



5 biggest branding mistakes made on social media

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840 people join social media every day, and it's clear that it is here to stay. For most businesses, it's the cheapest way of getting your product or service in front of the masses for a small investment (your time). Unfortunately, though, significant damage can be done to your brand if you don't have a planned approach to social media. The saying 'something is better than nothing' doesn't apply when trying to build a brand that customers will fall in love with.

Mistake #1: No plan

To avoid brand damage on social media, you need to decide:

- The platforms you *should* be on (and the answer is never 'all of them')
- What you want your social media to say about your business
- Your goal — is it brand recognition? Sales? Or perhaps engagement?

Once that's clear, write a plan that outlines what you're going to post, how often, and by whom, as well as visual concepts for what it should look like.

Mistake #2: The wrong brand culture

What are you actually posting on social media? Are you constantly in sales mode? Are you sharing inappropriate images or videos of your staff hitting the town (and perhaps the pavement) on a big night out? And do

you have a strategy in place for managing comments or negativity?

Look at the brands you love to follow. Watch how they engage their customers. Having a good balance between sharing expertise, highlighting clients, showcasing your products or work, and introducing your team will educate, engage and entertain your followers. Importantly, it will create a brand culture that's far more memorable. After all, your culture helps mould your reputation. What kind of reputation do you want for your brand?

Mistake #3: No brand voice

Whether you realise it or not, how you write and talk creates a particular brand voice for your business. Are you fun, playful and hip? Perhaps you're intelligent, witty or intellectual? Your social media posts should reflect the tone and language you'd like your brand to have. Create a list of words or guidelines that staff can refer to that will ensure the brand voice is consistent across your platforms.

Mistake #4: No brand experience

Creating a brand experience is essential in the cluttered world of social overwhelm. Why do you think cat and dog videos are so popular? It's because they allow us a moment to relax, be entertained and have a chuckle. They provide a viewer *experience*. Include an opportunity to create a brand experience for your fans in your plan — something that they will remember or, even

better, pass onto their friends.

For us at WRD, we like to do Logo Votes. We encourage our followers to vote on the best of three logos that we've developed for a client. Everyone likes to be asked their opinion, so we receive plenty of comments, suggestions and even critiques, but it's worthwhile as people not only remember that we design logos, but they've also been engaged in the process.

Mistake #5: Inconsistency

Inconsistency refers to everything about your brand across all social media platforms. Your colours, fonts, style of images, brand voice, use of video, music, live streaming, hash tags... the list goes on. Are these consistent across the different platforms that you use? Is the message that you send on Instagram consistent with the message on Facebook or Twitter? This isn't just about *what* you post, it's about the *styling* of your social media, too.

And most of all, is the transition from one platform to another a seamless brand experience?

Without realising it, too many businesses unwittingly damage their brand by not being strategic with their social media. Yes, social media is social by nature and very much about engagement. But it's also a digital representation of your business, and needs to be managed in the same manner as you would manage any other facet of your marketing.

Is *your* social media building a brand that customers are falling in love with?