



Social Media Glossary

Definitions for the Most Common Social Media Terms

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It seems like you can't turn on the TV, listen to the radio, or read a magazine without seeing something about social media. Social media is definitely a hot topic. No one can get enough of these new tools that help us stay in touch, share information, and stay updated on all the latest news.

Sounds great, right? Why, then, are some of us still not jumping on the social media bandwagon? It could be that some of the words used in social media are unfamiliar, strange, and sometimes downright silly.

Why Do You Need a Social Media Glossary?

Does the thought of social media send you running for the hills?

Do you think a "tweet" is something a bird says?

Do you find yourself wondering why anyone would put their face in a book?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this guide is for you! We've scoured the World Wide Web to provide you with the best definitions of the most common and most frequently-used terms in social media today. We'll update it frequently, so you'll always have the latest information at your fingertips.

Are we missing anything? If so, please let us know. You can contact us using the information below:

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A

@ replies/mentions	In Twitter, the @ symbol comes immediately before a person's Twitter handle and lets them know a tweet is directed to them. For example: @<twitterhandle>.
App	An app is an application that performs a specific function on your computer or handheld device.
Avatar	Images used to represent a person. It can be an actual photo or a graphical representation.

B

Blog	A contraction of the term "weblog". An online journal with regular entries of commentary displayed in reverse chronological order. They typically contain comments by other readers. Can also be used as a verb: to blog is to maintain or add content to a blog.
Blogger	A person who maintains a blog and regularly posts content to it.
Blog post/entry	Content published on a blog. Entries can include text, photos, videos, and links to other websites.

C

Cloud computing	Refers to the growing phenomenon of users who can access their data from anywhere, rather than being tied to a particular computer.
Community	A group of people with a common interest around a product/brand, product, or site online.
Creative Commons	A not-for-profit organization and licensing system that offers creators the ability to fine-tune their copyright, defining the ways in which others may use their work.

D

- Delicious** Delicious is a free online bookmarking service that lets users save website addresses publicly and privately online so that they can be accessed from any device connected to the Internet and shared with friends.
- Direct message (DM)** This is Twitter's version of a private message, like an email sent directly to one person. No one else can see a DM but the person it is intended for. That person must be following you to receive a DM.

E

- E-book** An electronic version of a traditional printed book that can be downloaded from the Internet. A PDF can be an e-book and anyone can create one. They are available both free of charge and for nominal fees.

F

- Facebook** A web site that allows users to connect and share information with friends by posting status updates, sharing photos, joining groups, or becoming fans of organizations and businesses.
- Fan page** A profile on Facebook for businesses and organizations. Customers and enthusiasts can become "fans" of your fanpage, and can then receive updates, share information, and comment on posts from the business.
- Fan** A fan is someone who is enthusiastic about a particular business or organization and elects to receive updates from that business on Facebook. Fans can also add content to a business' fanpage and comment on posts from that business.
- Flickr** A website that allows users to post and share photos with others. Users can create and join groups with similar interests.
- Follow** On Twitter, to follow someone means that you will see their tweets. Followers are people who receive the updates from other Twitter users.
- #FollowFriday (#ff)** A tradition on Twitter whereby users recommend other people

to follow every Friday. Each tweet contains the hashtag #followfriday or #ff.

Friend On social networking sites (like Facebook), friends are contacts whose profile you link to from your own profile.

G

Geotagging The process of adding location-based metadata to media such as photos, video, or online maps. Geotagging helps users find a wide variety of businesses and services based on their location.

Google alert Google's service for building keyword searches for things like your company's name, industry terms, your competitors, or any other search. The results come directly to your E-mail inbox or to your RSS reader.

Group In Facebook, groups are collections of individuals who share some sense of unity about certain topics, like interests, activities, or values.

H

hashtag A tool to aggregate the conversation surrounding an event or theme on Twitter. Created by combining a # with a word, acronym, or phrase (#word). Anyone can make one up, and they're great for following information coming from a conference or event.

I

Instagram An application that allows users to take photos, apply various filters, and share the photos with Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and other social applications. Followers can "like" photos as well as comment on them.

L

Like	A "Like" is an action that can be made by a Facebook user. Instead of writing a comment for a message or a status update, a Facebook user can click the "Like" button as a quick way to show approval and share the message. A user can also "like" a fanpage to become a fan and begin receiving content from that page.
Link/URL shortened	Because tweets are limited to 140 characters, it's difficult to post long links. Link shorteners like TinyURL, Bit.ly and is.gd take a long URL and condense it down to a shorter version. Clicking on the shortened link takes you to the original long link.
LinkedIn	A social networking site for professionals to connect with each other. LinkedIn provides opportunities to join industry groups, recommend the work of others, and post and answer questions among your peers.
Listening	Setting up searches on various social networking sites to monitor (or listen) for mentions of specific key words (like your company, your product, your city, etc.).
Location-based service	Any information, entertainment, or social media service that is available on a mobile device via an application (app), and makes use of geographical position. Position is determined by GPS. Can provide useful information about venues, customer reviews, or a social-gaming component to build user engagement. Can also provide rewards including free or discounted goods/services.

M

Micro-blog	A form of blogging where the posts are limited to a certain number of characters, like on Twitter.
MMS	Multimedia Message Service. The rich media equivalent to SMS which can include images, video, and audio (not just text).
MySpace	An online social network similar to Facebook. MySpace caters to artists and musicians, who have the flexibility to create a custom look for their page. MySpace allows users to "friend" each other and create groups.

P

- Pinterest** An virtual and social photo-sharing website and application (also known as a “pin board”) that allows users to pin and organize the things they love on the web. A visual bulletin board for the web. Users can pin and re-pin photos from the web, and add captions for context.
- Podcast** Online audio or video recordings that are available to download to portable media players like iPods.
- Profile** Profiles are the information you share about yourself when you sign up for a social networking site. They usually include a photo of yourself and basic information like personal/business interests, etc.

Q

- QR Code** A Quick Response Code (or QR Code) is a two-dimensional barcode that is readable with special scanners or readers. These scanners can be downloaded as apps onto smart phones. The code consists of black and white modules arranged in a square pattern that can be encoded with text, a URL, or other data.

R

- Re-tweet (RT)** In Twitter, a tweet that has been reposted by someone other than the original sender. Re-tweeting is usually done to pass on good information to your followers.
- RSS feed** Really Simple Syndication. This allows you to subscribe to content on blogs and other websites, and have it delivered to you through a feed without having to visit the site.
- RSS reader** A website that aggregates information from an RSS feed in one place.

S

- SEO** Search Engine Optimization. The process of arranging your website and creating content that will give it the best chance of appearing near the top of search engine rankings.

Smart phone	A handheld device capable of advanced tasks beyond those of a standard mobile phone. Capabilities might include E-mail, chat, taking photos or video, accessing the Internet, texting, downloading and using apps, and more.
SMS	Short Message Service. A system that allows the exchange of short text-based messages between mobile devices. Also known as “texting”.
Social bookmarking	A website that helps people search, organize, store, and share online items of interests (i.e., blog posts, online articles, pictures, videos, etc.) using the item’s URL. It becomes almost a public library, and can aid in collaborative research. del.icio.us.com is an example of a social bookmarking site.
Social couponing	An online method of receiving a coupon or voucher. Users can print the coupons (or have them scanned from their smartphones), and use them to save on products and services. Groupon and LivingSocial are the two most popular social couponing services.
Social media	Social media is a catch-all term for the tools and platforms people use to publish, converse, and share content online. It is about dialogue, not a one-sided stream of information.

T

Tag	Keywords attached to a blog post, bookmark, photo, or other type of content so that you and others can easily find them through searches.
Tweep	A friend or contact (person) on Twitter.
Tweet	A post on Twitter of 140 characters or less.
Tweet-up	An organized gathering of people who use Twitter. These events are held in person, and usually the Twitter users share a common interest.
Twitter	A micro blogging platform where users share updates/information with their followers in 140 characters or less.
Twitter handle	Your user name on Twitter (i.e., @YourCompanyName).

U

URL Unique Resource Locator. This is the technical term for a website address (i.e., <http://www.lcra.org/coloradorivertrail>).

W

Web 2.0 The 2nd generation of the World Wild Web. A term coined to describe blogs, wikis, social networking sites, and other web-based services that emphasize collaboration and sharing content.

Webinar Short for web-based seminar, a webinar is a presentation, lecture, workshop, or seminar that is transmitted over the Internet.

Widget Sometimes called a gadget, a widget is a small block of content (typically displayed in a small box) with a specific purpose and is constantly updating itself (via RSS). Widgets can be embedded into websites or blogs. Examples can include weather forecasts, news updates, photos, Twitter stream, etc.

Wi-Fi Wireless Fidelity. A system that allows enabled devices such as computers and smart phones to connect to the Internet within range.

Wiki A website or set of pages on a website that can be edited collaboratively. The best known example is Wikipedia, a web-based encyclopedia created by thousands of contributors from all over the world.

Y

Yelp An online city guide (also available via smart phone application) that helps users find places to eat, shop, drink, etc. based on the opinions of other users. Users provide reviews and recommendations based on their experiences for the benefit of other users.

YouTube A popular video hosting website that allows users to upload, share, and view video content.

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