER</h2> <h3>GENERAL</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Views itself as a news platform as much as a social network• Retweeting and sharing others' content is very important• Highly suited towards event and topic-specific conversations through use of hashtags <h3>WHAT IT OFFERS IUCN</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The main platform for reaching IUCN's target audiences• A good place to build relationships and have conversations• The right space to showcase IUCN's credible and substantive content |
|--|--|

Social media networks and what they can offer | Credit: IUCN

Best Practices

4. Getting started

4.1 Strategy

Social media shouldn't exist in isolation within your communications mix. There should be a clear strategy in place, defining the goals of the account, the strategies employed to achieve them and the metrics used to measure performance and adjust your approach. A strategy doesn't have to be a lengthy and drawn out document – even bullet points will suffice. The main point is to think about what you want to achieve overall with your communications and then how social media can contribute. Each platform has its strengths and limitations. Successful strategies will play to the overlap between the strength of the platform and the goals of your communications.

4.2 Planning and Posting

Selecting and crafting content for social media takes time. The small – but very important – nuances in post length, composition, voice, image and video selection, and scheduling can have a big effect on the level of engagement with your content. Remember: each post has the potential to reach hundreds, thousands or even millions of people, but it is also competing with countless other posts in the audience's feed, so ensuring the message is thought-out with a post that catches the eye, is imperative. Quality over quantity is key too. It's better to take a little more time developing one really engaging post, rather than diluting your impact with many average ones.

4.3 Monitoring

Defining how you measure success is up to you, but identifying and working to improve your key performance indicators (KPIs) over time is a good place to start. Find out how well your content has been performing (see sections 9, 10 and 11), and aim to make even small improvements over time. Not only will it be satisfying to see your strategy (hopefully!) pay off, but it also looks great when you turn in your communications reports.

5. Composition 101

Composition deals with everything from the text length and focus to the style and dimensions of the image or video. Making sure your post conveys a clear message in a voice that your audience responds to and includes a strong digital asset can make a big difference on social media.

Remember, each time you post something to social media, you are asking your audience to give you their attention. You should give them something of value in return or risk losing them, or worse, sending the message that your programme is not relevant or useful.

5.1 Text

The text should only convey information relevant to your audience. This can be a main message or call to action, but it should not try to do too much. Try to include compelling statistics, news and issues, and learn as you go – if you notice certain topics or text styles working on a regular basis, take note.

It is also important to consider your 'voice' on social media. How do you want others to hear you? Fact-based, authoritative, informal? Stay consistent with your voice so your audience gets used to it. This should stay the same no matter who is posting to the channel.

5.1.1 Twitter

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Maximum tweet length: | 280 characters. |
| Recommended tweet length: | 140 or less. General rule: shorter is better. |
| Hashtags: | 1-2 maximum. |

People tend to scan rather than pause to read each tweet in depth. Therefore, shorter tweets are easier to comprehend quickly. Try making your message succinct without compromising your voice and tone. Sometimes longer tweets are necessary, especially if explaining a complicated issue or topic, but aim for the majority of your posts to be around – or under – 140 characters. Twitter is not the best platform for making long, complicated or nuanced points, so look for the simple point that can resonate with your audience. Remember: the first five to 10 words are critical. Make them count with an unusual, intriguing or surprising first line.

What to do...

- Be concise, no need to use all characters
- Show, don't tell e.g. this tool can protect species/show the impact it's had
- Focus on the key, relevant and interesting information
- Use hashtags sparingly, and generally choose shorter rather than longer ones
- Always include a link in the tweet
- Use teasers to draw the audience in. Asking questions and leading readers to the answer on an IUCN web page is one tactic to consider

What not to do...

- Avoid jargon or language that is not clear or immediately understandable to your audience
- Try not to force several messages into one tweet. One is usually enough; many can confuse
- Don't use shorthand (4U, GR8, etc.). This looks unprofessional and distracts the reader
- Where possible, avoid starting the text with a handle. It is generally seen as a way of speaking directly to another account. Instead, rearrange your sentence



Tweets containing **less than 100 characters** receive on average 17% higher engagement rates.



IUCN @IUCN · Feb 16

When the storm hits, mangroves help reduce the risk of disaster for coastal communities bit.ly/2iozdAJ



1 68 109

DO: Example of a tweet using minimal characters but conveying a main message



MENA Regional Center · Jun 13

The Regional Advisory Committee for the MENA Regional Center met for its second face-to-face meeting in Nicosia, Cyprus on 16-17 May. #WaterScarcity, leadership, & #research were discussed & future meetings have been scheduled. More here: bit.ly/2Lddh47



2 6

DON'T: This text is too long, does not offer any real value, and comes with an uninspiring image. It basically tells the reader that we did some work and will do more again in the future.

5.1.2 Facebook

Maximum post length: 5,000 characters.

Recommended post length: Varied, but generally fewer than 300 characters

Facebook is an excellent platform to tell slightly longer stories than possible on Twitter. It is also quite informal, so you can use more conversational language. Although the character count is very

generous, posts should still be as short as possible. Posts that deliver more interactions, such as comments and shares, are seen more because Facebook regards these posts as most valuable, and therefore shows them to more people. Note: Many resources say that fewer than 100 words drive more engagement, however this is usually for commercial brands. The key is to test what works for you.



On average, **only 8% of your Facebook followers will see any given post.** The best posts get seen more as Facebook pushes them to more people.



What to do...

- Tell interesting stories, unwrap bigger picture issues and offer interesting information
- As on Twitter, the first few words are critical. Make sure people will want to keep reading
- Structure: often starting with the conclusion first works. Then tell the rest of the story
- Facebook rewards content that prioritises conversation and sharing, so aim for this approach
- Asking questions is a great way to drive engagement (which Facebook rewards by showing it to more people)
- Always include a link in a Facebook post



What not to do...

- Avoid clickbait language such as 'Share this post...' or 'Tag people...'
- Although less formal than Twitter, don't use shorthand in your posts
- Say no to jargon! Simple words work better. Each piece of jargon is another reason to keep scrolling
- Don't just post once on a big picture topic. Break it up into multiple posts that tell a bigger story and allow you to use a range of assets such as images, videos and links
- Avoid the use of multiple hashtags in the text. Not as popular or searchable as on Twitter, they can often cloud your message



Using **120 characters or less** in a Facebook post and posing text as a question can result in **23% more engagement.**

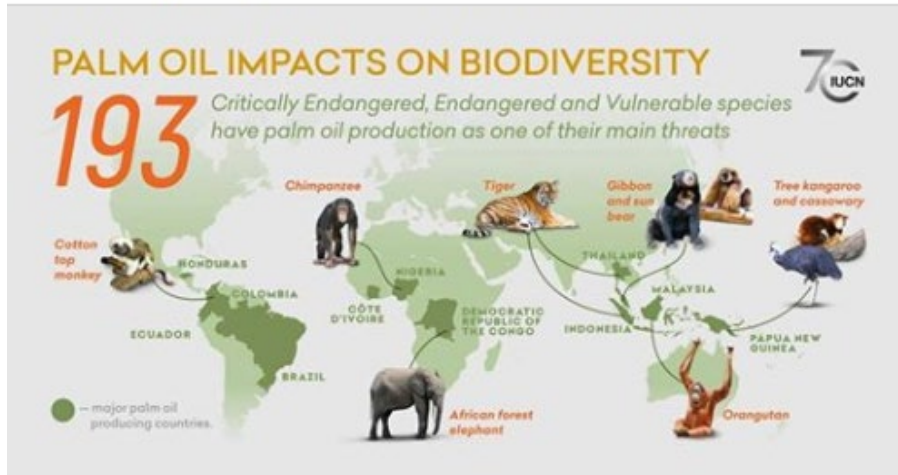


IUCN

Published by Sprout Social [?] · 8 August at 13:10 · 🌐



Palm oil production is having damaging effects on global biodiversity with the home of orangutans, gibbons, tigers and elephants rapidly disappearing. To protect this biodiversity, avoiding more deforestation for palm oil plantations is crucial <http://bit.ly/2Mnoslh>



👤 29,338 people reached

Boost Post

👍👎👤 Mike Mor, Ulrika Åberg and 195 others

8 Comments 179 Shares



TELLING A STORY: This palm oil post describes the relationship between palm oil production and biodiversity loss. It isn't too long, and the reader finds out what species are impacted by palm oil. It also outlines a step that can be taken to reduce impacts. Both pieces offer new, valuable information to the reader.

5.2 Images and infographics

Images

Images (like video) take up a considerable amount of space, and therefore capture the most attention, in a social media feed. It is often the image – not the text – that forces the reader to stop and engage with your content. Choosing high-quality, striking images is paramount. Never compromise on them.



What to do...

- Ensure the image is interesting in its own right. It should be high-quality, framed correctly and compelling to the viewer. Ask yourself will it stand out amongst the rest of the social media noise? Is it colourful enough? Will it generate that 'wow' factor?

- Make sure you have permission to use the image and be sure to credit the image owner. This can be done by adding the attribution on the image. Simple tools such as Microsoft Paint or [Canva](#) can be used to do this
- Adding text over the image provides another way to relay key information. Be careful not to overwhelm a great image with text
- Use infographics that make a clear point even on a small screen (most social media is consumed on mobile devices). Be sure the infographic is the correct size to display the main information on the platform's feed without having to click to expand it



What not to do...

- Never post to social media without an image (or other digital asset). Engagement rates are far lower for content that does not include these
- Avoid sharing portrait images. These are cropped by Twitter in the mobile news feed and it can lead to the subject being cut out of the frame
- Try not to share people at workshops, conferences or meetings. These are uninspiring and do not stand out in a news feed. If you *must* talk about a workshop, share an image of its subject e.g. forests, freshwater, species, rather than the people
- Don't post overly manipulated stock images. They undermine IUCN's authenticity



High-quality, awe-inspiring images can boost likes and retweets/shares and can also drive clicks. In this tweet, National Geographic's goal was to drive traffic to its great ape web content. The powerful image captures the audience's attention and suggests there are more images like it on the website. The short text also allows the reader to get straight to the call to action without distraction. | Source: Nat Geo Twitter

Infographics

Infographics are one of the most effective assets for communicating complex messages. They should be visually compelling and contain key findings, messages and information. They also work very well on social media.



Social media infographics

This infographic supported the release of IUCN’s 2018 report on palm oil and biodiversity. It helped to convey an interesting figure related to the broader messages IUCN shared during the campaign.



Ideally, **infographics should be the same dimensions as images on Twitter**. This means a 2:1 ratio (see section 5.2.1), and for Facebook this will also suffice. If these dimensions are not used, Twitter will crop the infographic to fit the news feed.

Free tools for creating infographics include [Canva](#) and [Piktochart](#).

5.2.1 Image size specs

Exact image sizes for each platform change as the platforms update their feeds and features. The sizes below are as of September 2018, but you can always check this resource to get the [latest specs for each platform](#).

Twitter specs

| Image type | Dimensions | Maximum upload size |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------|
| In-stream (tweet) photo | 1200 x 675 (best) or 1024 x 512 px (2:1 ratio) | 5 MB |
| Profile photo | 400 x 400 px | 2 MB |
| Header photo | 1500 x 500 px | 5 MB |

Facebook specs

| Image type | Dimensions |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| In-stream (post) image | 1200 x 630 px (recommended) |
| Profile photo | 180 x 180 px |
| Cover photo | 820 x 312 px |

5.3 Video

Video content is one of the most attention-grabbing forms of content on social media. Posts with good use of video will almost always earn more engagement. Indeed, platforms such as Facebook reward good video more readily than other forms of content, so it reaches many more people.



What to do...

- Upload videos directly to Twitter and Facebook, as this is a much more viewer-friendly experience than sharing a link. You can do this easily
- Social media is much better suited to short, punchy videos (15 secs to 1 min) rather than longer feature pieces. If you're commissioning video, or creating yourself, keep in mind a social media friendly version
- Get straight to the point. Make sure your videos get right to the issue your speaking about, without the delay of logos fading in. Most social media video views are less than 5 seconds, so if the first few seconds do not engage the viewer, they will rarely stick around for the rest
- Make sure your video has on-screen text. As 60% of people use social media on their phones, they might not be listening to sound. On-screen text helps not to lose this audience



What not to do...

- Avoid sharing YouTube and other video player links on social media. These videos don't auto play in the feed like native uploads, and look less attractive



Videos directly uploaded to Twitter drive more engagement than videos hosted on other sites (e.g. YouTube) with 2.5x replies, 2.8x retweets and 1.9x the favourites

5.3.1 Video specs

Twitter

Twitter provides two formats of in-feed video content to share with your followers: landscape and portrait. These specific formats are only available for uploading video directly to Twitter, rather than sharing YouTube or Vimeo links.

| Video type | Video length | Maximum dimensions | Maximum upload size | Format |
|------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|
| All videos | 140 seconds | 1280 x 1024 | 512 MB | MP4 or MOV |

Facebook

| Video Type | Video length | Recommended dimensions | Maximum upload size | Format |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Shared post video | 120 minutes | 1280 x 720 | 4 GB | MP4 or MOV |

For specifications related to other Facebook videos such as video ads, carousel videos and 360 videos, use these [guidelines](#).

5.4 Links

Sharing links in your social media posts is essential if you want to drive traffic to the IUCN website or relevant external websites. Make sure that the link offers value to the reader, as it's their time you are requesting. If the link page isn't useful for them, then don't share it.

If you put a link into your social media post without uploading an image, video or other digital asset, both Twitter and Facebook will automatically try to take a picture/logo from the link location, if available. If there is no asset on the page, no image will appear (see below).

If you want to preview what the link will look like, you can use [Twitter's link validator](#).



A link displaying correctly

Twitter automatically took an image from this news article on the IUCN website.

Ensure you have a strong and suitable image that will appear when sharing links. If there is no image on the destination page, add an image manually to the post.

For IUCN web stories, the first image will be taken. This should be a strong one!



A link displaying incorrectly

If the website does not have Twitter card functionality set up, no image will appear when sharing the link.



What to do...

- Always try to share a link in your tweet and as much as possible in your Facebook posts
- Shorten your URL to save space. [Bit.ly](#) is a good place to do this, however Twitter will automatically shorten it for you too
- Use [Twitter's link validator](#) to preview the link. If it doesn't show correctly, upload an image/video/other asset instead
- Make sure the image on the webpage you link to is strong. If it isn't, uploading a better image is preferable



What not to do...

- Try not to repeat the text that displays with the link in the text of your tweet. There are two opportunities to communicate your message so make sure they are complementary, but not repetitive

5.5 Other assets

Images, video and links are the most popular assets to attach to a tweet or Facebook post. However, to diversify your content, there are other options available. Below are some ideas of what to use.

GIFs

Increasingly popular on social media, GIFs are animated graphics composed of a series of images. They are generally a few seconds long and designed to catch the viewer's attention immediately. GIFs can be created professionally or through [Adobe Photoshop](#), if you have access to it.

Note: You can find details on dimensions and upload limits for GIFs on Sprout Social's up-to-date [image sizes guide](#).



GIFs

This [animated GIF](#) made for World Oceans Day was created in Adobe Photoshop.

GIFs also play on a loop so it is best to keep them short.

Twitter Moments

A Twitter Moment is a curated selection of tweets that tell a particular story. If you have posted several tweets on a particular theme or as part of a campaign (e.g. report launch, event

participation), using a Twitter Moment to gather all tweets in one place and share as one new tweet is quite engaging. You can see [an example of a Twitter Moment](#) promoting IUCN's 2018 Palm Oil and Biodiversity report.



Seven Tweets, One Moment

This Twitter Moment allowed us to share seven tweets promoting the report in one new tweet. Combining the specific individual messages into an overall message provided context for each individual tweet and told a more complete story of the report.

5.6 Hashtags and Tagging

5.6.1 Hashtags

A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a hash symbol (#) used on social media to identify messages on a particular topic.

Hashtags are primarily used for three reasons:

- To organise searches on a topic so content can be viewed in one place
- To draw attention to a particular theme, topic
- To engage in conversations

There is greater opportunity for successful engagement sharing good hashtags on Twitter rather than Facebook. Hashtags have not been fully embraced on Facebook just yet, and this is why they have more potential to distract from posts rather than add value to them, unless the hashtag is particularly popular.



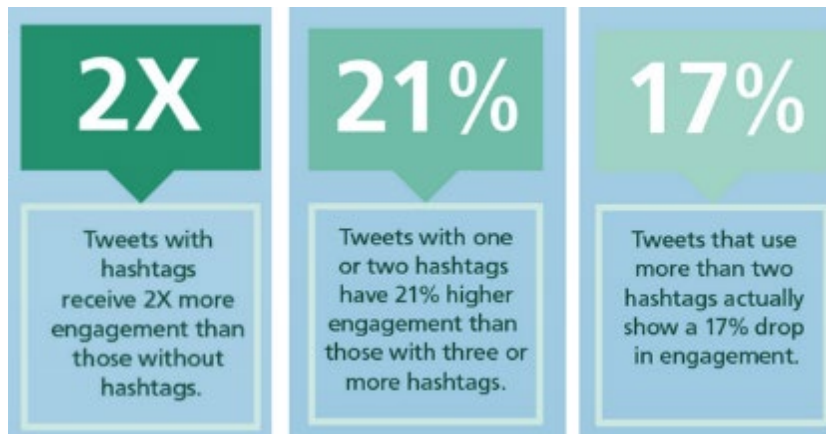
What to do...

- Use existing hashtags to engage in a conversation or to make sure you reach the audience where they already are. Ensure that other accounts are using the hashtag. They are only valuable if there are conversations on social media using it
- Consider using hashtags at events and conferences (e.g. #COP23), World Days (e.g. #WorldOceansDay) and popular conservation/sustainable development topics (#SDGs)
- If you must create a hashtag, for example to start a campaign with a coalition of partners, make sure the hashtag is short and memorable
- Only use hashtags that are relevant to the content of your tweet or post. Mismatching hashtags with content only frustrates followers



What not to do...

- Avoid using overly long hashtags unless they are widely used. Hashtags that are too long distract from the main message and don't look professional in tweets
- Do not include too many hashtags as they distract from your message. 1-2 hashtags are more than enough



Less is more. Fewer hashtags mean more engagement | Credit: Linchpin SEO



Using too many hashtags make social media posts look unprofessional and difficult to read



You can use RiteTag and Hashtagify.me to **discover if hashtags are being used** and how successful they are. This will inform your decision on whether to use it or not

5.6.2 Tagging

Tagging (also called 'mentions' on Twitter) is used to draw the attention of another account on Twitter or Facebook. When you tag an account, they receive a notification and can immediately view the tweet or post. You can do this in a number of ways – by adding their handle in the tweet text, or tagging the image by entering their handle in the 'Who's in this photo?' box of the tweet.

Many of the same best practices that apply to hashtags also apply to tagging:

What to do...

- Only tag other accounts when the content you share is relevant to them
- Monitor your accounts for others tagging you. This is a great way to see what conversations people are involving you in, and provides an opportunity to respond and add IUCN's value to the conversation
- Tagging IUCN experts in posts relevant to them is a good idea, but check their account beforehand and ensure the most recent content is relevant and appropriate for the reader. For example, if you tag a staff member who co-authored a paper you share, make sure their account feed isn't full of holiday pictures or other unrelated content

What not to do...

- Avoid spamming accounts with constant tagging. It is useful to alert accounts you are talking about them, but this does not need to be overdone
- Tagging too many accounts doesn't look nice. Try to limit your tags and remember you can also tweet or post again and tag other accounts
- Don't put tags at the beginning of posts unless you are addressing the account owner directly

6 Scheduling and Timing Posts

Planning and scheduling your content is an important part of any social media strategy. Instead of taking time to post numerous times throughout the day, scheduling saves valuable time and allows you to balance your content theme and type. It also allows you to spread your content into non-work hours as appropriate to reach certain target audiences.

Scheduling your content is possible in one of two ways:

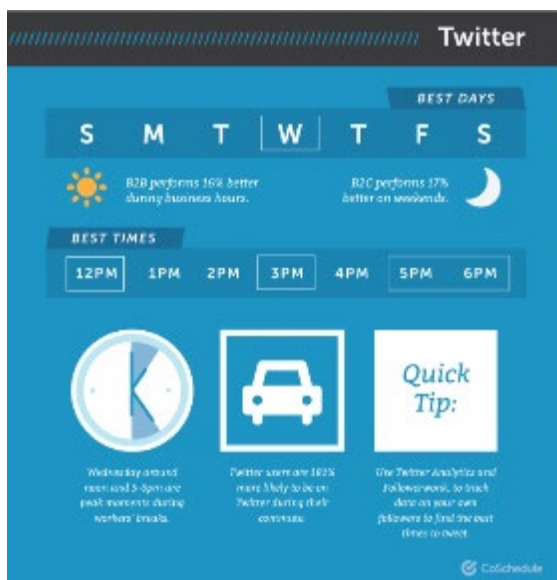
- **Native platforms:** Both Twitter and Facebook provide the option to schedule the content to post within the platform itself. For Twitter, you will need to [register for a business account](#) and add credit card details to access the scheduling feature. This is free and Twitter won't charge you. On Facebook, you can schedule your posts for free and without the need to add credit card details. All you need to do is add your text, image or video asset, and click schedule below the text box.
- **Third-party platforms:** Third-party services such as [TweetDeck](#) and [Hootsuite](#) are among the most popular services for scheduling content. Hootsuite also has paid packages which offer a range of useful features.

6.1 Choosing the right time to post

The best time to share your content is a matter of debate, but it is entirely dependent on your audience's location and the time they are most active on social media. You can use Facebook Insights to discover when your audience is most active (Twitter currently doesn't offer this data), but in general, you will find a broad spread, unless the majority of your audience is in a specific location. A good practice is to test similar content at different times and monitor the results. Also, if a piece of content is targeted to a certain geographic area, then it is best not to post it when those people are sleeping.

Some times when it might be worth posting:

- **Commuter:** During morning and evening commutes from work, when your followers are more likely to be on their phone
- **Lunch:** At lunch hour, when followers might be using their phones
- **Evening:** After work when people spend some more time on social media
- **Weekend:** With lots of free time, weekends are useful to test sending content



A useful guide to the best times to post to Twitter | Credit: [CoSchedule](#)



A useful guide to the best times to post to Facebook | Credit: [CoSchedule](#)

The [useful study](#) from CoSchedule has some information on the best times to post on social media.

6.2 How often should you post?

There is no easy answer to this question, but a good rule is:

'Quality over quantity.'

Generally, your audience would prefer to see one high-quality post per day (i.e. relevant to their interests) rather than numerous of lesser quality. The trick is finding exactly what posts your audience identifies as high-quality and then curating content based on that.



Posting too often will not increase your reach or grow your audience any faster. On the contrary, your account may come across as spamming followers, so you actually might lose potential followers.



Evergreen posts are considered to be those posts which are not time-sensitive and provide value over a long period of time.

7 Sharing non-IUCN content

Whether and how often to share non-IUCN content are strategic decisions. When sharing external content, it is important to weigh the strategic benefits against the risks. Retweeting or sharing content from credible social media accounts can be a good way to build relationships and raise IUCN's reputation. However, a feed that shares more non-IUCN content than original content can send the message that IUCN has little of value to add to the conversation. It is imperative to be selective in the type and amount of non-IUCN content you share, including that of individuals such as heads of other organisations, world leaders, journalists and others. Keep in mind, every share of this content can be seen as an endorsement of the other social media account and their positions. Therefore, it's always best to stop to ask: how does sharing this content raise IUCN's reputation, and is there a risk that it could be damaged at the same time? If, however, the content comes from a credible and influential source and raises IUCN's authority with your target audience, then sharing it could be a positive move.

Note: Always open and read the content behind the links posted in other tweets and posts. Make sure the content it leads to is in line with IUCN positions and adds value for your audience.

Note: Conversely, if you engage other social media accounts in sharing IUCN content, be sure that they are aware of the key messages you intend to talk about and how what we are asking them to do adds value to their audiences.

8 Engaging in conversations and managing comments

Social media is exactly that – social. It was originally created to build relationships and community between people, but it is increasingly being used by businesses, brands and organisations to raise awareness of their mission and work, and of course to sell products.

However, it is still a social space and one that organisations such as IUCN can use to build brand awareness among its target audiences. To do that, conversations – whether initiated or responded to – are crucial.

Here are some tips:

8.1 When to engage in conversations

- If you notice relevant discussions around particular hashtags that you can make a significant contribution to e.g. sharing a climate change-related Issues Brief during a relevant event and using the hashtag.
- If you want to thank someone, acknowledge an action or build a relationship with a partner or similar.
- Monitor your 'mentions' on Twitter to see what others are saying about you and tagging you in. If someone asks you a direct question and their account is credible, aim to answer as quickly as possible.

8.2 Managing negative comments

Negative comments are commonplace on Twitter and it is likely you will encounter some that indirectly tag your account, or directly challenges you or asks you a question. In these instances, follow the below advice.

- Do not remove a negative comment unless it uses profane language, shares sensitive information related to IUCN or an employee, or is in breach of the platform's community standards – See [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). In the latter case, this content can be reported. Remember, leaving negative comments online shows that you're not hiding anything and are confident in the validity of what you share
- If the comment comes from a credible account and questions factual information or content, aim to reply as quickly as possible. If it takes more than a few hours to answer, acknowledge the question and aim to reply as soon as possible
- Answer calmly and politely. If a conversation becomes inflammatory, encourage the person to send you a private message to discuss out of the public domain
- Never argue in public. This is what the antagonist wants. Engaging with them in a public social media debate adds to their credibility and diminishes yours. Always take the high road

Note: Negative comments are normal. Don't worry if you see one, but do monitor the thread in case it gains traction and spreads. In this case it is advisable to [contact GCU](#) for advice.

Note: Make sure any conversations you engage in reflect IUCN positions.

Analytics

9 Why use analytics?

Utilising social media analytics in an effective way is key to reaching your communications objectives and improving the reach and engagement over time. Social media generates a tremendous amount of strategic data, and yet account managers often overlook this valuable information. Most major platforms feature a native set of analytics tools – **Twitter Analytics** on Twitter and **Facebook Insights** on Facebook – which allow you to track and measure post performance in terms of the amount of users that saw them, the engagements received, and much more. Social media analysis can be as deep and complex as you want, but the key is to get started. Identify which metrics most align with your objectives and start by tracking those. Test different types of posts and compare the results. Make adjustments, and continue the analysis.

To learn more about analytics tools and the ways they can help you improve social media performance, please [get in touch with GCU](#).

10 Key metrics explained

Before diving into your performance metrics, take a moment to think about your goals for the analysis. Are you trying to show success or to assess and refine your strategy? For example, a big number such as 500 k monthly Twitter account impressions is great to see, but is the change in engagement rate (the % of those people that actually clicked on your content) more useful as you assess your approach and content for future posts? Arguably it is, but this doesn't always deliver the 'wow' factor thousands or millions of impressions do. Identify metrics that show how well you are meeting your strategic goals, then use the metrics to show trends (positive and negative) that allow you to refine and improve your approach to social media (and to show off your successes along the way).

As both Twitter and Facebook calculate and term their metrics in different ways, it is important to become familiar with the terms used. Try to standardise these in your work and explain what they mean to colleagues.

10.1 Twitter

For a full list of metric definitions, please visit the [Twitter resources page](#).

| Metric | Definition |
|------------------------|---|
| Followers | The number of users that follow you and could potentially see your content |
| Impressions | The number of times users have seen a tweet in their timeline or search results |
| Likes | The number of users that have liked (heart symbol) a tweet |
| Retweets | The number of users that have retweeted (shared) the tweet with their followers |
| Replies | The number of replies (comments) in a tweet |
| Engagements | The number of times a user interacted with a tweet. This include clicks anywhere on the tweet, including retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo or tweet expansion |
| Engagement rate | The number of engagements divided by impressions |

10.2 Facebook

For a full list of metric definitions, please visit this [Sprout Social resource](#).

| Metric | Definition |
|-------------|---|
| Followers | The number of people that have liked your account and could see your content |
| Reach | The number of people your post was seen by |
| Impressions | The number of times people saw your content |
| Reactions | The number of times your post received a like, love, sad, wow, etc. |
| Shares | The number of times the post was shared with a user's followers |
| Comments | The number of comments received on a post |
| Engagement | The number of times a user interacted with a post. This include all reactions (likes, loves, wow, sad, etc.), clicks, comments and shares |

11 Setting targets and benchmarks

As you begin monitoring the performance of your content, first look back to get a firm idea of how it has been performing over time (3, 6 and 12 months are recommended periods to analyse). This will involve studying the key metrics listed above, calculating average performance numbers over time to set baselines, and setting achievable targets for the future. If you would like further guidance on measuring social media performance and setting targets, please contact socialmedia@iucn.org.

11.1 Twitter Analytics Dashboard

Use the Twitter Analytics dashboard to get a better idea of how your content is performing. To access it from your account, navigate to 'Analytics' (**highlighted in red below**) on your account profile page.

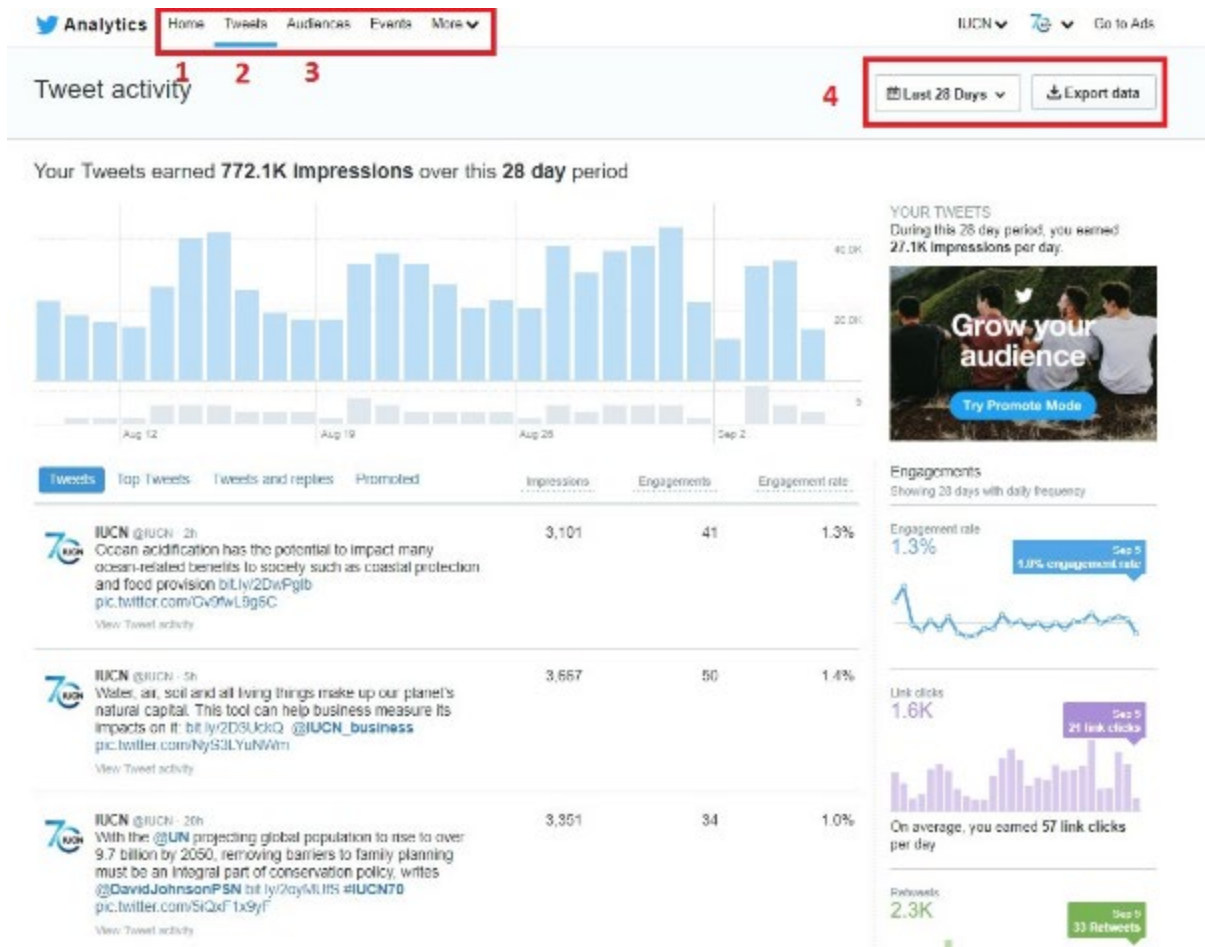


Accessing Twitter Analytics from your account

The dashboard allows you to analyse multiple elements of your account. Examples of functionality includes:

- **Home tab (see 1 below)**: This shows the top performing content/highlighted content and audience insights over a selected period
- **Tweets tab (see 2 below)**: This shows individual tweet performance over a selected period
- **Audience tab (see 3 below)**: This shows an audience analysis of your account, including geographical location, demographics and interests

- **Raw data (see 4 below):** You can download raw data for time periods of up to three months
 - **Note:** You must be on the 'Tweets' tab to access it.



The Twitter Analytics dashboard is your main source of performance information

11.1.1 Exporting raw data

If you would like to look deeper at your analytics, it is best to export the raw data regularly. There you will be able to measure performance over longer periods of time by merging the Excel exports. Remember, Twitter only allows exports of up to three months' data. Once you have the data in Excel, you can use simple formulas to calculate the results over time and by any number of parameters that can inform your specific strategies and objectives.

11.2 Facebook Insights Dashboard

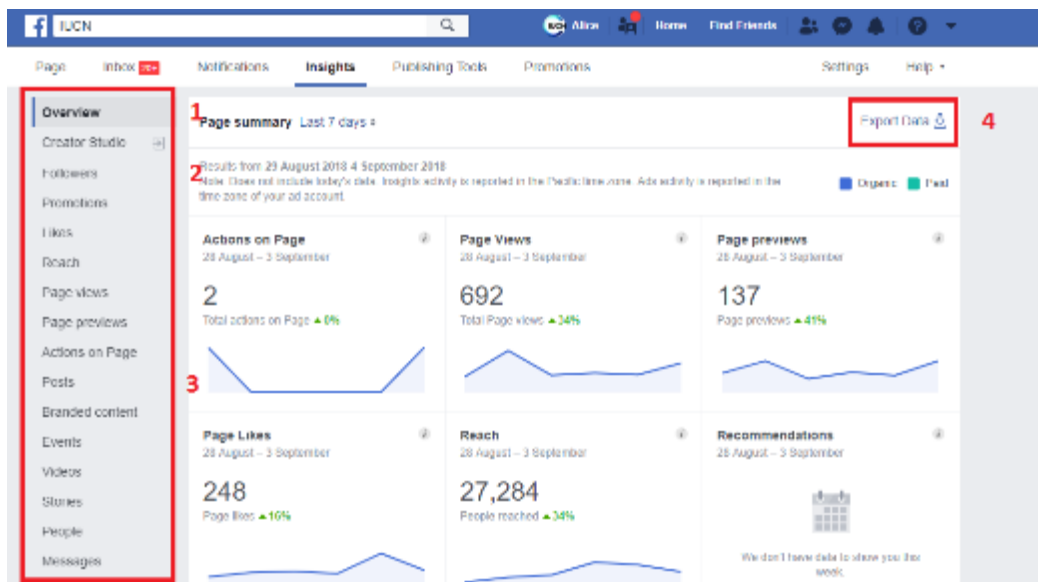
The Facebook Insights dashboard is a powerful tool to measure your performance. Much like Twitter, it offers a range of options for data analysis. To access it, navigate to 'Insights' (**highlighted in red below**) on your account profile page.



Accessing Facebook Insights from your account

Examples of the analysis capability of Facebook Insights includes:

- **Overview tab (see 1 below):** This offers a useful overview of key metrics such as Reach, Page Follower Growth and Post Engagements
- **Followers tab (see 2 below):** Here you can track where your page follows occurred and your follower growth
- **Posts tab (see 3 below):** This is the main source of information for your posts. You can track general statistics such as Reach, Engagements, Reactions, Comments and Shares
- **Raw data (see 4 below):** Raw data for up to 500 posts can be downloaded from here



The Facebook Insights dashboard

11.2.1 Exporting raw data

As in Twitter, the raw data export for Facebook provides a wealth of information for you to analyse. Although Insights will generally meet your needs, exporting the data allows you to merge files and run your own calculations. Keep in mind, a Facebook export can include a maximum of 500 posts.

Note: Does not include today's data. Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ads activity is reported in the

Export Insights Data

Select a data type, file format and date range. You can export up to 500 posts at a time.

Data Type

- Page data
Key Page metrics for engagement, such as sources and audience details.
- Post data
Key post metrics for reach, impressions and feedback.
- Video data
Key video metrics, including views, unique views, paid views and organic views.

Date range

9 August 2018 - 5 September 2018 ▼

File Format

Excel (.xls) ▼

Layout

All Page post data ▼

[Facebook Page Terms](#) Cancel Export Data

we don't have data t

Raw data can be exported for page, post and video data

Useful Resources

12 Images

Below are some resources for you to find good images. But remember, ensure you have permission to use them and credit the owner as appropriate.

12.1 Paid

- **Getty**: Popular stock image resource
- **Shutterstock**: Same as Getty, a good selection of images
- **National Geographic**: Excellent selection of nature, wildlife, environment images

12.2 Free

- **IUCN Photo Library**: Thousands of images that relate to IUCN's work
- **Colleagues**: Ask an IUCN colleague in a relevant thematic area if they have what you need
- **WikiMedia Commons**: Free to use images, most requiring attribution
- **Flickr**: Excellent variety of images you can use once using a Creative Commons license
- **Pixabay**: A good selection of high-quality stock images
- **Pexels**: Much like Pixabay, these are a useful last resort

13 Video

If you have budget to make videos in-house, the below sites are worth trying for footage.

13.1 Paid

- **Shutterstock**: Lots of video footage that covers environment and nature
- **Adobe**: A reliable resource for video

13.2 Free

- **Videvo**: A good selection of free stock video
- **Pexels**: Less clips than Videvo but still useful to check

14 More Reading

Bonfire Marketing – Social media best practices

<https://thinkbonfire.com/blog/social-media-best-practices-infographic/>

Buffer App – Facebook stories

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/facebook-stories>

CoSchedule – Best practices for business

<https://coschedule.com/blog/social-media-best-practices-for-business/>

Dash Hudson – Ultimate social media best practices resource guide

<https://blog.dashhudson.com/social-media-marketing-resources-best-practices-dash-hudson-blog/>

Hootsuite – The ideal social media post length
<https://blog.hootsuite.com/ideal-social-media-post-length/>

Hubspot – Dos and Don'ts of Facebook for Business
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/dos-donts-facebook-business-infographic>

MarTech – Scheduling social media posts
<https://martech.zone/scheduling-of-social-media-posts/>

Maximise – How to write a killer Facebook post
<https://maximizesocialbusiness.com/facebook-post-look-like-2018-27593/>

Post Planner – 7 tips for Facebook posts
<https://www.postplanner.com/7-no-brainer-tips-to-write-awesome-facebook-post/>

Sprout Social – 9 Smart Social Media Tactics to Dominate 2018
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-tactics/>

Sprout Social – Video specifications
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-video-specs-guide/>

Sprout Social – How to Use Hashtags
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/how-to-use-hashtags/>

Smart Insights – Storytelling is the future of Content Marketing Strategy in 2018
<https://www.smartinsights.com/content-management/content-marketing-strategy/storytelling-content-marketing-strategy/>

TalkWalker – Social media analytics guide
<https://www.talkwalker.com/blog/social-media-analytics-guide>