

## The Influence of Social Media Platforms for Startups

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### Abstract

The basic need in the study to understand the social media platforms by which a startup company may benefit since its inception. This study will give an understanding on how social media can benefit the startup company and entrepreneurs who can face the tough living concept in the business world. Every year there are thousands of new startup companies emerges and hope to be the next great success; there are some who are experiencing a great success within limited time. A few that is blessed with a great idea which is even with a better leadership, while most of them will not make it a great success. One word which is true that holds incredible weight in the success of a product called as "Marketing". The traditional marketing has been taken place by Social Media Marketing. Whereas the failed startups, some of them fail due to an improper vision strategies that they draw at the initial stage.

**Keywords:** Social Media; Marketing; Media Marketing; Economic Factors

### Introduction

Few decades ago, startup companies faced a number of tough decisions for marketing their companies. They had to determine product features and quality, establish accompanying services, set the price, determine the distribution channels, decide how much to spend on marketing and able to decide how to divide their resources among advertising, sales force, and other promotion tools. It used to take much longer times to establish any company and to get into the marketing and off-course the marketing cost would always be high when compared to this.

The result of all the economic developments and technological advancements are dramatic shift of economic power from sellers to buyers this has brought an incredible change in economic factors of the society. Here it comes when companies need marketing vision and marketing knowhow in order to successfully respond to the above changes. Additionally communications and transportation systems have developed. These are the companies that will help shape the future after taking right steps to do marketing in a right way if they could manage to operate all the required aspects in a proper way. Social media presence is a best way to gain maximum exposure for any startup if one put proper efforts to make a strong presence on the firm in the market. From large sized corporate firms to mid-level agencies again brand new startups make good sense in leveraging in social media which will allow businesses to gain power in attracting more clients and customers resulting to good growth of the startup firm.

There are huge resources and manpower between the larger and smaller firms, larger companies often can easily keep pace with the latest social media changes to reap a good profit and allocate the fixed budgets and make the most benefits out of it regularly. However, few of small firms and startups typically struggle in this case due to a lack of money and business connections. Improper social media utilization could also be one of the reasons behind the startups fails. David Skok clearly explained few reasons for startup fails-Market Problems, Business Model Failure, Poor Management Team Running out of Cash [1]. These could be several other reasons behind failure which you would need to figure out at the earliest possible way. This 101 reasons will help one to understand it better [2].

It is a strong point to understand that social networks not only enable users to communicate beyond local or social boundaries, but

also offer possibilities to share user-generated content like photos and videos and features such as social games. Social advertising and social gaming are two major points of revenue for social networks which will help any startups to go socialize without much effort as it used by in its regular marketing activities.

It was proved; recently a survey released by Manta earlier this year said that nearly 50 percent of businesses surveyed had increased their time on social media channels with another 55 percent actively using them for lead generation and customer engagement [3]. Despite this sincere and focused investment of resources, more than 60 percent reported no return on investment. So it is a good chance to startups to make the right investment in the social media by making them good ROI in the best possible way.

It's common for small businesses to quickly jump into multiple social media streams where it is Facebook, Twitter or other social media platforms. In fact, social platforms strategically make it very simple and quick to join the ranks increasing the chances highly socialized. While that ease of adoption is great for small businesses, especially those who are with limited social media presence, it's actually something of a double-edged sword. One can create accounts and start sharing without ever really considering your audience.

Similarly, some companies make any content out at an impressive in starting way. The emphasis and values should be on benefits – providing something that's useful, interesting and shareable for customer base. Startups always should focus on quality over quantity the more quality will gain the great attention of audience. Invest in some experimentation and see what works the best, ideally AB testing should be a perfect example in this case [4]. Should post at least once per week which may be enough if one is selling to small businesses several quick content sharing and posting a day may be necessary, if on the high side, when you're selling home based products – otherwise you're in a quick-stop retail business, the less is okay. Sometimes

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Received June 17, 2014; Accepted June 27, 2015; Published June 30, 2015

Citation: Akula SC (2015) The Influence of Social Media Platforms for Startups. J Mass Communicat Journalism 5: 264. doi:10.4172/2165-7912.1000264

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overinvestment could not benefit the startups like making budget only on Facebook before figuring out the audience presence in Twitter and LinkedIn. The point is, it's always a learning process for everyone so such type experiments should be learnt for the better performance for every startup.

Over the past few years, it is observed that an interesting transformation has occurred in the business world where startup companies are utilizing its maximum sources to be derived in social media platforms with less budget and efforts compared to traditional marketing. Social media for startups has become good marketing opportunity and increasing more priority day by day. In fact, platforms like Facebook and Twitter have become integral parts of content distribution, lead generation and brand awareness with customer acquisition strategies for businesses. This is truly helpful for startups working with smaller budgets and more gain in ROI. However, despite its importance, very few startups and new ventures understand how to maximize the potential of social media (Table 1). The below suggested points will make more sense to the startup companies, integrating in the below way will help startups for a quick beneficial.

### Evaluate your social media strategy regularly

Make new ideas for your startup, companies can get overwhelmed and making a good growth in less time. If you have a good social set up figure and schedule regular checks for all your channels to maintain a steady presence.

### Plan and choose the right social networks for your business

It is not advisable if any one of the social networks is not the right platform for your business of many. Facebook may have over a billion users, but if your potential audience is not a big part of that user base, it cannot be the right social network for your startup. You have to find the target age group of your audience, the location of your business, and the nature of your services in the right way. Business sites like LinkedIn, Influence & Co. Dynamic Signal, HubSpot etc will help your business in well mannered way.

A recent study was to determine on how school teachers in the United States (US) perceived using Twitter as a means for professional development along with engagement in communities of practice [5]. The main themes were teachers' perceptions of sharing knowledge and resources by which Twitter promoting a sense of belonging, they also found many benefits to participating in Twitter.

### Do customer interaction with social media

Having an open line or face to face of communication with your

clients could be crucial and your ability to respond to their comments and suggestions about your products or services can make a deal or break a deal for your startup. Respond to your clients with a customer support on social media platforms. "The Conversation Is Transparent" this will make potential customers get to see how well you handle the situation [6].

### Do experiments

Think outside the box and always do experiments with your social activities, you can learn a lot from practical knowledge rather than book knowledge.

### Utilize Human Resources on social media

Online audience is not limited to potential customers. Startup should recruit a passionate, talented individual to join the cause. Create some post by which a dedicated Marketer will work on Social strategies of the company. Utilize social media to drive resources from across the places.

Recently a recruitment company has taken a sample of 1023 verified veteran participants over a period of 24 days for the advertising price of approximately US \$7.05 per verified veteran participant [7]. This could be one of the efficient sources of advertising by which one can get desired results; they found that Facebook can be an adequate method of obtaining samples of veterans in need of care

### Recommended to do a strategy on social media before creating social media profiles

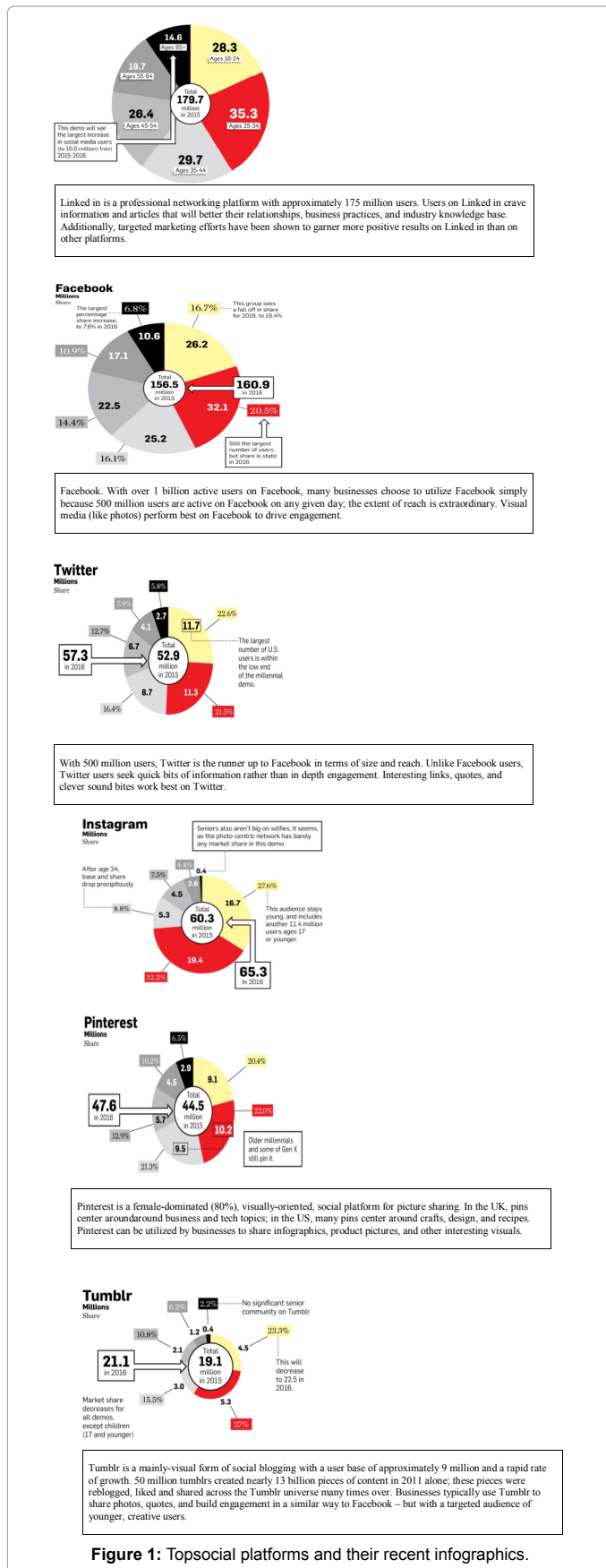
Before you start choosing the right channels, make a strategy on how you think of your business goals and objectives, and plan on how social media can help to achieve those. Plan on your targeted audience, study on how the successful same line businesses are practicing the social platforms and try to make your strategies in similar to them.

### Tools to measure metrics

There are at least 25 viable metrics startups can use to evaluate the success of social media efforts. Startups can gather meaningful metrics from which they can plan future strategies and implementations. Know your demographic social media usage by locals, there could be interesting finding for example a research study show 56% of Americans have a profile on a social networking site [8]. This will really help you to make your presence on social media as 56% of people on social networking sites by which you can promote your business though online.

Social Networking site	Category	No of Users
Facebook	General: photos, videos, blogs, apps.	1280000000
Twitter	General. Micro-blogging, RSS, updates	645750000
LinkedIn	Business and professional networking	200000000
Sina Weibo	Social microblogging site in mainland China.	300000000
Tumblr	Microblogging platform and social networking website.	226950000
Pinterest	Online pinboard for organizing and sharing things you love	60000000
VK	General, including music upload, listening and search. Popular in Russia and former Soviet republics.	249409900
Instagram	A photo and video sharing site.	150000000
Flickr	Photo sharing, commenting, photography related networking, worldwide	32000000
Odnoklassniki	Connect with old classmates. Popular in Russia and former Soviet republics	45000000
Renren	Significant site in China. Was known as 校内 (Xiaonei) until August 2009.	160000000

Table 1: Top social networking sites.



## Get funded with social media

If you are a quick start company and holds a brilliant idea which could beat up the market for the next coming years then you could probably get funded by Angel Investors.

Generally, An investor (references) who provides financial backing for small startups or entrepreneurs. The capital they provide can be a one-time injection of seed money or ongoing support to carry the company through difficult times [9].

Some of the startups have gained more seeding than usual. Social media can really help how one can really gain attracting angel investors but are few of them raised billions of Dollars in their seeding series.

These are the example that make you to think to use social media immediately Uber. \$1.2 billion for a total of \$2.5 billion raised since it launched in 2009 [10]. The latest money was raised at an impressive \$40 billion valuation.

Dropbox- raised \$507 million from investors like Accel Partners and Y Combinator and is currently valued at \$10 billion and is valued at \$2.4 billion [11].

Snapchat- after turned down a \$3 billion acquisition offer from Facebook, Snapchat has raised \$150 million and attained a valuation of \$10 billion[12]. Pinterest, SpaceX, Cloudera also start in the same row. All these companies used majority of activities though social media at their initial stages.

Interestingly seeded funding has become very famous in the areas of startup companies, companies are becoming very popular within no time and gaining more revenues in the market- India has emerging and attracting big shots to get funded, we have one good example for this Indian business Tycoon Ratan Tata is one amount them[13]. Sanchit Sethi Founder and Managing of Stay Uncle which is a hotel booking website, Sanchit wrote his on how he had found an angel investor Ajay Naqvi, through LinkedIn [14]. However finding angel investor directly is difficult sometimes he made an effort using the social media platform for his success.

We have found that community is core to social media who plays a key role on understanding the startup products so quickly. We have found ideas that a startup should adopt to make a great change for their social activities which will bring a great results even in small run or long run, I have highlighted few them as below. Startups should identify strong social influencers who will make some differences in the community for example – bloggers that customers read the more customers with bloggers the great chance of word of mouth, individuals with robust followers and friends who are regularly in touch with their peers – and start engaging with them as much as possible. Follow them on their social channels to ignite a return follow. Comment on their posts thoughtfully, respectfully and better if it is without self-promotion posts, it may works even multiple times a week. As time consumes on, the door for conversation will open – as will opportunities for more meaningful engagement like sharing new milestones or promotions, guest blogging or even reciprocal commentary on your posts make more sense in your promotional activities.

While social media on its own isn't a slam dunk in terms of an effective and well-balanced marketing strategy, it does offer an excellent way to get creative with that strategy. Many businesses are incorporating social media into their consumer outreach campaigns and seeing amazing results. Yet, it is the most creative uses of social media that reap the most benefits.

As result driven with one of their understanding in Journal of Medical Internet Research [15]. Hospitals have adopted social media which is varied across hospitals with a percent of 94.41% (3351/3371) having a Facebook page and a percent of 50.82% (1713/3371) having a Twitter account. Although there are many other platforms where startups can gradually increase using social platforms like A majority of hospitals had a Yelp page (99.14%, 3342/3371) and almost all hospitals had check-ins on Foursquare (99.41%, 3351/3371). Large, urban, private nonprofit, and teaching hospitals were more likely to have higher utilization of these accounts. So this should be a perfect example if a new Startup commence business in the field hospitals and medical treatments can try many social platforms for a well establishment of the business. Although most hospitals adopted at least one social media platform, utilization of social media varied according to several hospital characteristics (Figure 1) [16].

## Conclusion

As a startup company or small business, it is no longer an option to ignore social media as a means of communication, promotion and possibly even recruitment or revenue. That's true for any business new to the internet, as well. However, diving head-first into an ever-expanding realm of social media networks can feel overwhelming at best. Each platform has not only a unique audience of users, but also its own idiosyncrasies when it comes to usernames, imagery and usage.

Startups need to implement better social media strategies which will help one to reach and engage existing and potential clients, in other way spreading the word about ones products and services in the market. In today's global connectivity, before making the decision on the their purchase they are connecting the internet world to check online reviews, comments etc., and also seeking recommendations from friends and family, it is in the best interest of most startup companies to have a dynamic and engaging social media presence. We should understand that not all startups are getting successful. The successful startups should and seems to be flexible enough to shift with changes in the technology and adopt the internet and social climate. Whereas the failed startups, some of them fail due to an improper vision strategies that they draw at the initial stage. Ultimately, there is a lack of foresight which might have saved their companies. I should

strong recommend that the startup companies should adopt the recent trends and technology of Social Media platforms to make their business long lasting successful enough.

There are approximately more than 2000 Social media platforms ranging from 200 followers to billions of followers for each site, there is more potential market in future and hence it is going to prove that social media marketing could place in high ranking of marketing platforms for any business especially for a startup companies to move in fast paced competitive world.

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