



Succeed with Social Media

Insurance Brokers: Selling with Social Media

It is often said that businesses should avoid overtly selling products or services via social media. However, that doesn't mean you can't use social media at all in your sales process. In fact, social media is an ideal venue for gaining new customers and driving new sales—but how you execute these strategies makes a world of difference.

How it works

When looking to sell more and grow your business, you have three objectives: gain new customers, deep sell to existing clients and cross sell to existing clients. Social media can complement your selling strategy for the following reasons:

- It can help you gain new customers, both as you reach new audiences and then as you are able to influence your followers through the content you post.
- Social media can also strengthen your relationships with current clients as you provide knowledge and expertise, which can increase retention as well as cross-sell and deep-sell opportunities.
- Social media is word-of-mouth exposure on a whole new level. If your followers value your services and/or the content you're posting, they will retweet you or share your content (or their own experiences)—expanding your reach to even larger audiences.

Get started

If your brokerage isn't already involved in social media, decide which platforms are right for you. Some of the most popular options to consider include blogs, Facebook®, Twitter™ and LinkedIn®. Whichever venue(s) you choose, make sure you have a plan for getting started and maintaining your presence—a stale profile that doesn't respond to followers may be worse than no presence at all.

- **Blogs:** Starting a blog is a great way to gain exposure and establish your expertise. It is time consuming, but it can yield great results. In your blog,

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focus on education and industry trends. For instance, if you talk about the need for a particular coverage, current clients may realize they have an exposure and may come to you for an additional policy. Also, as your blog gains more traction, prospects may come across it and see your wealth of information and expertise—which could get you a first meeting.

- **Facebook:** Facebook is useful because the site is popular and it reaches people where they are already spending time. If you create a Facebook page, there are many ways you can share information. Link to your own blogs and share agency news, but also link to industry news and share other content, so your page becomes a hub of useful information for prospects and current clients. Try to initiate conversations among your followers—think of lighter topics that will get people talking to mix in with your insurance content. Facebook also has paid advertising targeted by demographic, so you could promote your services or draw traffic to your page.
- **Twitter:** The focus of Twitter is the periodic short post (“tweet”), rather than a profile. Followers see tweets in a real-time stream. Though limited to 140 characters, tweets allow sharing plenty of impactful information, from interesting article links to short tips to breaking news updates. The biggest benefit of Twitter is that tweets are easily shared (“retweeted”), so the potential for reach is much greater. Not only can you speak to current clients who follow you, but you have the opportunity to reach a wide audience of potential clients if you share content that people find engaging.
- **LinkedIn:** Most businesses today have a LinkedIn presence, making it a prime place for your agency to connect with current clients and prospects. Make sure your profile is engaging and up to date, so anyone who comes across it gets a good picture of your agency’s competitive advantages. LinkedIn also offers the ability to make groups in which the members can hold discussions. For instance, if you made a group for your clients, they could ask insurance questions, you could share industry updates, compliance news, coverage FAQs, etc.—strengthening your client relationships and increasing deep- or cross-sell opportunities.

For existing clients you connect with on social media, come renewal time you’ll have added a new dimension to your value as their broker—making them more likely to not only renew, but to place more coverage with you. And for prospects that interact with your brokerage online, you’ll be demonstrating your value even before your first meeting, better positioning your producer to close the sale.

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