

# 3 Ways to Tell If You're Doing Social Media Right



By Lindsey Baine, [Merritt Group](#)

Social media can often feel like the Wild Wild West to brands. With so much guidance around what to do and what not to do, how can you make sense of it all? While there is no one magic answer or approach to “doing social right,” a company should ask itself a few questions to understand if its social efforts are hitting the mark.

## **Are you meeting the goals you want to accomplish through social?**

Take a look back at your original goals for social media. Did you create a presence as a way to build awareness and buzz for your company? Or perhaps you wanted to develop stronger relationships with influencers in your industry, or even generate new leads. Whatever the goal, set clear KPIs and track your progress in meeting them. For instance, if you set out to increase brand awareness, measure how many impressions your posts received. For lead generation, review the number of clicks that social media drove to your website. These goals will not necessarily be mutually exclusive, but measuring against a clearly-defined set of parameters will help you evaluate overall success.

## **Are your followers engaging with your content?**

One of the most critical indicators of social media success is

engagement. You could develop and post content until your fingers fall off, but if your audience does not engage (or even worse, does not see) those posts, what's it worth?

Many social media platforms use algorithms to help users bypass the cluttered newsfeed by bubbling the most interesting content to the top. Facebook has used this approach for years, with Twitter and Instagram following suit in the past few months. While the algorithms themselves are top-secret, they tend to reward posts that receive the most likes, shares, or comments. For brands, this means that posts with a high level of engagement could be served more often than those without, raising the stakes even more.

### **Are your follower numbers increasing?**

When you execute a social media strategy that reaches and engages the right audience, you'll likely see your follower numbers begin to increase, even if slowly. A stagnant or decreasing follower count could signal that your posts are not relevant for the audience or a specific platform, resulting from a lack of hashtags or keywords, low engagement on posts, irrelevant content, and more. Test a variety of tactics, tracking your progress to understand what resonates best with your followers, and implement the most effective strategy moving forward.

The key element underpinning each of these questions is simple: Measurement! This step is a critical component to any social media strategy and can help you quickly pinpoint trouble spots to pivot strategies, if needed. For instance, if you answered no to the above questions, perhaps it's time to step up your engagement with key influencers, shake up your content mix, or add a little personality to your posts. Taking an agile approach and being willing to experiment with new ideas and tactics is critical to staying at the top of your social game.

At the end of the day, it's not about what you are putting into social media; it's about what your community is getting out of it. By asking yourself these questions and measuring the impact of your social efforts, you can begin to reach your goals, engage with your audience, and build a strong online community.

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