

TWU Quick Guide: Social Media Toolkit

Introduction

For better or worse, everyone uses social media and engages with it in one way or another. It's more than just people showing off what they ate for dinner, it's an important organizing tool for sharing information, inviting people to events, and creating groups that allow people to organize virtually. While face-to-face contact will always remain critical to organizing, so many interactions these days start online — whether that's an Outlook invite, a Facebook event, or a tweet. An online interaction opens the door to offline engagement. Even if we don't like this trend, we have to adapt to it in order to keep pace with our target audiences, who are already using these technologies. The good news is, with a little training and use, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram become very intuitive and easy to manage: you can control your level of engagement as well as all of your privacy settings, and you can customize these tools to make them work for you. But not using these platforms is a disservice to your organization.



Several movements in particular have had huge successes by using social media. The Fight for 15, a campaign to raise the minimum wage, has succeeded in raising the minimum wage in cities and states nationwide. The campaign organizes almost entirely online, then holds in-person rallies around the country. The Fight for 15 Twitter has more than 15,000 followers, and local chapters have about 10,000 followers each. Their Facebook page has more than 160,000 “likes,” and they constantly update with breaking news and policy updates.

Part I: Platform Overviews & Why TWU Should Care

Facebook

What is it: Facebook is the biggest and most widely used social network. Unlike other social networks, Facebook filters what content appears in users' home pages (called the “newsfeed”). While a user might have 1,000 friends, only 100 of the friends' posts might show up in a user's newsfeed. This is because Facebook uses a highly complicated algorithm to decide what content is shown in the newsfeed. As a result of this algorithm, Facebook pushes paid posts more than any other network. The best way to *ensure* your content will reach a large audience is to pay to boost or promote it (which we can test at a low cost), but we can still reach a

significant portion of our audience organically by posting engaging and rich content. We would only pay to promote content that is already doing well on its own.

Why TWU should care: Despite the challenges around the newsfeed algorithm, Facebook is by far the most widely-used social network, boasting well over 1 billion users — and more than 60 percent use Facebook at least once a day. Facebook also skews to an older base, which means our members are more likely to be on it. Lastly, it is the absolute king of Internet traffic. In 2014, Facebook accounted for a whopping 24 percent of all referrals (Pinterest, the second leader, accounted for 7 percent). Meaning, if we want people to visit our website, the best way to encourage that is to have a strong Facebook presence.

Who uses it well? [AFL-CIO](#)

Twitter

What is it: Twitter allows users to publish short updates called “tweets” throughout their day, and the tweets appear in their friends’ (called “followers”) timelines. Most unions and other organizations have a organizational Twitter handle (like @transportworker, our handle), and their president and/or key staff also have one (for example, @RichardTrumka).



Twitter has been instrumental in raising the minimum wage in cities nationwide.

Why TWU should care: Twitter is a fantastic organizing tool. Twitter users are used to interacting with corporate entities like American and Southwest on Twitter already, and in fact airlines have caved to bad Twitter press in the past (Delta in particular). Shaming airlines, transit authorities and other employers and corporations on Twitter is widely accepted, and these companies invest a lot of time listening to Twitter followers. Twitter also makes it easy to contact people we might not otherwise be able to reach as easily like journalists and legislators. I was once able to get an infographic placed on Upworthy via Twitter, and it drove more than 2,000 visits to our website, and we received a \$5,000 donation.

Twitter is also a great place to test messaging, engage with other allies, and consume information as rapidly as our audiences are. Now that we have a 24 hour news cycle, information is on overdrive, everyone has a mouthpiece, and attention spans are short. Although this sounds daunting, we're more equipped than ever to maximize these tools and get our message out effectively.

Lastly, there are many strategic opportunities to expand our audience on Twitter. We can host tweetathons or tweet chats, where we invite people to all tweet about something at the same time using a specific hashtag. These can be incredibly successful, and reach more than a million people within just a few hours. When we have more than a million people targeting an employer or legislator, they're likely to listen. We can also host tweet chats, where our audience tweets questions to us and we answer with the same hashtag.

Who uses it well? [Jobs with Justice](#)

Instagram

What is it: Instagram is a photo sharing app that allows users to make high-quality looking images. There is no algorithm (like Facebook), so every follower will often see every single thing you post.

Why TWU should care: Like Twitter, Instagram is a great organizing tool, and because of the platform's focus on travel, there are a ton of current and potential TWU members already using the app. In particular, flight attendants are using Instagram. Virgin's flight attendants successfully waged an Instagram campaign in order to win their contract by using a common hashtag to garner support and encourage participation. In addition, it's a great avenue to showcase visually exactly what TWU is doing to advocate for its members. We can share photos of our members in action or launch campaigns targeted at city legislators, transit agencies, or other employers.

Who uses it well? [National Education Association](#)

Tweeting vs. Twerking: Your Guide to Social Media Vernacular		
Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
<p>Tweet: A 140 character update, which can be text, a link, photos, or video.</p> <p>Timeline: Your Twitter homepage, which shows the tweets of everyone you follow.</p> <p>Retweet: When someone shares someone else's tweet with their followers.</p> <p>Follower: Someone who receives your tweets in their timeline.</p> <p>Hashtag: A pound sign # placed in front of a word makes the word trackable. If you click it, you can see everyone's tweets that include this phrase.</p> <p>Mention: Also called "tagging," you can put someone's username after the @ symbol, and they will get an alert about your tweet saying you mentioned them.</p>	<p>Newsfeed: Your Facebook homepage, which shows posts from all your friends.</p> <p>Status update: A text statement, photo, video, or link sent to everyone who follows your page. There is no character limit. This is also called a "post."</p> <p>Like: When you "like" a page, you will now receive updates from that page in your timeline. You can also "like" a status update, and the person who posted it will get a notification.</p> <p>Tag: You can tag someone in a status update by putting an @ sign in front of their name. For example, @Emma Chadband.</p> <p>Share: When someone clicks "share" under a post, the post will be visible to their followers in their newsfeeds.</p>	<p>Regram: When someone saves your photo, and posts it to their own timeline.</p> <p>Latergram: When someone posts a picture from an event that happened previously, and isn't current.</p> <p>Instagram also uses mentions and hashtags. See Twitter box for definitions.</p>

Part II: Setting Up a Social Media Account

Facebook:

Resource: [How Do I Sign Up for Facebook?](#)

1. Go to www.facebook.com
2. Enter the required information
3. Hit “sign up”
4. When you receive a verification email, click the link to verify your email.
5. In the search bar at the top of the page, type in “Transport Workers Union”
6. Hit “Like”
7. To write a status update, click in the box that says “what’s on your mind?,” then hit “post.” Facebook accepts a wide range of content types. You can post photos, text, links, or videos. You can also “check in” to a location and share your whereabouts with your followers. You can tag your friends by writing their name with an @ symbol (example: @Emma Chadband).
8. If you’d like to set up an organizational Facebook account, you must first create a personal account (steps 1 - 7).
9. When you’re logged in, click “create a page” on the left side.
10. Follow the prompts. Click “Get Started.”
11. Facebook will ask you to fill out information about your group. You can usually copy text from your website to put here.
12. Hit next. You’ll be asked to upload a profile picture. If this is for a local, you should upload your local TWU logo as the profile picture. This process could be slightly different according to your computer, but generally you’ll need to save a photo of the logo to your computer, then click “upload from computer,” select the photo you saved, hit “open,” then “next.”
13. Click “add to favorites.” This will allow you to easily navigate to your page from your newsfeed.
14. Facebook now allows you to select a target audience. This is probably not necessary for TWU local pages, so you can hit “skip.” Or, if you’d like to include this information, fill out the questions as prompted. Hit “save.”
15. Your page is now live! To write a post, view the page (you can get to it from the left side of your newsfeed), and enter the post in the box that says “write something.”

Need ideas on who to follow? These organizations are already on Facebook.

TWU International
TWU Local 100
TWU Local 555
AFL-CIO
Jobs with Justice
Fight for 15
SEIU
UFCW

Twitter:

Resource: [Signing up for Twitter](#), [Mom This is How Twitter Works](#)

1. Navigate to <https://twitter.com/signup>
2. Enter the required information. Twitter will require your phone number.
3. Twitter will send you a code via SMS. After you receive the code, type it in the box.

4. Click sign up for Twitter.
5. To write your first tweet, navigate to www.twitter.com on a computer, or open a Twitter app on your phone (there are several available). You can either write your message in the box at the top of the timeline that says “what’s happening?,” or you can click the button that says “tweet” in the right corner.

Hashtags to Watch:
Not sure how to use
hashtags? To start, just
follow these.

#1u
 #p2
 #unions
 #labor
 #FightFor15
 #EqualPay

Instagram:

1. Download the Instagram app on your phone. Once it finishes downloading, open it.
2. Either enter your email or select “log in with Facebook.” Then hit “next.”
3. If you signed up with email, you will be prompted to create a username and password.
4. If you created a username and password, you can now login. To create your first post, you can either take a photo or upload a photo you already have on your phone. Push the blue camera button, and select the photo you’d like to post. Or, select “photo” or “video” to shoot something right then. After you’ve selected your content, hit “next” in the upper right. You’ll now be able to edit your photo or video. You can select a filter, or make other adjustments in this section. When you’re done editing, select “next.” In this screen, you’ll be prompted to add a caption. You can describe what is going on in the photo, and you can tag other Instagram users with the @ symbol. (Example: @NEAToday would tag the NEA Today account). You can also add a location or include hashtags, which allow other people to look up your photo. When you’re done, push “share.” The image is now live.

Part III: Ten Tips to Write Terrific Tweets

1. **Post as often as you can, without diminishing your quality.** Don’t tweet just to put something out there, keep your tweets interesting.
2. **Opinionated tweets usually work better than newsy tweets.** “Nissan workers harassed and intimidated while fighting for fairer wages. These scare tactics must stop! [link]” will probably work better than “Nissan workers harassed and intimidated when trying to form a union. [bitly]” I often write a newsy tweet and an opinionated tweet, and just schedule them for different times.
3. **Get fast and loose with exclamation points, capitalization, and strong language.** “HAPPENING NOW: Student guestworkers walk off the job at #Pennsylvania McDonalds, alleging physical abuse and wage theft [link]” will be way more successful than “Student guestworkers walk off the job at #Pennsylvania McDonalds, alleging unsafe working conditions and unfair wages.”
4. **Tag your allies whenever possible.** When writing about guestworkers, tag the National Guestworker Alliance (@NGADignity). When talking about a victory by a specific coalition, tag the coalition. You get the idea.

5. **Use the right hashtags, but use them sparingly.** Most of our tweets are tagged with #p2 for the progressive Twitter network, and #1u for the union network. Use the hashtags specific to your movement, but try not to use more than four in a single tweet.
6. **Tweets do best when they can stand alone.** A fact, a quote, a clear statement — these will all do better than a question or an open-to-interpretation statement. Don't count on readers to click the link for the full story.
7. **Most articles warrant multiple tweets.** You really can't over-tweet. If an article has a few great facts, tweet them each and link to the same article. No one is going to click on all of them, or even read them all.
8. **Not every article warrants a tweet.** Usually more nuanced tweets don't do well. Try to break it down into a simple, self-contained idea.
9. **Reply and retweet often.** No one likes someone who only talks about themselves! Respond to people who mention you.
10. **Measure everything and record results.** Always monitor how many retweets your tweets get so you can develop a set of categorical best practices (for example, "our tweets get the most retweets in the mornings and on weekends.") Also monitor when you get the most followers. Your Twitter audience will grow constantly, but you care about the peaks and valleys to see what you did differently then.

Part IV: Tips for Writing Engaging Facebook Content

1. **Use an image or a video.** If you are posting a link, you can upload your own image.
2. **If posting a standalone image (without a link to more content), the image should tell a story.** Overlay text on photos so a user can see an entire story just by looking at the photo.
3. **Inspire emotion.** Posts that make people feel strongly will engage more people than "newsy" or neutral posts. In particular, a post will be successful if it makes people angry, happy, or laugh.
4. **Include a call to action.** Don't just say the world is ending and let the user infer what you want them to do. End a post about wage theft with "Enough is enough, it's time to stand up to these corporate fat cats." If possible, be specific, and have a place for users to sign their name to a petition or another online action.
5. **Use statistics.** Any kind of "gotcha" fact will play well on social media, but Facebook and Twitter in particular. If you can put the fact on an image, it will do better than writing it in text. That way, people can share the image and add their own commentary in the text.
6. **Be timely.** The more urgent a post sounds, the more shares a post will receive.