

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM (SMES) COFFEE ENTERPRISES IN EAST AFRICA



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East African Community



International
Trade
Centre

Social Media Guide for Small and Medium (SMEs) Coffee Enterprises in East Africa



Social platform connects coffee SMEs to customers, increases brand awareness - a new contact is a potential customer. Photo credit: Nicole Motteux ©2020

Supervisor: James Howe, Senior Advisor – International Marketing, Branding, and E-commerce, International Trade Centre (ITC)

*Written and prepared by Nicole Motteux
Edited by Lilani Goonesena*

Disclaimer

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Background / About

More than 90% of coffee is exported as a raw product, with most of the added value transformation taking place in developed countries. Only a fraction of global earnings, estimated as less than 1%, remains in the hands of coffee farmers.

But the world is changing: digital technologies offer coffee producers the potential to promote their beans around world, differentiate themselves from commodities and secure more reliable and higher earnings. Increasingly sophisticated consumers seek to understand where the beans come from and wish to buy higher quality, sustainable produce that respects and reflects its origins. Social media is a powerful tool to connect and tell these stories. But it is not always easy for coffee producers to understand how they can go about this, or aspire to best practice.

The East African Community – European Union Market Access Upgrade Programme (MARKUP) is supporting coffee producers from across East Africa to better understand principles of branding and marketing communications. Our coaching directs coffee producers toward telling their stories in a more convincing manner, whether toward professional buyers or direct to the consumer. The project has allowed us to develop and share with you this guide, which we hope finds a wide audience among coffee producers and inspires many toward better use of social media, improved visibility and stronger branding.

James Howe

Senior Advisor – International Marketing, Branding, and E-commerce

International Trade Centre

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Executive Summary

*"Success today requires the agility and drive to constantly rethink, reinvigorate, react, and reinvent."
– Bill Gates*

The concept of social media had humble beginnings: to connect friends and family, and to share memories and events. In the past 16 years since the advent of Facebook (arguably the most successful platform), social media has become an integral part of people's lives.

And where people go, business follows.

Today, our social media experience includes online ads and business posts. Users are bombarded with images, offers and marketing every day, and have learned to filter out what they don't want to see. With a wealth of information at their fingertips, audiences will readily research any product or company they are interested in. And they expect to find answers to their questions and easy ways to connect.

Traditional advertising has lost its power of illusion. Now, more than ever, customers want to engage with companies they're interested in, to follow their journey, and to stay loyal to them.

Put simply, customers want to spend their money with brands they like.

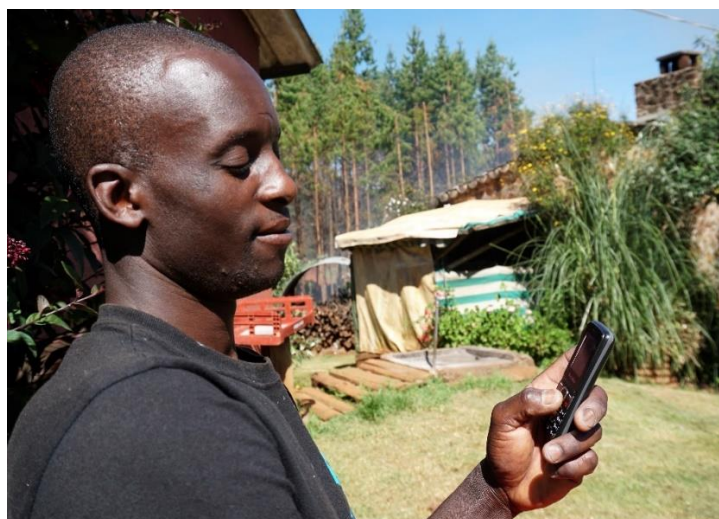
This is a golden opportunity for coffee enterprises from bean to cup. Many have adapted their marketing to reach and engage with customers on a more in-depth level.

Social media is one way of reaching that level of engagement. Free and interactive, it provides a singular opportunity for businesses to build and showcase their products and grow their audiences. Users will engage with businesses on their chosen social media platform, if they find their activity relevant, interesting and consistent.

The MARKUP social media guidelines focus on specialty coffee enterprises, a small but growing segment of the coffee market.

Consumers of specialty coffee appreciate quality over quantity and are willing to pay a higher price for it. Both business to business (B2B) and business to consumer (B2C) are interested in more than the product itself. They want to know the story of the bean, the brand and the business itself.

This is where social media comes in – an interactive platform to create and share brand storytelling.



Social media is transforming communications in Africa, Credit: Nicole Motteux ©2018

1 AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA

The Market Access Upgrade Program (MARKUP) is a regional development initiative conceived by the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat in partnership with the European Union (EU) and the governments of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The programme is EU-funded and it is implemented by various agencies, including the International Trade Centre (ITC), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and other national partners. It is designed to increase exports of agribusiness and horticultural products to contribute to the economic growth of countries in the EAC.

To support increased exports of coffee, MARKUP is training targeted small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda in specialty coffee branding and market communications. The aim of this training is to strengthen their international export competitiveness and business development.

1.1 Coffee market players

The world's leading coffee companies have spent the last several years getting substantially larger. Mergers and acquisitions of coffee majors have consolidated the global market, now tightly controlled by a handful of players.

At the top sits Nestlé, recently partnered with Starbucks and JAB Holdings. Other players, such as Lavazza, are on the second tier. Recently, Coca-Cola moved in as well, buying Costa Coffee and planning to increase in size over the coming years, capitalising on the rise of cold brew and ready-to-drink coffee.

Emerging markets in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America are also growing in value in 2014-2019.

1.2 Rise of millennial purchasing power

While the industry may be dominated by the major players, consumers are fast setting the trends. Companies need to respond to the increasingly sophisticated consumer demand for single origin and specialty coffee, and new tastes and formats.

Nowhere is this trend more evident than with millennials, or Generation Y, who have a very keen appreciation for high quality, specialty coffee. Currently between the ages of 20 and 38, this group accounts for a quarter of the US population.

Millennials are typically tech savvy and lead the way in online shopping. They are interested in "unique experiences" rather than just products and often purchase a product or service if they believe in the cause behind it. They love good customer service and tend to be loyal to a brand.

Why is all this important to you as a coffee producer?

Millennial purchasing power is a huge influencer on niche industries like specialty coffee. Coffee from rich, volcanic soils of the EAC fits well into the specialty coffee story. Which means businesses like yours can and should be targeting millennials.

The Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) classes coffee that scores 80+ points on a 100-point scale as "specialty." Specialty coffees are grown in ideal climates and are distinctive because of their full cup taste and little-to-no defects. The unique flavours and tastes are a result of the special characteristics and composition of the soils in which they are produced.



Millennials at Speedo Café, Australia's most Instagrammable café. Credit: Nicole Motteux ©2018

Millennials want to know where their coffee comes from, who produced it, the wellbeing of the coffee producers, how growers benefit from sales, how the coffee is roasted and by who, and the best way to brew it. In short, they want to know brands like yours.

TIP: Understanding your target market is key to selling your products. Learn more on page 5.

1.3 Word of mouth marketing

Millennials expect answers to all these questions and more, preferably in a neatly packaged Instagram account, website or brand story. In turn, they will re-market their favourite brands across their own social channels, to ever-widening circles.

This is one of the fundamental marketing tools of social media – and a key to its own success – the power of sharing. People love sharing their own experiences and feeling aligned with a brand. Businesses that foster that connection can turn followers into brand ambassadors.

Free, independent and honest recommendations by real people, known as social proof or word of mouth marketing, is the most valuable type of advertising there is.

1.4 Trendsetting

Millennials paved the way in the demand for greater transparency and interest in coffee origins. Now this has become a standard expectation across the industry. So too has the trend for documenting and sharing coffee consumption on social media.



Barista Maniac's latte art creations are accompanied by a humorous caption or pun, making posts more fun and engaging

In cafés and restaurants across the world, consumers snap pictures of freshly brewed coffee and upload them to Facebook or Instagram, tagging the venue, brand and a multitude of other details. Boom. Another brand ambassador is born, eagerly sharing their recommendation to hundreds and thousands of potential customers.

1.5 What do coffee customers want?

We know that in 2020, coffee consumers value trustworthiness, honesty and transparency in the brands they buy from. They expect high quality products and top customer service. They also have an increased awareness of sustainability, the environment and social responsibility.

In addition, consumers want to be able to easily access information about a brand. This is why online visibility is so important.

Brands that fail to adapt to changing consumer demands will not survive. Traditional brand loyalty is dying out as consumers actively seek out new brands that meet their needs.

Coffee buyers and customers now want and demand authenticity – in brands and in all aspects of the supply chain. Even the biggest coffee companies in the world use storytelling to share the journey from the bean to the cup, boost loyalty and ultimately, sales.

1.6 Building your brand's online visibility

Social media is a vital part of building your online visibility and showcasing your brand to a global audience. However, it's only one part of a good online marketing strategy. You should also develop a website and adopt SEO (search engine optimisation) principles, collect customer reviews through a Google My Business listing, and build a subscribers list with an email newsletter.

This guide focuses on six of the biggest and most popular social media platforms:

- Facebook: Connecting with family, friends and communities
- Instagram: Image and video sharing app
- Twitter: News and commentary as it happens
- LinkedIn: Professional networking and industry trends
- YouTube: Video creation and sharing across multiple platforms
- Pinterest: Finding and sharing inspiration and creative ideas

It is worth noting that many of these social platforms are banned in China, a growing market for specialty coffee. See the end of the guide for a brief outline of popular Chinese social media platforms.

The MARKUP social media guidelines will help you set up your social platforms, expand your brand, reach new audiences, and tap into the world of social media marketing.

Specifically, the guidelines deliver:

- Practical, hands-on social media tips and strategies
- In-depth analysis of each social media channel
- Targeted post ideas for each platform
- Examples of coffee producers on social media
- Analyses of successful posts on different platforms



Migoti Coffee, Mutambu Commune, Burundi. Photo credit: Carley Serwat ©2020

2 WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA TO ACHIEVE?

That's an easy one. You want to increase your marketing activities, grow your brand visibility online and extend your customer base.

Great. But in order to do that effectively, you need to figure out what to post, when and why, plus who will read your posts. You need a social media strategy.

2.1 Create a social media strategy

A social media strategy is simply a plan for how you intend to use it to help reach your marketing and business objectives. Use a Word or Excel document. It doesn't have to be fancy, just functional.

2.2 What are your goals and objectives?

Having a goal makes it easier to measure whether you achieved it or not. You may try many different tactics on social media before figuring out what's most effective and engaging for your audience.

SMART goals will give you a purpose and direction. Your goals should be:

- Specific (this makes it easier to achieve)
- Measurable (use numbers to quantify goals)
- Attainable (set goals that are within reach)
- Relevant (your goals should be relevant to your business' success)
- Timely (give yourself a realistic deadline)

Examples of SMART social media goals

- Increase reach (followers) by 50% by the end of the year
- Increase 'likes' on your Instagram posts by 20%
- Increase number of mentions, shares and retweets on your Facebook page by 15%
- Connect to all your current and potential traders on LinkedIn by end of the year
- Increase coffee promotions by 20% by the end of the year
- Post on Facebook twice a week

2.3 Audit existing social media accounts

A social media audit is about looking at your existing social media accounts and deciding whether they fit into your new strategy. You may wish to close old accounts, or update them to use exclusively as business, not personal accounts.

What to look for during your audit:

- Is your brand logo current?
- Is there style consistency between accounts?
- Does your bio text fit with your brand?
- Have you completed all the fields in your bio?
- Are all posts in line with your business?

2.4 Assign someone to run your social media

Decide who will take ownership of the social accounts. It's easiest to assign this to one person who will create content, take photos and videos, respond to comments and review the analytics. This person will need password access and to understand your goals, objective and strategy.

2.5 Who is going to follow my social media page?

Good question. But what you should be asking is not who will *choose* to follow you but who you *want* as a follower.

Identifying your target audience is a very important step in any marketing plan. This is called an ideal customer avatar and it could be B2B, B2C, or both. Once you decide who your avatar is, you will be able to target your social media posts to engage those types of people.

2.6 Decide on your ideal customer

Consider your ideal avatar carefully. Think about where they live, how old they are, which language they speak, what kind of career they have, and how much money they earn. Other factors can be whether they are married or single, their level of education, ethnic affinity, interests and behaviours.

This is a lot of detail but it's important to know and understand your target market. For example:

Meet David. He's 29 and an IT consultant in the US. He's single, recently moved for a job and enjoys sampling different specialty coffees from Africa. David drank Starbucks throughout his university days but his new colleagues have been taking him to local boutique cafés. He's started buying single origin coffees and recently bought a coffee machine to try beans at home.

David's older sister works for a food and wine business. She encourages him to trace the origin of the coffee he buys and see if it positively impacts the farmers that grow it. He is now keen to buy beans directly from his favourite supplier – that makes him a B2C.



Consumers want to know where their coffee comes from and how it is farmed. Credit: Nicole Motteux

©2018

Now, if David were your target customer, what kind of social media posts would he find interesting? Maybe...

- Where he can buy your coffee
- Where it comes from and who grows it
- Videos of the coffee fields, environment and harvest
- Interviews with your farmers
- The different varieties of coffee you grow
- The farming process and seasons

TIP: Remember, your customer avatar may know next to nothing about where coffee comes from. So, your business and farm, while ordinary to you, can be very interesting and unusual to them.

2.7 Set up a social media calendar

It's important to try to post consistently and often. Your audience gets used to a regular pattern. A social media calendar is really helpful when planning posts.

When figuring out what to post, consider the 70-20-10 rule:

- Post original content 70% of the time
- Post content relevant to your followers' interests 20% of the time
- Post self-promotional content 10% of the time

Keep it varied. Mix things up by answering questions or sharing observations and industry trends.

Use a normal calendar (digital or printed) and decide when and what you will post on given days, then write it all down. Include things like:

- Upcoming events
- Special times of the year
- Planting season
- Harvest time
- Processing and drying time
- Cupping coffee
- New product launches
- Personal events like an employee having a baby or moving business premises

TIP: You don't need to create original posts for each platform. You can repurpose content between them, and even repeat content weeks or months apart.

Calendars also help with categorising different types of posts to give your audience variety. For example: blog post, product launch, video, campaign, event and so on.

Now that you have your strategy set up and ready to go, let's move onto creating your actual posts.

3 CREATING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Set time aside to create each post. This could be 10-15 mins at the start of each day. Or you can set aside 1-2 hours and create a whole bunch of posts for the next week or two. This is known as batching.

3.1 Things to consider when creating a post

- What is the purpose of the post?
- What do you want people to know?
- Which category of post is it (eg video, event)?
- Are you tagging any other brands in the post?
- Which hashtags will you use?
- What is the Call to Action (CTA) – what action do you want your readers to take?

See, for example, the breakdown of an Instagram post by an Australian café for a free coffee promotion. It follows a basic layout – an image, post content, tags to another brand or company (if necessary) and hashtags at the end.



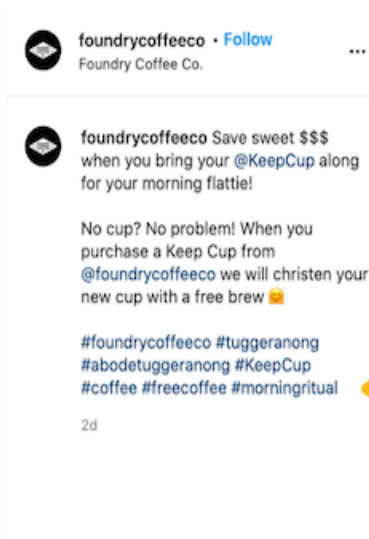
Once you write a few posts of your own, you will see that they all follow a similar style. The main difference is your brand’s personality and focus.

TIP: A moment of truth: if your images are poor, no one will click on your posts or like them, so invest in good quality images.

3.2 Writing your post

There is a formula to every post. You don’t need to be a wordsmith to write for social media. Keep it simple, whether it’s a promotion post or a video about your business. Think about what you want your audience to know, and what action you’d like them to take. Keep the text short and clear, 1-2 sentences is perfect. And write as if you were having a conversation with your customer.

Post category: Promotion



1st line: What do you want people to know? eg: Save money when you bring a KeepCup to the cafe

2nd line: The details of the promotion, eg: Buy a KeepCup at our cafe and get a free coffee

Hashtags: Include brand (foundrycoffeeco) location (tuggeranong), other brand (keepcup), promotion (freecoffee), industry (coffee)

The same formula applies to video posts and other social media platforms, with only a few small differences. For example, while hashtags are crucial to Instagram posts, they're rarely used on Facebook.

Post category: Video/about our business



1st line: What do you want people to know? eg: We are open for business

2nd line: What is the video about? eg: Our animals (alpacas) are happy and healthy. Our location is a beautiful place to visit.

- Everyone loves animals (especially baby animals)
- Video is shot in natural light on a clear day with blue sky and green grass
- No one is talking so sound isn't needed
- It is not a professional video: you can easily shoot one like this on your phone and upload it directly to socials

Video is always popular on social media - it's easy to watch, like and share



Saffron Coffee in Laos uses an Instagram post to market their menu as well as coffee products, with a backdrop of their location on the banks of the Mekong River

3.3 Post lengths

The caption length differs between platforms, but generally shorter posts get more engagement. Length is measured in “characters”, which include spaces, emojis, links and hashtags.

That said, it can be difficult to include everything you want in a 1-2-sentence post. When that happens, go back to what the purpose of your post is, and try to keep it succinct.

Ideal post lengths in 2020:

- Facebook: 88 characters
- Instagram: 138-150 characters with up to 30 hashtags
- Twitter: Less than 100 characters
- LinkedIn: 700 characters
- YouTube: 70 characters (title) and 5000 characters (description)
- Pinterest: 500 characters but the first 50-60 characters are most visible



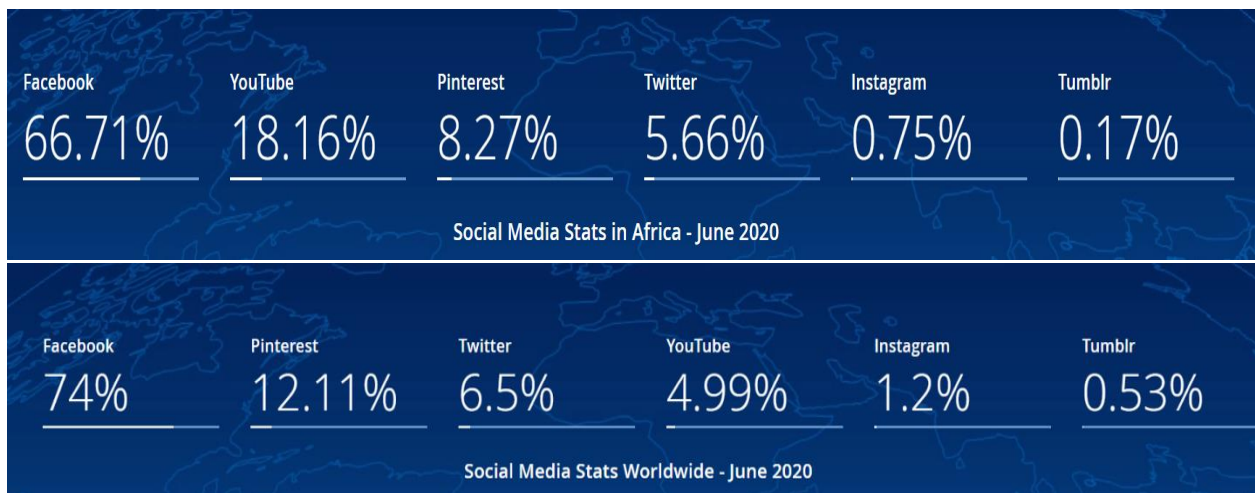
*Social media can take coffee drinkers into the heart of your business, Migoti Coffee.
Photo credit: Carley Serwat @2020*

4 SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS – IN DEPTH

Now let's look at social media platforms in more detail, and work out which are right for your business, now and in the future. Different platforms have advantages to different businesses. Here are some factors to consider when choosing the platform you'll invest in:

- Which platforms have you used before and feel comfortable with?
- Will you use a computer or a mobile phone to access social media?
- Which ones does your target audience spend time on?
- How much time and resources can you give to social media?
- Do you enjoy writing or would you rather do live videos?
- Will you be creating original content or sharing others' posts?

Here is a look at social media user statistics in Africa and globally in June 2020. As you can see, Facebook has the highest number of users by far. So, it may be a good platform to start with.



TIP: It takes a lot of work and time to get social media followers. Choose your platform carefully, so you can focus your energy and resources where you can have the greatest impact.

4.1 Facebook

Let's start with Facebook, the most popular of all social media platforms. In sub-Saharan Africa, which includes East Africa, over 95 million people access Facebook every month, 97% of them from their mobiles.

Medium: All devices

Engagement: Number of likes, comments and shares per post.

Tips to build your brand on Facebook

- Honest, accurate content is valued
- Provide a mix of content, images and videos that show your business environment
- Respond to every comment and message you receive
- Invite people who like your post to like your page – an easy way to grow your audience

TIP: Build your marketing solutions with local expertise. Keeping it local matters.

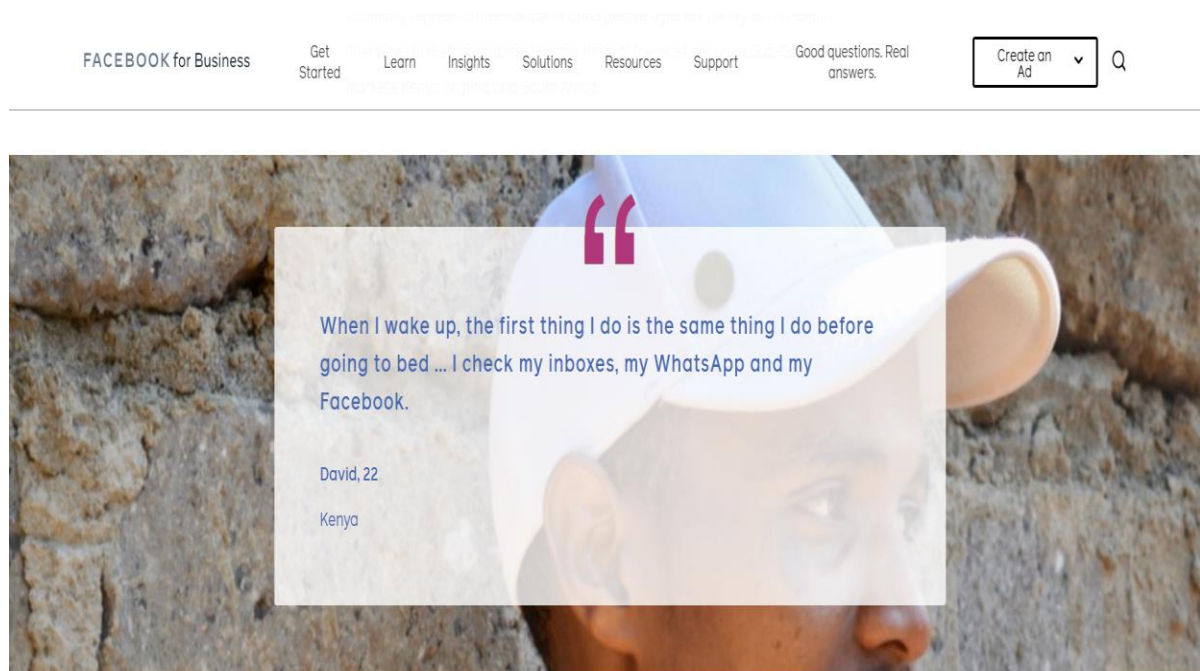
Setting up a Facebook business page

It's important to have a Facebook page that is separate from any personal account you may have. It's easy and free to set up a business page. All you need are a couple of good quality images, a short description of your business and your contact details.

Facebook business page post ideas

- Images and videos of coffee growers
- Images and videos of the surrounding landscape and natural beauty
- Images and videos of seasonal ups and downs and wildlife
- Live videos of coffee plantations and harvest
- Your work to support improved livelihoods and conservation
- Trends and innovations in the coffee industry
- Behind the scenes stories of your business
- Interviews with workers and small-scale farmers
- News in your business

When people like your page, they become followers and your content appears in their news feeds. This is particularly important in the 2-3 days after liking your page, when they'll see your content most frequently. If they engage with it, then your posts will keep appearing in their feeds. So ensure you post regularly and consistently to build your following.



Million people coming to Facebook every month across the Africa, with over 80% on mobile

Facebook ads

Facebook also offers the option to promote your brand/post for a fee. You may consider Facebook ads to expand your target audience's awareness of your brand.

Ads can target people by age, interests, location and behaviour. Facebook claims an 89% accuracy.

Facebook paid ads allow two ways to manage your ad budget:

- Daily budget: enables you to run through the day in accordance to the budget you selected
- Lifetime budget: enables you to run your ad for a specified length of time over a set time period

Note: if Facebook rejects your advertising, check out Facebook for Business advertising policies, edit and save the post, and resubmit it. Facebook monitors posts for false and confusing claims.

TIP: You don't need to spend a lot of money to run a successful ad campaign. Experiment with a small amount for a few days. You can edit your budget and timeframe during the campaign.

Facebook groups

Facebook groups are a popular way to share your brand and connect with like-minded people in all aspects of the coffee industry. However, groups are not advertising channels. Be sure to engage with other people's content and not just share your own.

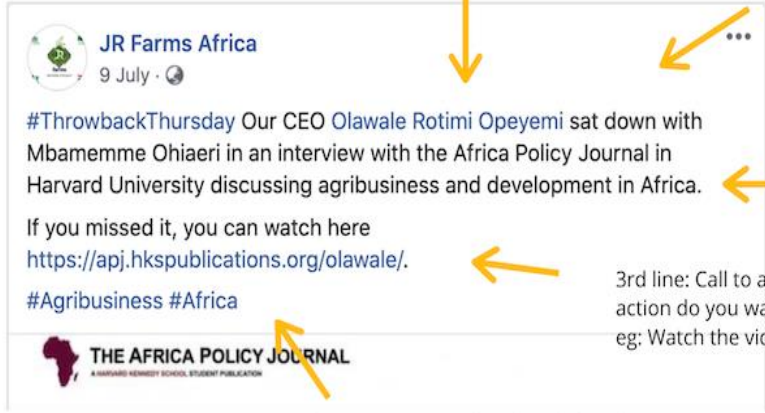
Facebook analytics

You can check your analytics under Insights. It's easy to access, and provides a wealth of information about your posts, engagement and popular times, your followers and demographics, and more. You can even track competitors' pages and see how they compare.

Post category:
Video/about our business

Tag a relevant person or brand,
eg: JR Farms CEO

1st line: What do you want people to know? eg: Our CEO was interviewed by a prominent publication



2nd line: The details of the interview, eg: Agribusiness and development in Africa

3rd line: Call to action (CTA) - what action do you want the reader to take? eg: Watch the video

Hashtags: category (ThrowbackThursday), topic (Agribusiness), location (Africa)

The image shows a Facebook post from JR Farms Africa dated 9 July. The post text includes a throwback Thursday announcement, a link to an interview, and hashtags #Agribusiness and #Africa. Annotations with arrows point to various parts of the post: the top line (interview announcement), the second line (interview details), the third line (CTA link), the hashtags, and the tag 'JR Farms CEO'.

4.2 Instagram

Specialty coffee and Instagram are a match made in heaven. Instagram is about images. It's a great platform to promote your coffee products and build a community of engaged coffee fans from your region and around the world.

Millennials are the biggest users of Instagram and we know they love coffee. As Instagram is a mobile phone app, and East African internet use is dominated by mobile rather than desktop, this is likely a great platform for your business.

Medium: Mobile devices

Engagement: Measured by the number of likes, comments and shares.

Tips to build your brand on Instagram

- Instagram is a great platform for visual businesses selling products
- Tag other brands to put your post in front of different audience. You can do this by typing '@' followed by their name, and they will receive a notification
- Original images have a much higher rate of engagement
- Stay up to date on trends and changes by checking out other people posts
- Use useful product names, for example, instead of "East African coffee", try "Rwanda Highlands single origin speciality grade Arabica coffee"

Instagram stories

Instagram stories are 'real-time' photos and videos that stay live on the platform for only 24 hours.

You can use stories to show followers your coffee fields, cupping sessions, fundraising events, or speak directly with your audience through live video. Stories provide an authentic, creative and candid touch to your brand.

Instagram post ideas

- Images and videos of coffee growers
- Images and videos of coffee plantations
- Images and videos of the supply chain
- Trends and innovations in the coffee industry
- Behind the scenes stories of your business
- Interviews with employees
- Your business news
- Support for sustainability, the environment or native animals



Create a post on Instagram using a call to action in your caption, e.g. "swipe across for a list"

Hashtags

Hashtags are important on Instagram as a way of finding trends and topics of interest. You can use up to 30 hashtags per description and add more in your post comments. You can even develop your own brand hashtag.

For example, if your post is about coffee growers, try #coffeegrowers. If it is about your single origin coffee product, then try #yournamecoffee, like #Burundicoffee or #Ugandacoffee.

Here are some other commonly used ones suggested by a selection of coffee-focused publications, but keep an eye out for other trending hashtags:

#specialtycoffee

#sustainableagriculture

#organicfarming

#farmlife

#knowyourfarmer

#futureofcoffee

#womenincoffee

#coffeelife

#latteart

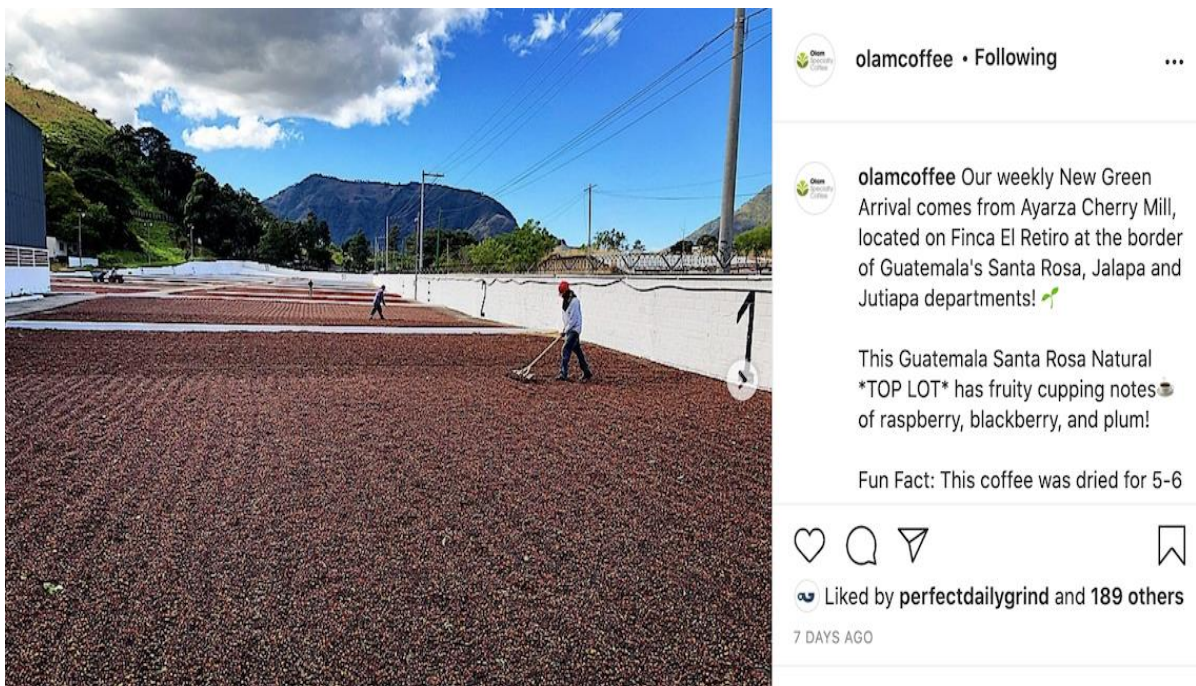
#coffeelovers

#coffeeaddict

#barista

Instagram analytics

Insights show an overview of impressions, reach and engagement, as well as demographics like gender, age range and location. You can also see which posts and stories your audience sees and engages with the most.



Olam Coffee posts regularly on subjects such as values, meet the farmer, practices and coffee flavours

4.3 Twitter

Twitter is popular for discussing and sharing real time events, opinions and news, coffee articles, blog posts about your business, and national and regional facts and figures. English is the most used language on Twitter in Africa, and users are typically young, educated and based in cities.

Medium: All devices

Engagement: Measured by the number of likes, comments, shares and clicks anywhere on a tweet.

Tips to build your brand on Twitter

- Keep posts succinct and to the point
- Links of any length typically add 43 characters to a post length
- Include an image or video with posts
- Add a call to action at the end, e.g. “watch this”, “read more” etc
- Optimise your bio to showcase your coffee brand and personality
- Follow other brands to see how they use Twitter

Twitter post ideas

- Images and videos of coffee growers
- Trends and innovations in the coffee industry
- Opinions on coffee production in your country
- News and stories in the coffee industry
- Interviews with employees

Twitter analytics

Twitter analytics will show how many times people have seen, retweeted, liked, and replied to your tweets. You can see your top performing tweets and the most influential followers in your network.



Farm Africa ran a series of Twitter posts introducing its employees, showing a personal side to its business.

4.4 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is generally used by well-informed businesspeople who are interested in networking with like-minded people and making new partnerships. Users appreciate helpful and relevant industry information. It is a great platform to build your profile as a coffee professional.

It is also used by coffee growers, service providers including certifiers, key coffee industry organisations, journalists, business owners and CEOs. In Africa, LinkedIn is primarily used to network with other professionals.

Medium: All devices

Engagement: Measured by the number of likes, comments, shares and link clicks

Tips to build your brand on LinkedIn

- You will need a personal profile before creating a business page
- Ensure your page describes your business honestly
- You can invite up to 100 personal connections per month to follow your business page
- LinkedIn rewards active accounts by recommending them to people with similar interests

LinkedIn post ideas

- Practical advice that has worked for your business
- Coffee industry trends
- Coffee farming trends or initiatives
- Relevant business trends or initiatives
- Native (uploaded) video of your business environment
- Answers to common questions that your audience may ask/not know

TIP: LinkedIn is a great platform for demonstrating expertise and building a reputation for reliability, knowledge and trust. Post content with insights and information your audience may not know.

Connections

Build your network by inviting people you know to be your connections. You are also allowed a limited number of free messages per month, to connect with people outside your network.



SUCAFINA 6,891 followers
1mo • Edited •

[+ Follow](#)

We are proud to announce the rebranding of our Group!
An exciting time for Sucafina as we get one step closer to our vision of being the leading sustainable "Farm to Roaster" coffee company in the world. ...see more

SUCAFINA UNVEILS NEW BRAND IDENTITY AND ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF SUCAFINA SPECIALTY
group.sucafina.com • 3 min read

243 • 11 Comments

Sucafina builds awareness of their rebranding and their work towards sustainability

LinkedIn articles

LinkedIn is increasingly becoming a content-rich platform. LinkedIn articles are similar to blog posts and can be 1-2 pages long. They are a great way to demonstrate your expertise and industry knowledge.

LinkedIn paid ads

Before setting up a LinkedIn ad campaign, it's best to work out your objectives, select your audience and set a budget. LinkedIn gives you the option to target audiences by demographics, job title, job function and industry, allowing you to reach a very specific audience.

LinkedIn analytics

The LinkedIn activity dashboard will show the effectiveness of your updates, including post likes, shares, comments and mentions and posted videos. See the demographics and sources of your followers and visitors, such as location, industry and job function.

4.5 YouTube

YouTube is the world's most popular social video channel. With YouTube, you can share helpful information that offers insights into your coffee business. You can also share your YouTube videos across other social media platforms.

Medium: All devices

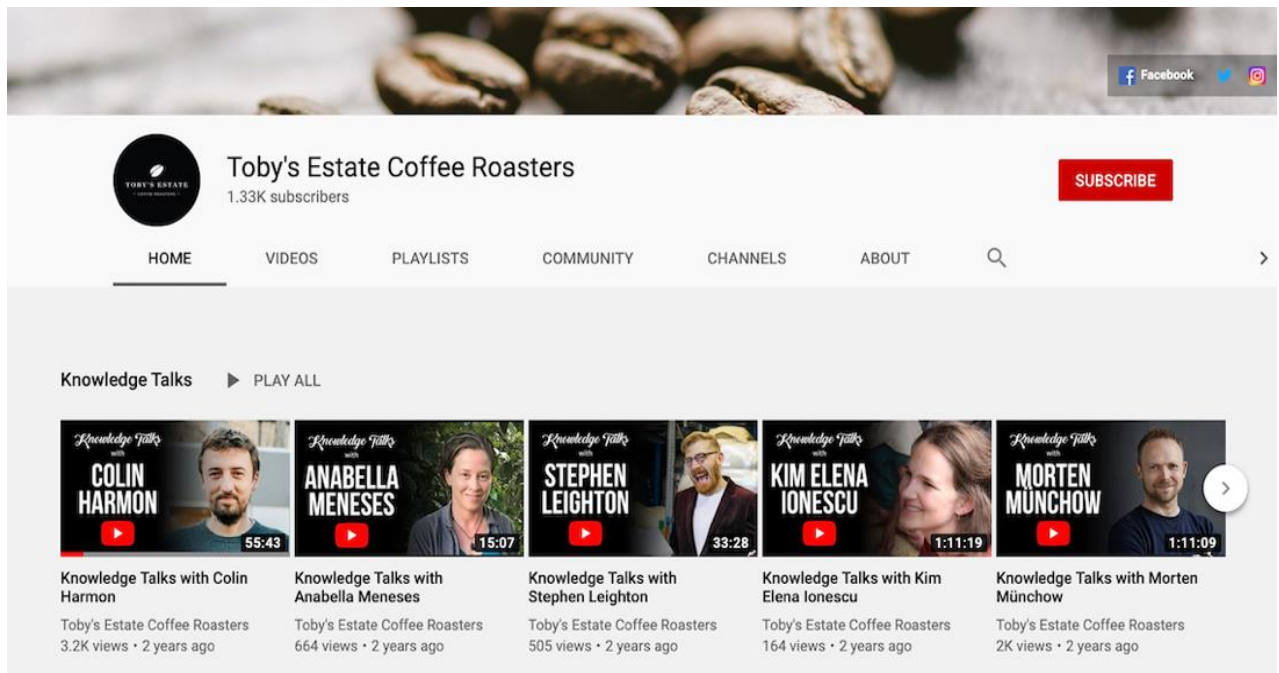
Engagement: Measured by subscribers likes, dislikes, comments and shares per video post.

Tips to build your brand on YouTube

- Poor quality videos can result in viewers completely ignoring your content. Spend time to learn the art of engaging viewers
- Create a YouTube channel for business. This allows multiple authorised people to access, edit and update videos and respond to comments
- Followers expect regular content, so pick a day (e.g., every Tuesday or the first day of the month) and post new material consistently
- Keep your videos short and to the point, between 2-4 minutes is ideal
- At the end of the video, add a call to action (e.g., visit our website for more information)
- Ask your viewers to like your videos, share them and subscribe to your channel

YouTube post ideas

- Tutorials on how to brew different styles of coffee
- Informational videos on how coffee is grown, processed, transported and roasted
- Interviews with farmers and employees
- Interviews with coffee experts
- Live product demonstrations
- Your natural environment including local wildlife
- Environmental friendliness, sustainability and social responsibility
- Issues impacting coffee production: climate change, pest management, disease control, droughts, floods



Toby's Estate Coffee Roasters has several categories of YouTube videos to appeal to a wide audience, including knowledge talks with baristas and industry experts, brew guides, farmer interviews and recipes.

TIP: YouTube offers a personal insight into how businesses operate, so don't be afraid to show your personality: smile, be friendly, share your joy of wildlife, or insights into your vision and innovation.

Basic technical requirements

- A device to record high resolution video - a digital phone may be suitable
- Clear sound – avoid windy places, or use an external microphone
- Good lighting – outdoor, natural light is best
- A tripod – for keeping your video steady
- Reliable internet connection to upload video

How to post on YouTube

- Upload your video to your YouTube account
- Decide on a heading for your video
- Select a generated thumbnail for your video snapshot, or upload your own image
- Include your business name and a brief description of what the video is about
- Add links to your description and other social media platforms
- Add up to 15 hashtags
- Add cards, watermark and bumper ad to your videos
- Add a call to action
- Publish your video

TIP: YouTube is a great tool for creating and sharing video widely and for free. You could create an account for this purpose, even if you don't promote the account itself.

YouTube analytics

YouTube analytics provide detailed information on audience demographics, engagement and other helpful metrics. You can see the number of people who have viewed your account, the average view time, and the engagement rate.

4.6 Pinterest

Pinterest is a platform that aims to inspire users with creative do-it-yourself (DIY) ideas and aspirational lifestyle products. Users can “pin” images from websites they like as inspiration or reminder to return. It’s like a virtual noticeboard to save, collect and organise pins.

Not many people use Pinterest in Africa, largely due to slow internet connections. However, interest in East African coffee products on Pinterest is growing, mainly from UK and US coffee markets. The demographic is typically millennials and often women.

Medium: All devices

Engagement: Measured by link clicks, comments, close ups, pin saves and video views

Tips to build your brand on Pinterest

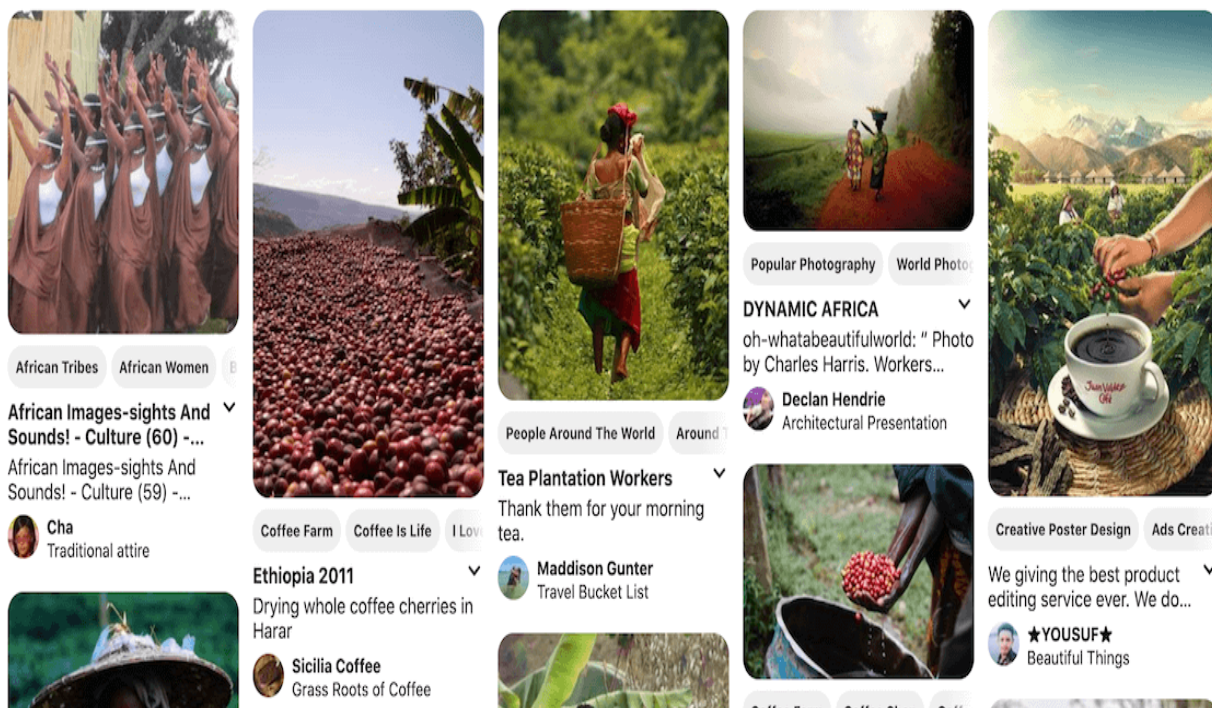
- Pinterest is a visual platform. You must create tall, narrow, high resolution images that present your product in an attractive way
- Use “boards” to organise your pins so people can easily browse and explore your brand
- Add a “pin it” button to your website so people can pin images from your site
- Choose a specific day to post. Pinterest users tend to match categories to different days, for example, Friday has a lot of travel pins and Saturday is food and DIY
- Pinterest fits coffee well as it is driven by users seeking positivity and emotional wellbeing

Pinterest post ideas

- Product pins that detail pricing and availability and how to purchase your coffee
- Recipe pins that explain how to prepare your coffee
- Article pins featuring content about your business, industry or social or environmental programs in which you are involved
- Place pins that show your location. These could include a map, images of your farm and environment, including its natural beauty and local wildlife

How to post on Pinterest

- Create a business account. This will also give you access to analytics and ads
- Consider your target audience: demographic, location, gender, language, trends
- Add keywords specific to your product, location and industry that people use to search for a product, for example, “East African Coffee”
- Use rich pins to include more product information to increase traffic to your website, for example: how to brew your coffee, a map, address, phone number, an article headline
- Research which times perform well with your target audience on Pinterest
- Include a CTA at the bottom of each pin, for example, to contact you or visit your website



There are lots of ways to showcase your business on Pinterest, from products to images of freshly brewed coffee, to the people and landscapes where you work

Pinterest ads

Use the Mobile Ad Tool to run and manage campaigns from your device. You can target Pinterest ads directly to customers (B2C) – for example, selling packets of roasted beans. Or to businesses (B2B) such as selling wholesale beans to café owners.

To run an ad, select a pin, then a target audience and a budget. You can promote the pin through a pay-per-click system. Pinterest ads can appear either on your homepage feed or in search results. It's important to use specific keywords to target possible user search terms.

Pinterest analytics

Pinterest insights provide detail about impressions, engagement, link clicks, video views, pin saves and more. Check the demographics of your followers and see how they engage with your pins. This helps you see trends and what your audience is interested in. Review your most popular pins and ad performance to determine what type of content is most successful.

5 THE CHINESE COFFEE MARKETS

Chinese consumption of coffee has nearly tripled in the past four years, according to the US Department of Agriculture. And with a population nearing 1.4 billion, it's a growing trend.

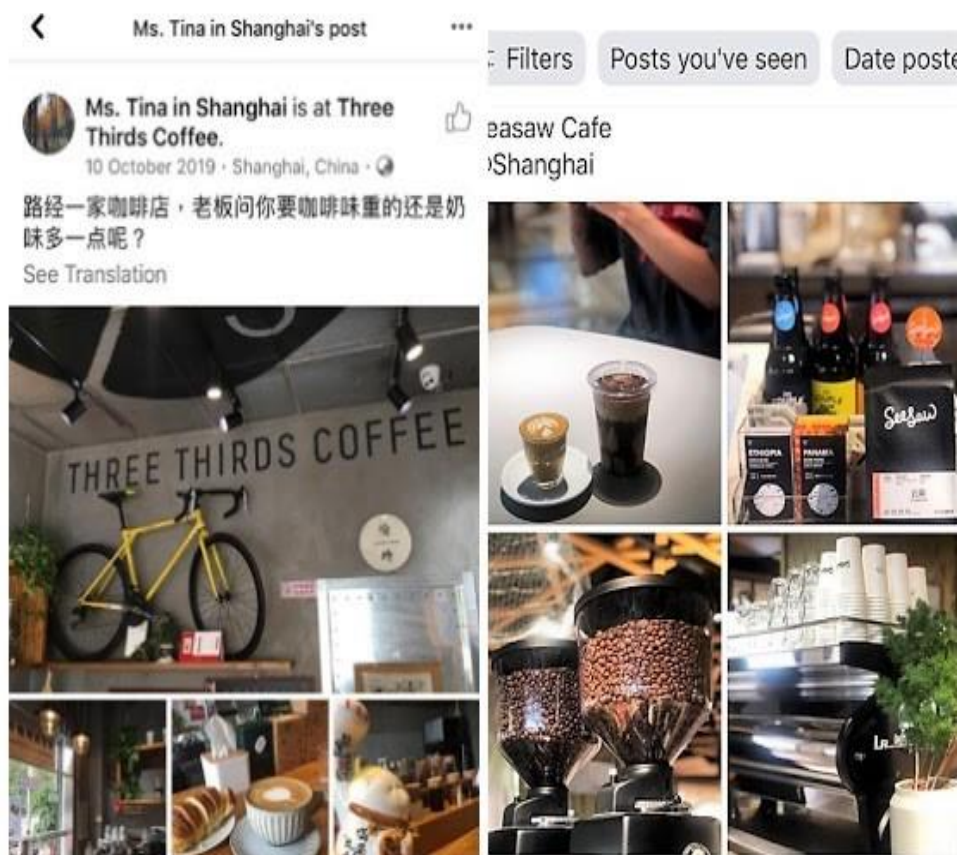
China's social media landscape has significantly expanded as well, with several booming platforms dominating it. Social media may be a great first step in developing relationships and engaging with Chinese users.

Some popular Chinese social media sites include:

Sina Weibo	Diandian
Tencent Weibo	Youku
Renren	QQ
PengYou	Douban

Chinese consumers demand convenience facilitated by far-reaching digitalisation.

Set a budget and be prepared to focus on online marketing. Even consider engaging Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) who have thousands of followers on Chinese digital platforms. KOL helps you to tap into large active Chinese communities, markets and supports you to build your brand name and reputation.



Three Thirds Coffee is a specialty coffee shop in Shanghai and on Chinese social media

6 SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS AND TIPS

6.1 Tools

As social media has grown in popularity and become an integral part of marketing, a variety of software and apps have sprung up in support. Many of these are global leaders for social media support and have become must-have tools for particular platforms.

Here are a few free social media tools that may help you:

- Grammarly : spots typos and grammar errors [grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com)
- Hemmingway: improves your writing by focusing on readability. It highlights long sentences and complex sentences that are difficult to read [hemingwayapp.com](https://www.hemingwayapp.com)
- Headline Analyzer: checks the effectiveness of your headlines coschedule.com/headline-analyzer
- Canva: templates to create graphics for social media [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)
- Stitcher: internet radio service to keep up to date with trends and news [stitcher.com](https://www.stitcher.com)
- Hootsuite: schedule your social media and monitor engagement [hootsuite.com](https://www.hootsuite.com)
- Pixabay: find copyright free images to use on social media if you don't have your own [pixabay.com](https://www.pixabay.com)
- TinyJPG: reduce the file sizes of digital images to make easier to edit, send and share [tinyjpg.com](https://www.tinyjpg.com)

6.2 Using images for social media

Label each image with your business name and a brief description of what it is, for example:



- When you post an image, the platform may ask you for “alt text”. This is a brief description of what the image is. Be sure to include your business name and a few words about the image
- Search engines like Google cannot “read” images, so they use the image name and the alt text to understand what it is and categorise it accordingly
- Make sure you have permission to use images on social media. Either you have taken them yourself, or you use copyright-free images from a reliable source
- Collect a variety of different images and videos including people, landscapes, coffee processes, farming, the environment, meetings, etc so you always have images on hand
- Store your images in labelled folders in an accessible place on your computer or cloud-based storage
- Keep two copies of your digital images on your computer – an original which remains untouched, and a copy that you can edit
- Find someone in your business who enjoys taking photographs and can manage this for you and support your social media efforts.

6.3 Managing your social media page

Spam

Spam makes you appear disingenuous. Monitor your channels regularly and if you receive dubious content, block the account.

Respond to comments

Your audience may leave comments or ask questions on your posts. Try to respond to every comment you receive. It builds connection with your brand, and the commenter feels encouraged to interact.

Variety

Map out a few different categories of posts in your social calendar. Readers appreciate variety. This can include marketing and new product promotion, as well as informal or personal posts about the farmers, seasons and life around you.

The sun doesn't always shine

A common misconception on social media is that everything must always be positive. This isn't true. Farming, in particular, is subject to poor weather, fluctuating prices and other unpredictable factors. Sharing the downsides of life, including mistakes or bad choices, shows that your business is real, honest and relatable.

Inject your personality

Remember that your brand is unique from all others. Find your voice and inject some personality and humour into your posts. Make it personal and story driven.



Social Media Explorer's 4-part formula demonstrates creating a consistent brand voice based on your goals, objectives and strategy.

Choose topics that interest you and you know about

If you are passionate or knowledgeable about certain topics, you will be able to express it more easily. It is also likely that your audience will find it interesting and will feel your enthusiasm.

Fine-tuned profile

Check that your brand is easily recognisable in your profiles. Your profile should tell users all about you at a glance.

6.4 Privacy

Once an image is on a social media platform, it is in the global internet space and cannot be retrieved or permanently deleted. For this reason, it is important to respect the privacy of others.

Familiarise yourself with the laws on public photography in your country. Draft your own internal agreement about rules when taking your own photographs. This could include a consent form to get permission from people when taking their image. Also state how you will store these images and where you will use them (e.g., only use them on social media but not in print materials, etc).

Photographing people under 18 in public spaces requires consent from them and their carer. You may choose not to photograph their faces or to blur their identity if they are the subject of the story.

Be mindful of taking images of people with a disability where there may not fully understand why their image is being taken, and how it will be used. Seek permission from their carer and avoid paying any money.

TIP: Get to know the local traditions or restrictions around taking images. If you sense any reluctance or confusion from your subject, refrain from taking the photo or video.

6.5 Copyright

Copyright is a legal right that protects original works of authorship. In simple terms, if you create an original work, such as a photo or a video, you have copyright over its use.

When you post to social media, you still retain copyright over any original materials, however some platforms may reserve the right to use your work for their own marketing purposes.

However, it is very difficult to protect your own work once it is on the internet. You may wish to watermark or label your images. You should always name them with your business name and brief description.

Social media sites have very strict rules around confidential or private information that violates peoples' rights, including their intellectual property.

7 CONCLUSION

By now, hopefully you can appreciate the benefits of using social media to market your coffee brand. It offers you the opportunity to connect directly with your target audience, it's affordable and relatively easy to use. It also helps boost your brand visibility with a range of different demographics.

Social media is a sophisticated and growing medium. The six platforms we have covered here are all billion-dollar companies. It is in their interests to engage new businesses and users and help bring them together. That can only benefit growing businesses like yours.

Social media users are more perceptive and engaged than ever before, so deciding on your ideal customer avatar is one of the best ways to tap into the right audience for your brand.

Social media provides a reliable and consistent line to potential customers. It enables you to build long-term relationships and gain the trust and loyalty of your followers.

Social media is not an ad-hoc activity. It is driven by your social media strategy and requires planning and consistent content to engage with users. A targeted approach will also help you select the right social media platform, post relevant content, and get maximum reach and engagement for your marketing efforts.

Just as social media platforms evolve and update their features to reach new audiences, so will your strategy and posts change to suit your target audiences. This may take time and that's completely normal. It takes patience and effort to build brand recognition on social media.

As Bill Gates said, your success depends on your passion and ability to stay up-to-date, constantly reflecting, rethinking, reinvigorating and reacting, all the while staying flexible.

You can do this. See you out there on social media.



Coffee is a truly global product and goes hand in hand with social media. Photo credit: Nicole Motteux ©2018