



How to clean up your social media landscape for better audience engagement.

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# Optimizing your Social Landscape in 3 easy steps

By: Cathy McKnight  
Chief Problem Solver  
The Content Advisory

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# Cleaning up your social scene

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Before Snapchat, we had Pinterest and Instagram.

Before Insta, we had Twitter.

Before Twitter, we had Facebook and LinkedIn.

And before that ... MySpace (now Myspace), the modern social channel that launched them all.

And those are not even close to being all the available social media platforms. We can't forget Reddit, TikTok, WeChat, Douyin, QQ, and YouTube. We can't forget any of them, because according to the 2021 Hootsuite "We Are Social" report, social media channels combined have 4.55 billion active users.

Yet so many companies have – forgotten, that is, about the need to proactively tend their social landscape.



## Is your social field fertile or lying fallow?

Not sure?

Then ask yourself these questions:

- Does our company still have a Myspace page?
- How many Twitter handles do we have?
- When was the last time our company LinkedIn page was updated?
- Are all our corporate social channel profiles aligned in branding? Voice? Message?

If you answered these questions without hesitation, well done! Feel free to check out another one of our blog posts.

But if these questions kicked your fight-or-flight sympathetic nervous system into overdrive, just breathe, you're in the right place. And you are not alone.

We see this in our content strategy consulting gigs all the time. When we ask about what social channels a company has, who owns them (read: is responsible for them), who manages them, and where they fit into the overall content and customer experience strategies, we get a lot of “well, that depends” or “blank stare ... pause ... uhmmm ...” responses.

If you fall into the latter group, don't worry – getting social back on track is easier than you think. By following three easy steps, you'll be well on your way to a strong, healthy, and fruitful social presence.

It all starts with a three-part social media audit.

## Social media audit step 1: List all handles and channels

Audit is a word that can instantly bring a bead of sweat to anyone's forehead, and understandably so. But in this case, no panic is needed.

First thing to do is to get your arms around ALL the social handles and channels out there representing the company and its brands. And I do mean all. Don't just track down the obvious ones – think outside the box:



Is there an executive or employee who is particularly vocal in promoting the company and its products, services, and/or brand?



Are there spaces associated with the brand or its offerings that are still live but otherwise dead – i.e., never used?



Are there rogue or unsanctioned handles or channels being used by others that should be shut down or at least monitored?



And what about social outlets that represent parts of the business that have been sold, shut down, or discontinued?

Assembling a list of these and any others you can find in a simple spreadsheet is an important first step in laying the path forward to a manageable and productive social landscape.



## Social media audit step 2: Track engagement and audience

Now that you know where the handles and channels are (at least most of them), it's time to start separating the wheat from the chaff by documenting details on:



Audience: subscribers, followers, community members, etc.



Engagement: clicks, likes, retweets, shares, comments, etc.



Top posts for each channel/handle

When you are building out your social media audit spreadsheet, if you are capturing data on more than 15 or 20 handles/URLs, you may want to categorize the handles to make them more manageable. This is easily done by creating a different worksheet in the master file for each:

- Channel: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- Product line
- Brand
- Geography

Whatever makes most sense for your business and makes the information accessible and useable.

Now it's harvest time.

## Social media audit step 3: Cull the sprawl

This is the fun part ... it's time to play a game of Keep It, Want It, Toss It. The rules are simple: review the list of audited social sites to decide whether they will remain active (Keep It), be put on pause (Want It), or be sunsetted (Toss It).



**"Keep It"** handles and channels are the social outlets that have a combination of:

- High rates of engagement,
- Large audiences,
- Company/brand/product name,
- Trending-up accumulating engagement, audience, etc., and/or
- Being part of an actively executed strategy.

Now, just because it has made it to the Keep It list doesn't automatically mean that a channel/handle will stay live/active. You may want to put a pin in some until you suss out a social strategy for how each will be used.



**"Want It"** handles and channels. These are the ones that:

- Have potential, growing audience and/or engagement,
- It's in a local language of a target-for-growth region, or
- Has influencer attention.

These outlets may need to be put to bed for a while, meaning not actively maintained, but not sunsetted (read: deleted).



3. **“Toss it”** handles and channels are whatever is left. The Toss It pile often includes URLs and handles that:

- Are not sanctioned by your organization; for example, rogue brand or product handles,
- Have low engagement and/or audience,
- Represent brands, products, or people that are no longer part of the company, or
- Do not have an owner and/or an active strategy.

These URLs and handles should be sunsetted and removed from the content calendar.

To ensure that you have the rationale for the Keep, Want, Toss assignment, be sure to add a few more details such as:

- Purpose and role the handle plays in the customer’s journey.
- What, if anything, needs to be changed moving forward to keep the content on point and engaging for its targeted audience.
- The opportunities and/or threats for the channel; i.e., what is the impact of putting the site on hold or sunsetting it?
- The owner, password, ID, email, URL, etc. associated with the handle.

Then, for the Want It and Toss It piles, make sure that you don’t lose any audiences associated with those URLs and handles.

## Plant the seeds of success



### Let followers know.

For any URL or handle that will be put on pause or ultimately closed down, make sure to post a message that lets people know when the account will be shut down, when and if it will be back up and active, and how they can get in touch with you on other media platforms. Do this for all accounts no matter how many, or few, followers they have.



### Leave a bread crumb.

If there is any chance that you’ll want to resurrect an account, or if you don’t want anyone else to use the handle, don’t delete it. You want to retain ownership of the handle. Instead, for handles that will be sunsetted, make a final post that says where your group will be online and pin it to the top. This way, audiences can find where you are active.



### Archive your content

For the URLs and handles that will be shut down, check with the legal department or company management on any industry requirements for archiving or retaining communications with customers. Be sure to download and archive a copy of all interactions and content published, as well as the metrics associated with the account. Store this archive in an easily accessible, central location for any potential future referencing that may be required.



### And finally, don't lose the login!

Regardless of which list the URL or handle landed on, make sure you keep track of the owner, email, ID, phone number, and/or password required to access the channel. Put this information in a secure place that can be passed on to future staff. Even if it's not active now, you never know if you may need access to the account again.



## Summary

Here's a quick recap on how to clean up your social media landscape and get better audience engagement:



**Perform a social media audit** of all social channels, handles, and URLs that are associated with your company, its brands and products/services.



**Assess all channels** to understand audience size and engagement levels.



**Decide what stays and what goes** and why. Determine whether channels and handles should stay active (Keep), be kept for future use (Want), or sunsetted (Toss).



**Redirect Audiences** to where you want them to go by posting an anchoring message with details on where they can find you.



**Analyze and stay current** by regularly checking-in on active channels and assessing the need/timing to potential relaunch outlets that are currently on hold.



# About The Content Advisory

At The Content Advisory (TCA) we help companies create and adopt intelligent content strategies via a series of frameworks and approaches that have been developed and honed over more than a decade. We combine independent and pragmatic thinking to achieve results.

The Content Advisory assembles agile teams to address specific challenges and help businesses to understand and meet the challenge of transforming their marketing into customer experiences.

Since launching in 2010, we've worked with more than 500 organizations, including 15 of the Fortune 100. We like to think of ourselves as conspirators of business success. Our focus is specific to the strategic use of content in the enterprise to create better customer experiences.

We can help you tell your story better. Reach out to learn how.



[info@contentadvisory.net](mailto:info@contentadvisory.net)



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