

Communications Tools and Best Practices for Your Business

Tools, strategies and best practices to effectively communicate with your target audience(s) and members of the media to get your business noticed!

MAY 14, 2025

About SCORE

As a resource partner of the SBA, we help small businesses by:



Providing free
business advice
and mentoring



Offering low or
no-cost business
training



Sharing free business
templates and
resources

Request a SCORE mentor at www.score.org/find-mentor

Your Presenter



- MBA from Temple University
- President and Owner, Debbie Goetz Media Connections since 2010
- Former Adjunct Professor at Delaware Valley University
- Philanthropy addict
- Crazy cat lady



Objectives & benefits of marketing

Objectives

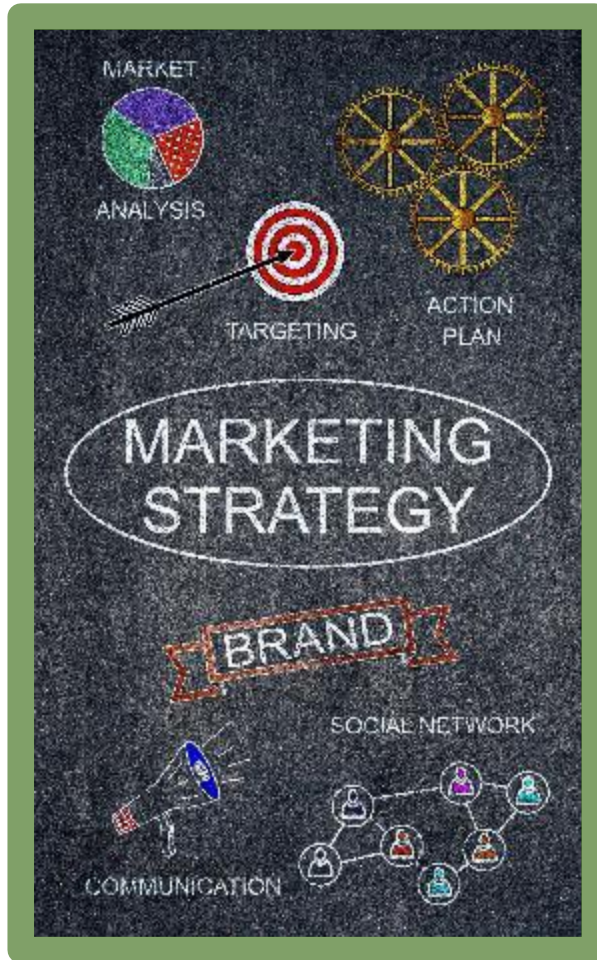
- ✓ Target a market/audience
- ✓ Build relationships with target audience(s)
- ✓ Brand the organization



Benefits

- ✓ Increase brand/organization recognition
- ✓ Establish trust 
- ✓ Encourage community engagement 
- ✓ Enhance overall image within the community

Evolution of Marketing



- Marketing has changed with increased use of the internet.
- Digital marketing allows for greater reach/better targeting in your communication efforts.
- Focus on building strong relationships with target audiences in the places they go to for information.

Is public relations the same as marketing?

Marketing:

- Marketing consists of the strategies and tactics used to identify, create and maintain satisfying relationships with customers or a target audience.

4 Ps of Marketing:

Product

Price

Promotion

Place

Public relations

- Public relations is the practice of managing and disseminating information from an organization (business, government agency, or a nonprofit) to the public in order to influence their perception.

Advertising

- Advertising refers to the practice and techniques employed to bring attention to a product or service using paid announcements/placements.



Communications Best Practices

Which tools do you use to communicate?

- ❖ Media Relations
- ❖ Website
- ❖ Social media
- ❖ Blog
- ❖ Email marketing

- ❖ Branding materials (logo, business card, brochure)
- ❖ Promotional products
- ❖ Business or vehicle signage
- ❖ Networking
- ❖ Public Speaking

Which tools have been most effective for getting your business noticed?



What are your goals?

- ✓ Get more clients/customers
- ✓ Differentiate your company from others
 - *What is your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?*
- ✓ Spotlight your expertise
- ✓ Become an expert/thought leader



Who are your target audiences?

- ✓ Customers
- ✓ Referral Sources
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Investors
- ✓ Government



Where do they go to get information about your products/services?

Each target audience should have its own messaging



How should you communicate?

- ✓ Ask yourself, “How do my target audiences like to receive information about my products/services?”
- ✓ Where do they go for info? Print, radio, online, social?
- ✓ Web search, newspaper, friend or advisor?
- ✓ Do I have a storefront where I can display a sign?



What tools make sense for your business?



- Media Outreach
- Website/Blog/Digital
- Social Media
- Vehicle or other signage
- Public Speaking
- Events

What should you communicate?

- ✓ Can you position yourself as an expert or thought leader to others or to members of the media?
- ✓ Does your firm have news to share?
 - New hire(s)
 - Certifications
 - Board appointments
 - Charitable initiatives
- ✓ Each time you share news is an opportunity to be seen by your target audiences.

Messaging Tips

Once you have identified your target audience(s)...

- ✓ Develop key messages for each one
- ✓ Your messaging & tools should align with each target audience
- ✓ Key messages should be used in all marketing & communication materials & supporting programs.
- ✓ Provide a consistent point of view
 - Over time
 - Across all marketing methods and channels
- ✓ Reinforce your brand & customer perceptions

Be consistent with your brand across all platforms



- ✓ Website
- ✓ Business card
- ✓ Brochure
- ✓ Direct mail
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Promotional products
- ✓ Signage



Common communications tools

- ✓ Media Relations
- ✓ Website
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Email Marketing
- ✓ Blog
- ✓ Public Speaking
- ✓ Events
- ✓ Community Outreach/Philanthropy

Let's look briefly at Media Relations



Tips for identifying local print and digital press outlets

- ✓ Google search
- ✓ Chat GPT
- ✓ Check the outlets' websites for a list of reporters
and their beats
- ✓ Social media

Tips for identifying local print and digital press outlets

- ✓ Bucks County Herald
- ✓ Doylestown Cardinal
- ✓ Bucks County Beacon
- ✓ Patch
- ✓ Intelligencer/Courier Times
- ✓ Inquirer
- ✓ NOW sites
- ✓ KYW NewsRadio
- ✓ WHYY
- ✓ 6abc, NBC10
- ✓ Fox29, CBS3
- ✓ WFMZ-Channel 69
- ✓ PBS-39
- ✓ Lower Bucks Source

How can you get the media to cover your news/event?

- ✓ What is your hook/angle?
- ✓ Match your angle to a journalist's beat (do your homework)
- ✓ Be clear and concise
- ✓ Ask yourself "Who cares?"
- ✓ Provide visuals
- ✓ Follow up but don't be a pest



Communications Audit



Perform a communications audit – Step 1

Your website

- ? Does your website reflect the look & feel of your business?
- ? Is it outdated & rarely updated?
- ? Does your website have a call to action?
- ? Can your website capture information about visitors?
- ? Is your website easy to manage from a CMS (content mgt.) standpoint?
- ? Does your website provide links to your social media platforms, blog, etc.?
- ? Are you doing any SEO? Do you have access to analytics?

Your website

Think of it as a digital brochure to educate prospects and referral sources, showcase your work & link to your social media & blog



What is your call to action?

The screenshot shows the SCORE Bucks County website. At the top right, there are links for 'English', 'Login', and 'Donate', with a green arrow pointing to 'Donate'. Below this is a navigation menu with 'Find a Mentor', 'Workshops & Events', 'Templates & Resources', 'Volunteer', and 'About'. A secondary blue navigation bar includes 'Bucks County', 'Local Mentors', 'Local Subject Matter Experts', 'Local Workshops', 'Local Resources', 'Local Success Stories', and 'About'. The main content area features the heading 'SCORE Bucks County' and the sub-heading 'Serving Bucks and Eastern Montgomery Counties | 2025 District Chapter of the Year'. Below this is a paragraph: 'Serving small business owners and entrepreneurs throughout Bucks County and Eastern Montgomery County, PA. We provide free mentoring services and a variety of educational workshops and webinars. Talk to us today!'. Three call-to-action buttons are present: 'REQUEST A MENTOR', 'WORKSHOP CALENDAR', and 'LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE'. A green arrow points to the 'REQUEST A MENTOR' button. To the right is a photograph of a man and a woman looking at a tablet, with a circular badge overlaid that reads '2025 SCORE DISTRICT CHAPTER OF THE YEAR'.

Communications audit

Step 2 - Social Media

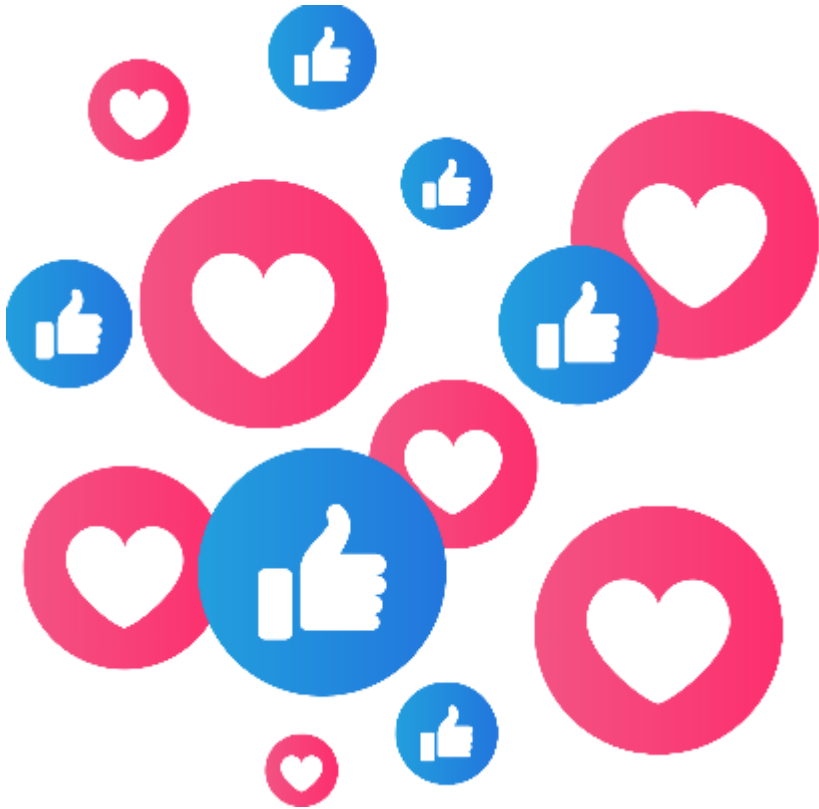


Communications audit – Step 2

Your social media platforms

- ✓ What do you want to gain from using social media?
- ✓ Who are you trying to reach and engage?
- ✓ Which platforms do your target audiences use?
- ✓ Will having a social media presence help serve your customer's/audience's needs and interests?
- ✓ What platform(s) will fulfill the goals of your business strategy?

How can social media benefit Your business?



- Build an online network
- Share Information
- Engage target audiences
- Positive word of mouth
- Develop brand loyalty

Choose the right social media platform(s) for your business



Where should you be?

Where are your target audiences spending their time?

That's where you should be!



Social Media Platforms

- Facebook
- X
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- TikTok
- SnapChat

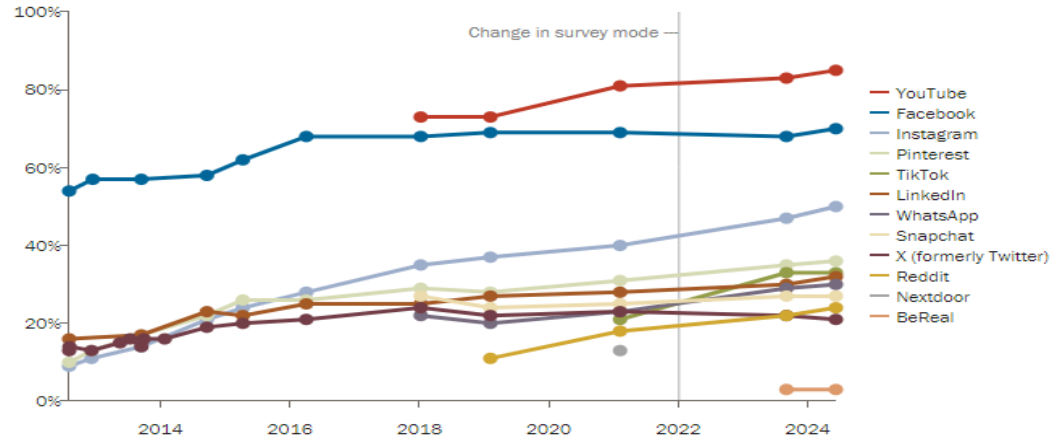


Which social media platforms are most common?

YouTube and Facebook are the most-widely used online platforms. Half of U.S. adults say they use Instagram, and smaller shares use sites or apps such as TikTok, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter) and Snapchat.

Which social media platforms are most popular?

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use ...



Note: The vertical line indicates a change in mode. Polls from 2012-2021 were conducted via phone. In 2023, the poll was conducted via web and mail. In 2024, the poll was conducted via web, mail and phone. For more on the mode shift in 2023, [read our Q&A](#). Refer to the topline for more information on how question wording varied over the years. Pre-2018 data is not available for YouTube, Snapchat or WhatsApp; pre-2019 data is not available for Reddit; pre-2021 data is not available for TikTok; pre-2023 data is not available for BeReal. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Surveys of U.S. adults conducted 2012-2024.

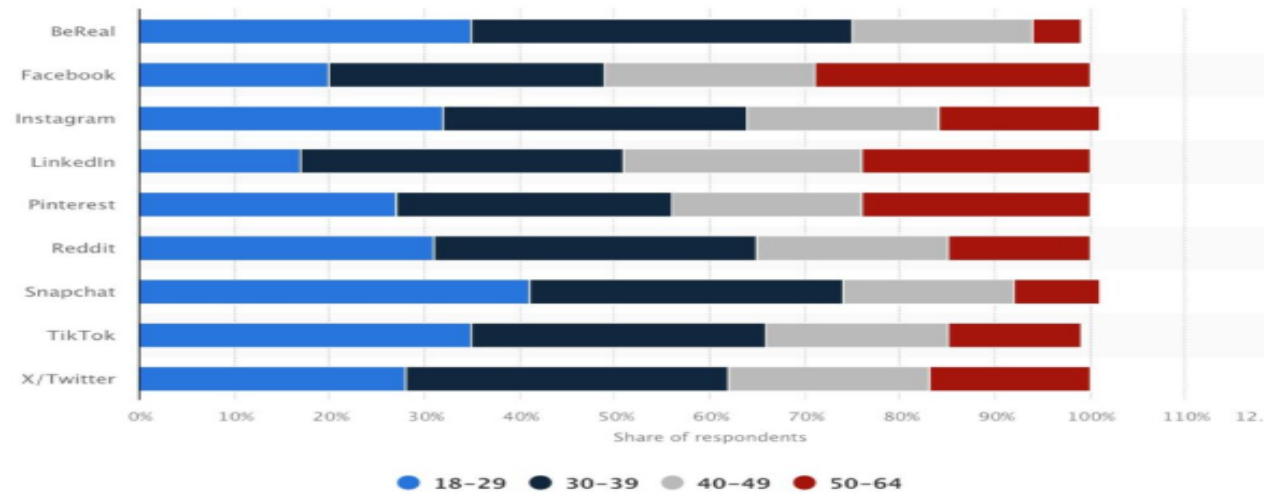
PEW RESEARCH CENTER



What is the most used social media by age?

Below is a breakdown of social media usage by age range:

- 18-29 years – Snapchat (41%), TikTok (35%), Instagram (32%)
- 30-39 years – LinkedIn (34%), X/Twitter (34%), Snapchat (33%), Instagram (32%)
- 40-49 years – LinkedIn (25%), Facebook (22%), X/Twitter (21%)
- 50-59 years – Facebook (29%), LinkedIn (24%), Pinterest (24%)



Source: Statista



What should you post?

What will be relevant or helpful to your followers?

- ✓ Highlight your work
- ✓ Educate & Inform
- ✓ Share before/after photos
- ✓ Share sales and special offers
- ✓ Ask for & share reviews & recommendations
- ✓ Join groups
- ✓ Participate in discussions – be a resource

SPECIAL OFFER



Social media wrap-up

- ✓ Do your social media platforms reflect the look & feel of your business & branding?
- ✓ Is the content updated regularly?
- ✓ Are you providing educational & informative content?
- ✓ Are you inviting followers to your other communications platforms?

Observe the rule
of thirds!!

Communications audit

Email Marketing



Communications audit – Step 3

Your email marketing

- ✓ Do you have an email marketing platform in place?
 - Stay top of mind with clients, prospects & referral sources
- ✓ Are you sending out eblasts or newsletters regularly?
- ✓ Are you providing educational & informative content?
- ✓ Are you giving followers the ability to opt in to your email marketing platform from your website or social media channels?

Email marketing



Dear Volunteers, Friends and Supporters,

We are in this fight together and below is a description of our mission crafted by Feeding America, the leading Food Relief Group in the U.S..

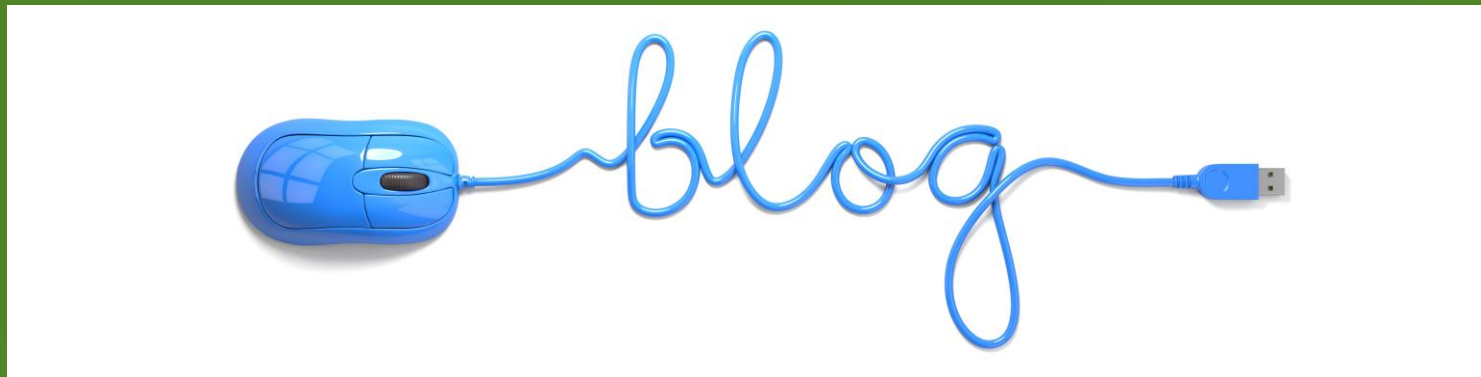
A definition of food insecurity

The USDA defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life. This can be a temporary situation for a family or can last a long time. Food insecurity is one way we measure how many people can't afford food.

More than 34 million people, including 9 million children experience food insecurity in the United States.

- Stay in touch with clients, prospects & referral sources to share news about specific projects, new services or interesting things your company is doing.
- Be sure to have an opt in form.

Communications audit – Your blog



Communications audit – Step 4

Your blog

- ✓ Do you have a blog?
- ✓ Are you posting regularly?
- ✓ Are you providing educational & informative content?



Blogging

- ✓ Write about specific projects, initiatives or trends in the industry or other topics related to your specialty.
- ✓ Share your success stories!
- ✓ Don't have time to blog? Delegate or outsource.



The screenshot shows a webpage from SCORE (Small Business Development Center) for Bucks County. The page features a success story article. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the SCORE logo and tagline 'FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR BUSINESS'. The main navigation includes links for 'Find a Mentor', 'Workshops & Events', 'Templates & Resources', 'Volunteer', and 'About'. A secondary navigation bar for Bucks County includes 'Local Mentors', 'Local Subject Matter Experts', 'Local Workshops', 'Local Resources', 'Local Success Stories', and 'About'. The article itself has a title 'SCORE Helps Therapist Unleash Expansion Opportunities for Animal-Assisted Practice' and a subtitle 'Unleashed Counseling, Annalisa Smithson'. Below the title, it lists 'Title / Role: Therapist', 'Formed in: 2020', and the website 'unleashedcounseling.com'. At the bottom of the article, there is a 'SHARE THIS SUCCESS STORY' button with social media icons for Facebook, X, LinkedIn, and Email. A photograph on the left shows a woman sitting on a white block with a dog sitting next to her.

Other communications tactics



Contests/Awards - Brag a little!

- Spotlights your expertise
- Can be leveraged in your collateral
 - ✓ i.e. “Winner of Best of the Region 2024
 - ✓ Gets your name out there
- Raises your credibility



Community outreach/philanthropy

- ✓ Demonstrates that your company is a good corporate citizen
- ✓ Gets your name out there
- ✓ Shows that you utilize your expertise for the betterment of others
- ✓ Raises your credibility/enhances your company image

Communications Audit Summary

- ✓ Aim for quality over quantity.
- ✓ Don't try to be on all platforms if you don't have the time and ability to maintain a consistent and active presence.
- ✓ Choose the platforms that make the most sense and expand from there.
- ✓ Develop a content calendar to help guide your social media posts, blog themes and other content

Conclusion

Your communications methods should:

- Enhance the relationship between your company & its target audiences
- Help raise your credibility with your target audiences
- Be consistent across each of your marketing & communications platforms
- Stay on brand, on message & on mission

NO time to manage your all of communications channels?

- Delegate or outsource to a professional

Remember to communicate and stay engaged!



Contact me

Debbie Goetz

Debbie Goetz Media Connections

215-630-5408

dgoetz@dgmediaconnections.com

www.dgmediaconnections.com





Questions?



Helpful Links

- Find SCORE resources for small businesses at www.score.org/templates-resources
- Find more SCORE live and recorded workshops and courses at www.score.org/get-business-training
- Book an appointment with a SCORE mentor at www.score.org/find-mentor



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION



Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

All opinions, conclusions, and/or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.

How should you communicate with your audiences?



- Newspaper
- Website/Digital
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Tik Tok
- Vehicle or other signage
- Yelp

What tools can you use to convey your brand?

- ✓ Business card
- ✓ Brochure
- ✓ Before & after photos
- ✓ Direct mail piece
- ✓ Promotional products
- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Vehicle signage

Quality & consistency are essential!