

Using Social Media

From Facebook pages to email newsletters – how to get the most from your Tweets and updates!

The internet has completely changed the face of marketing for all types of industries, not least the dance studio world. And social media has become an essential part of promoting your business, allowing you to reach a completely new audience, increase enrollment and, perhaps most importantly, improving communications with your existing students.

Anyone can set up a [Facebook](#) page, start a [Twitter](#) account and build up an email subscriber list. The tools are all out there for us to use and most are free, at least when we're first setting out.



But where's the best place to start? An effective, easy-to-navigate website is vital for your business. This then takes you to the next step of improving your search engine rankings and getting your studio name and website address listed in as many places as possible online for maximum exposure.

There are lots of websites that list dance reviews, job listings, local activities in your area and they are usually free to use and are a great way to advertise your studio at little to no cost.

It's also important to understand how people are finding out about you and your website. Tools such as [Google Analytics](#), [Woopra](#) or Omniture will give you good statistics on how people are using your site and where they're coming from.

Consider your whole website

When thinking about the design of your website, don't forget that while an eye-catching homepage is of course, in some cases as little as 15% of users are coming to your site through your homepage, so **don't neglect how the rest of your website looks**. Simple navigation tools with a clear menu should be apparent on each page, and a search button can also help potential students find information more easily. And don't forget to ask them to sign up to your email list at every opportunity!

Keep it personal

Following someone on Twitter or keeping up with the Facebook posts is all well and good. But understanding your audience and reaching out and making a real connection can make the difference - **the virtual equivalent of a quick call or stopping by for a cup of coffee.**

With your students there are well-established regular touch points – when they come in for a class or see a performance they interact with you, your staff and their peers and feel welcome and part of a community; when they receive an email with the latest news or offering them a discount they feel special and wanted. But how else can your social networking help to solidify that communication? With so many followers on Twitter and fans on Facebook it can feel impossible to make your contact personal. But here are some ideas on how you can move towards a more constant relationship with your students and fellow teachers.

Make it easy

Most of us are using many different types of social engagement, but not all will have the same technical abilities. Make it easy for people to find you, get started and keep interacting.

Keep it interesting

The more often you add content, post new blogs or reply to comments, the more engaged your patrons will be. Rather than just passively consuming content, people will become more active participants on your pages.

Look at the individuals

Understand your audience and tailor the experience to them. Take advantage of their links and posts, check out where else they are adding content and tailor your own information accordingly.

Be consistent

Social networking is about more than just setting up a Facebook page and hoping people become fans. Follow-up on news items and competition results, reply to messages and **show that you're listening to what people have to say.** If you're resource-constrained, it's better to be consistent and participate in fewer outlets than to spread yourself too thin. Make it part of everyone's job to get involved – a few minutes spent regularly every week, enriches your social networking point of view and adds up to a wealth of customer touch points.

Appreciate your friends

People who lend you their time – by following your posts, passing on your emails or blogging about a performance – they all deserve a thank you. Everyone likes to feel noticed and appreciated.

The value of engagement

Despite the increasing proliferation of social media, one of the most difficult things to determine has been: what is the monetary value of all those Facebook fans? According to [Adweek](#), the Value of a 'Fan' on social media is \$3.60* but even the big industry players such as Microsoft and Starbucks haven't quite worked out just how to leverage news updates and "likes" into dollars.

But the effort that you, as a dance studio, will put into acquiring a fan base on sites such as Facebook, can more appropriately be measured in terms of engagement – the captive audience you are building can then be informed quickly and easily about new classes, services and promotions. And you can also watch what they're saying about you.

Keep track of your chatter

If you're particularly active on a variety of social media outlets like Twitter and Facebook and want to track the online "chatter" about your dance studio, **there are lots of free tools you can use:** [Trackur](#), [Surchur](#), [BackTweets](#) and [SiteMention](#) are just a few.

But the easiest and most straightforward – and the one that's been around for ages – is [Google Alerts](#). Just register once, type in your name or studio name and then you will receive a daily or weekly email which compiles all of the online listings and mentions found about you. It's free and very effective!

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