

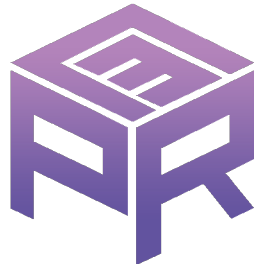
# SOCIAL MEDIA 101

*A GUIDE*

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If you are reading this, you're probably curious about, or in need of, social media promotion. It certainly can be overwhelming when it seems like every few months there is a new platform out there, and rumors fly about the demise of Twitter or lack of interest in Facebook.

Over the past few years, veteran social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn have changed to compete with newer platforms including Instagram, Snapchat, and Reddit. Now, TikTok, a platform initially used by grade schoolers to make mock music videos, has exploded in the tween demographic.

These outlets are important tools for building an online profile and effective marketing, but not all of them will be the right fit for you and your business.

For you experts seeking to share your knowledge with an audience, you will want to immerse yourself in a more text-based platform. Designers, artists, authors, photographers, interior designers, and the like: A more visually oriented set of tools would work best. Sometimes a happy medium is required, and many of the social platforms come with options that can bridge all worlds.

No matter what kind of promotion you need, joining the social media conversation is beneficial. Understanding the basics of how to utilize this opportunity to your greatest advantage is key. Here, we will provide a guide for navigating what we consider to be the most enterprising social media opportunities currently available

# Social Media 101: Reddit

Since its debut in June 2005, Reddit has curated 1.2 million sub-reddits or small forums with niche interests such as “r/IndieBookClub” where redditors meet to discuss a specific subject.



## A Reddit How-To

Entrepreneurs and authors alike are encouraged to use social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote their product. These platforms are indeed user-friendly promotional tools on an author’s belt in the effort to corner mainstream interest. Among these tools there is one invaluable gem that is perfect for targeting niche audiences yet is largely avoided: Reddit, host of 330 million subscribers according to TechJunkie.

So, why isn't the platform being used for marketing? Redditors and sub-reddit administrators are quick to attack, or even ban raw promotional content. Though Reddit has a massive base of users, the high volume of sub-reddits fosters a sense of grass-roots/tight-knit community among these small virtual villages. These users only want genuine content that is entertaining, informative, or useful in some way. This results in a general aversion to the shameless plugging of products. Authors who have met this obstacle are often discouraged from utilizing this platform. But don’t give up. There are a few tricks to making the most of Reddit for authors.

**Be active.** This is a rule of thumb with any social medium but is especially important with Reddit’s micro-communities. Participate in other redditors threads. Comment on threads, join robust conversations about things that interest you. Share other user’s content. Regularly create your own content that isn’t necessarily promotional or related to your book.

Being active builds awareness about you and your book and creates trust among your potential audience. You will also earn a good deal of karma points from being active -this is a score visible on your page, affected by how many upvotes or downvotes your content gets (comments on other redditor’s posts included) similar to likes on a Facebook post. As mentioned before, it’s all about building credibility -good karma means a good reputation in your communities. Being active is hard work, but effective, as seen in ReferralCandy Marketing Manager Si Quan Ong’s recent case study.

**Tease your product.** Present your book’s intrinsic value to your following. You can promote your book on Reddit, but it must be done with tact. Instead of sharing blurbs with Amazon buy links like you would on the other platforms, write a useful post relating to the subject matter of your book.

## *Looking for hard proof and results?*

Claire McKinneyPR's blog catalogues case studies and success stories to accompany our #SocialMedia101 tips -including this one! Check out "Social Media 101: Reddit" to learn how our recent client reaped the benefits of AMA at <https://www.clairemckinneypr.com/Blog>

# Social Media 101: Snapchat



**Snapchat is a hybrid social media platform and messenger. Almost entirely visual, it is only available for mobile device. These unique qualities require a creativity in branding that the other platforms do not. Because of this, while Facebook controls roughly 20.6% of the US ad market, Snapchat comes in at just 0.6% (Influencer Marketing Hub).**

## Snapchat For Authors

The application is intended as a messaging medium where users exchange photos, videos, or short messages. Photos and videos can have captions, but there is character limit. There is also a character limit for private messages. Reminiscent of the point-and-shoot model, to take photos, you focus the front (or back) camera of your device and hit the large circular button at the bottom of your screen. For videos, you hold the button down in 30-second increments.

Sound familiar? That is probably because Instagram operates similarly, but in a much more public way. Snapchat is a majority user-to-user application.

Don't let the unfamiliarity of Snapchat stop you. As of 2019, Snapchat has an astonishing 191 million daily active users, and climbing (Snapchat). There is an array of stickers, GIFs, geofilters (filters that are only available in certain locations), and many other interactive features that allow you to get creative with your Snapchat branding. Their demographic is in the 18-24-year-old range, so if you've been looking for a way to reach an overloaded Millennial/Generation Z audience, here's your chance!

With the medium's use-to-user atmosphere, you can form a personalized and meaningful relationship with your audience. You can find our shortlist of Snapchat musts to make this happen for your brand below.

**Snapchat stories** are a vital function of most popular platforms nowadays, and we've gone over them in great detail recently. Update your audience on the publication of your new book, introduce merchandise, and start conversations! Users can reply to your stories via private message. You can also link to the products mentioned above with our next Snapchat must.

**Snapchat links** or "swipe-ups" are an organic way to expose your audience to new and exciting content surrounding your brand. Simply take a photo or video, select the paperclip thumbnail to the right of your screen, and add the appropriate URL. This allows users to view your material with a simple screen swipe.

**Influencer collaboration** not only gets exposure for your author brand but builds a trustworthy sense of community which your audience values. Reaching out to fellow influencers about mentioning your work in a story goes a long way in broadening your own fanbase.

Armed with your new guide to Snapchat in the world of author branding, make the most of this untapped resource.

# Social Media 101: TikTok

**TikTok is a window to the latest pop culture trends among Generation Z. This generation also happens to be the next large target group of potential consumers. It is a video-only application that posts in 15-second bursts.**

**Hootsuite reports the app hit over one billion downloads in February of 2019, exceeding its competitors up to that point. Their net user and download numbers only continue to climb**



## How Do I Use TikTok?

Currently, the application is only available for download on mobile device. You will need to download via smartphone or tablet. While this sounds limiting, don't fear: TikTok has a host of editing tools in-app that enable you to create unique and original content.

**Setup:** The first prompt you get when logging in to the application is one asking your interests. Would you like to see comedy skits? Do you follow beauty influencers? What about dance performance? Your answers to these questions feed TikTok's algorithm and influence what content you view under the "For You" page (one of two pages that make up your TikTok "Home" screen). The "Following" page consists of users you are subscribed to after tapping around the app and finding what you like. Each user has a page setup much like Instagram -a photo of themselves, their handle, a follower count, bio, and their content.

**Creating Content:** Similar to Snapchat, creating your own content starts with a simple point-and-shoot clip. As talked about before, you only have fifteen seconds to deliver your message. Spend more time focusing on visuals, use dialogue sparingly. Most users supplement sound clips from popular music or memes rather than talking in their TikToks.

How can I use TikTok for book promotion?

**Challenges:** TikTok users generate a great deal of challenge-based content. The app is rife with these call-to-action posts, distinguished by hashtags (much like challenges seen across other social media). There is even a "#bookschallenge" with over 109.2K views! Feature your new book in original content to spread the word. You can even create your own hashtag and start a trend by simply adding a # before your desired phrase.

**Memes:** Aside from challenges, memes spread like wildfire. Users essentially take a pop culture item and tweak it with their own personal style. From songs to live-TV bloopers, TikTokers take soundbites from these moments and make a 15-second video performing their own take. Like we mentioned before, it's all about the visuals with this application. Having a stack of your own books as the background of a TikTok is the perfect subliminal marketing strategy.

TikTok has increased in notoriety to the point of Facebook imitating the application (Wired). It's time for you to make use of the trend. Now you're ready to TikTok with the best of them!

# Social Media 101: Facebook



**What began as a social networking application for students at Harvard in 2003 has blossomed. Today it's the social media giant that billions of authors consult every day. While the social network's growth can be neatly mapped out, it is a bit more difficult for users to understand how to use all of its newer features. That's why we've decided to lay out a revamped guide to Facebook as one of the handiest tools in an author's belt.**

## Social Media Stories

**The Facebook Story** is a newer function that you might be overlooking. Inspired by Snapchat, then adopted by Instagram, Facebook also added this feature to its dashboard in 2017.

**How to use it** – By clicking the camera icon on the upper-left-hand-side of your mobile app, you can take pictures and videos of your choosing. After that step, you will be prompted by three options: “Effects,” “Save,” and “Your Story.” The Effects option allows for different filter/sticker/text/location edits to add that extra pizzazz to your content. Save allows you to store this content on your mobile device. Your Story allows you to load content to the designated bar at the top of your audience's feed. You can find stories below the search bar of your app, represented by a circle containing your profile picture. You can also simultaneously load content to your story and your feed by selecting the option before you post. Each of these posts can be up to 20 seconds long and will expire after 24 hours.

This changes the game for a once text-oriented platform. The Facebook Story is a great opportunity for authors to share quick snapshots of a new book jacket, merchandise, or even your breakfast -it is a simple, free way to both promote a product and interact with your following.

## Live Streaming

**Facebook Live** functions as a branch of the Facebook Story. Below the search bar in the Facebook application, you will find the status bar. There are three options located in the status text box: “Live,” “Photo,” and “Check In.”

**How to use it** – Live is represented with a video camera icon; upon clicking this icon, a camera view similar to that of the Story comes up. The difference with Live is that you are sending a video in real-time to your audience. You can add a text description to your video, for example, “ARC Unboxing!” Live also comes with its own set of filters and effects, you can even invite another user to conference in your broadcast (by selecting the “Bring a Friend” option). You can choose where your Live video appears by tapping the “To:” drop-down, where you can make your broadcast public, address only your audience, or share it to specific groups you are a part of on Facebook. Like Stories, you can simultaneously upload a live broadcast to your story and your feed. Facebook live also displays how many people of your group are online, which makes choosing the most high-volume time for your broadcast a breeze.

Live is useful for broadcasting an event, making announcements about your product, or generally interacting with your audience. Users can comment on your Live broadcast and fielding those questions/comments can build a rewarding repartee between you and your following. Make the best of your Facebook following with these new tools!

# Social Media 101: Twitter

LinkedIn was founded in 2002, then launched in 2003 by Reid Hoffman, Allan Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly, and Jean-Luc Vaillant. It began as a digital job posting. Each user's profile served as an accessible resume for job recruiters to scout, and for users to connect with potential jobs of interest. So, aside from some cosmetic changes to the website layout, what's new with LinkedIn?



## Twitter Analytics

Twitter analytics is a feature that every Twitter user, business or personal, has access to. You can find the statistics of how users interact with your content by selecting the bar-graph symbol below each of your posts.

**How to use it** – Upon clicking the bar-graph, a window titled “Tweet Activity” will open allowing you to see exactly how many “Impressions” (people who have viewed your post); “Engagements” (how many likes, shares, or comments on your post); and “Link Clicks” (how many people have clicked the links in your post) your Tweet received. Monitoring your Tweet activity is an important piece of tracking the payoff of your efforts in comparison to the time you’ve spent creating content. If you are spending a lot of time planning Tweets and not receiving any buzz from your posts, it might be time to switch your strategy or outlet of choice. Logging activity can also help you better strategize the subject matter you Tweet about based on which of your posts gets the most traction.

## Pinning Tweets

Including a backlink to your website or buy link where people can purchase your book in social media posts is a great way to keep people clicking around your content for long periods of time. On Twitter, you can pin a Tweet to the top of your page containing those valuable links. This author strategy makes the Tweet containing your links the first thing users see when visiting your page.

**How to use it** – Each time you click on one of your own tweets, you see a dropdown arrow on the upper-right-hand side of its window. If you click on that dropdown, you are prompted by a variety of options: “Share via Direct Message,” “Copy link to Tweet,” “Embed Tweet,” “Mute This Conversation,” “Pin to your profile page,” “Delete Tweet,” and “Add to new Moment.” After selecting the Pin to your profile page option, that Tweet is now pinned to the top of your page. This ensures optimal exposure due to the fact that it’s the first thing users notice after clicking on your page. You’ll be seeing increased book sales and clicks on your website in no time!

Twitter is currently beta testing several brand-new features, such as status updates and a new color-coded organization for Tweet comments. For now, you are equipped with the Twitter tools to win over new followers.

# Social Media 101: LinkedIn



LinkedIn was founded in 2002, then launched in 2003 by Reid Hoffman, Allan Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly, and Jean-Luc Vaillant. It began as a digital job posting. Each user's profile served as an accessible resume for job recruiters to scout, and for users to connect with potential jobs of interest. So, aside from some cosmetic changes to the website layout, what's new with LinkedIn?

## What's New?

LinkedIn hashtags were just launched in 2018, keeping with the theme of a casual social network atmosphere on the evolving platform. Now, when creating a LinkedIn profile, you are prompted to follow hashtags that might interest you. Here's why these hashtags are important to you as an author.

**They're informational.** By following any given hashtag, you sign up to be constantly updated on what LinkedIn users are posting pertaining to the hashtag's subject. For example, if you are a fiction writer, you should follow #fictionwriting. This hashtag is now assimilated to your news feed. If fiction writing isn't your cup of tea, you can always search for your topic under "Discover More" in the "Followed Hashtags" section of your home page. Discover what is happening in your specialized area across the platform!

**They establish a presence.** As we've discussed in other blog posts, hashtags are an aggregation of posts that pertain to a common interest. By adding a hashtag to your post, you are adding it to a collection of content that contains the same hashtag. Going off of the example above, if you hashtag a post about your newest novel #fictionwriting, users just like you will find your content when searching the term on LinkedIn. Bam! You've successfully made you and your book known to a key audience!

**You can create your own.** Here is where you can have a little fun and be creative. Have you found that no hashtag on LinkedIn quite fits what you want to post about? If so, you can just make one of your own. It's as simple as putting together a short, and if possible, catchy phrase that relates to your subject with a # in front of it (but still keeping with work appropriateness as LinkedIn is still largely a professional platform). You might find that other people were looking for one like yours and begin to use it themselves.

Hashtags are used universally in the world of social media. Take what you've learned from this #SocialMedia101 and use it anywhere!

## *Psst! Need help with marketing & PR?*

If you're looking to gain some insight into public relations, marketing, and branding, CMPR's blog [www.clairemckinneypr.com/Blog](http://www.clairemckinneypr.com/Blog) has a wealth of information, including case studies, infographics, tips, and essays. We have new posts every week to help you in your journey to becoming an author or expert!



# Social Media 101: Goodreads

**The Goodreads Author Program is a fantastic marketing tool for authors that, from my experience, writers do not utilize enough. The “social cataloguing” website is owned by Amazon, so if you sell your book through Amazon’s services, most likely your book is—or will be—on Goodreads.**



## A Goodreads How-To

**Sign up for the Goodreads Author Program.** Even though you may have a Goodreads account for your personal use, if you want to be considered a Goodreads Author, you have to send a request to Goodreads so they know what books are yours. After they accept you (which can take a few business days), remember to flesh out your author profile like adding a biography and author photo, and rate some books so readers know where your interests in literature lie!

**Give away copies of your book.** Participating in a Goodreads Giveaway is a great way to get your name out there. When people enter a giveaway, Goodreads provides the option to add the book to their “To-Read” list. If you have a hundred people who added your book to their “To-Read” list, that’s a hundred people who might purchase your book—plus their friends may see it on their news feed and take interest, too.

**Join groups with similar interests.** Is your book in the thriller genre? Cozy mystery? Romance? There are hundreds of groups for those genres alone, and there’s even groups and book clubs that are regional or statewide who may want you in on their next meeting. Joining a group and finding out what readers love, hate, and talk about will help you figure out who your audience is—and isn’t.

**Befriend or follow other indie authors in your genre.** Starting a conversation with other indie authors may lead to them reviewing your book—and you may want to review their book, too. Indie authors are a community, not your competition, so helping another author in need isn’t going to hurt you. And hey, you might make some new friends in the process!

**Don’t forget to blog or announce events.** You never know who is in the area and may want to pop into your signing at the local bookstore. Blogging on your Goodreads page and linking back to your website may also result in more traffic. Don’t forget to add the Goodreads widget to your website, so fans can easily access your Goodreads page.

Although Goodreads is useful as an author tool, the website can be worth looking into if you are a brand or spokesperson. Microsoft founder Bill Gates for instance would release the books he read, and Mark Zuckerberg hosted his own book club. If you love reading and want to start your own billionaire book club, start with Goodreads!

# Social Media 101: Instagram



**With over 800 million monthly active users (users returning to the application each month), Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world according to social media marketing expert Dustin Stout. It didn't earn its massive audience overnight -this social media staple has been around over nine years- so what's new with Instagram since its launch?**

## **Instagram Stories**

Following the example of Snapchat, Instagram rolled out its story feature in August of 2016. According to Hootsuite, almost half the app's following use this Instagram update daily.

**How to use it** – You can either tap the camera icon at the upper left-hand corner of your app, or, if you haven't already added content to your story, the plus (+) sign at the bottom edge of your photo in the story bar. This bar borders the top of your feed. Via either option, a camera view will fill your screen. You can select from several options in a scrollbar at the bottom of this screen, which are broken down into the following: “Type,” “Music,” “Live,” “Normal,” “Boomerang,” “Superzoom,” “Focus,” “Rewind,” and “Hands-Free.”

The Instagram Story is a great way to generate quick and consumable content for your audience without much planning; one in five Instagram stories get a direct-message response. This feature can tap into the potential audience you've been missing all along!

## **Instagram TV**

IGTV was launched June of 2018, a function inspired by Snapchat and adopted by Facebook as well. Essentially, this Instagram update provides a host of channels that cable networks can't with this innovation. Each show stars a celebrity or person of interest and lasts only minutes. IGTV not only introduces a new set of outlets for you to plug yourself and your book, but you can also create your own channel.

**How to use it** – By tapping the television icon in the upper-right-hand corner of your app, next to the direct message icon, the IGTV feed will open. There you will find a cog; upon tapping the cog a prompt to create your own channel will appear. You can either upload videos from your mobile library or record one from the application. There is no landscape layout to this feature -vertical videos only, making it optimal for mobile use. IGTV is great for users who want to publish videos longer than a minute to their Instagram audience.

Luckily, these new updates are very user friendly -and fun. You are now well-equipped to share custom Instagram content for your niche audience at the tap of a screen.

# Social Media 101: Pinterest

**It's hard not to immediately think about recipes, hair tutorials, or DIY projects when someone mentions the word "Pinterest," and it can seem like there is no room for anything else when your own boards are filled with these exact objects. But as an author, you can take advantage of Pinterest—and most importantly, have fun with it.**



## A Pinterest How-To

**Pin your main character's interests.** Does your protagonist have a love of dresses and cute shoes? You can create a Pinterest board full of the exact clothing that she wears. Are there a number of quotes from your character that can be created into a graphic? Add them to a colorful board.

**Let us know what you're up to.** Was there a specific playlist of songs that you listened to over and over again while you were writing your latest novel? You can make a board solely based on the songs and artists you listed to. Are you participating in the Gilmore Girls/Rory Gilmore books challenge? Add a board with a pin of each book you've read so far. (And good luck. That's quite the goal!)

**Post your blog.** Do you have a blog that you post to weekly? You can upload the posts onto a board based on your blog.

**Design a vision board.** Vision boards are a person's ideas and goals curated into once visual space (usually a bulletin or pin board). Use Pinterest as the digital version of a vision board, where you can find millions of photos that will fit your needs.

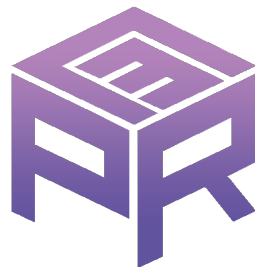
**Add a button.** If you have a blog, you can add a "pin it" button to your website. This allows someone who likes your blog posts to add them to one of their own boards, and it's one more way that you can market your blog and website.

There's so much more that you can do with Pinterest, and the best part about it is that you aren't just limited to one thing (140 characters, a photo, a status). You can make as many boards as you want, full of as many pins as you want.

In this guide, we have tried to provide the basic information you need to utilize what we at CMPR deem to be the primary social media tools to promote books, ideas, and/or consumer brands. Are there others you can use? Yes, absolutely. Do we recommend you try to manage a dozen different tools at once? No, because you will lose track of what you are trying to say; you will dilute your message; and you will have overwhelmed yourself to the point of not sustaining any momentum you start.

Don't do it if you don't like it! When we speak to groups about branding and promotion, people have asked us if they have to use social media. In general, it is helpful in creating an audience to which you can market, but if you dread it, or hate the thought of it, then don't do it. We recommend talking to an expert who can advise you on what tools, if any, you absolutely need and then looking for someone to help you.

Hiring a firm or individual to run a social media campaign can cost a few hundred dollars a month up to a couple of thousand. It all depends on what you need and how much time it is going to take. Hopefully in this guide, we have supplied enough information to demystify the process and give you the opportunity to independently manage your own campaign.



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