



Social Media Platform Comparison






Key channel trends & features to inform your story sharing process





PLATFORM	KEY FEATURES	DEMOGRAPHICS	PROS	CONS	STORY TIPS
 FACEBOOK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscribe feature allows users to follow people without becoming their friends; personalities (like ED, board president, etc.) can post content with a personal voice to complement organization's official page Emphasis on visuals: prime real estate on every profile is devoted to visual content, from the cover photo to ones within the timeline Hashtags (with unique URLs) allow for content and conversation aggregation Facebook Insights offers strong snapshot of user demographics and behavior "Donate Now" button currently being tested among large nonprofits Recent changes to the newsfeed make it harder to reach followers without promoted content/ads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest usage among ages 45-54 65% of users are age 35 or older Unlike Twitter, average age of users is getting older Among U.S. users - 53% female, 46% male 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go-to source of information for significant portion of key audience Rewards quality content (visuals, video) with higher engagement "Donate now" button—if widely deployed—can bridge gap between Likes and donations Analytics help take guesswork out of what types of content resonate and what times to post Relatively inexpensive ads and promoted content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brands and organizations compete with friends for attention in the newsfeed Difficult to keep up with rapidly changing rules for content Content only seen by a small percentage of followers when it's first posted, which can make serial storytelling difficult Most engagement happens on Facebook itself; users don't leave the platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of visual opportunities—swap profile and cover pics often to reflect current stories and campaigns; share images with text calls-to-action overlaid When repurposing content, find a new angle (add a picture, link, etc.) to keep on top of newsfeed changes Shares (and visibility among friends of followers) are key to building reach; encourage people to tag themselves in pictures when possible and pay attention to data from Insights about what people like, share and comment on most When sharing stories from website, blog or newsletter, take the time to craft (and test!) multiple compelling headlines Disable auto-posting from newsletters, Twitter, Instagram, etc.; it's worth the extra time to customize the messaging
 TWITTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 140 characters or less Powered by searchable/connected hashtags Drives people to external sites New redesign with emphasis on images (both in content and in profile design), pinned Tweets, and highlighting of most engaging Tweets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtually equal usage among genders Most popular among ages 18-29 More urban/suburban users than rural High levels of usage among African Americans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text-based (for easy on-the-go updating) Real-time engagement opportunities Hashtags are easy to create Trending topics are easy to tap into when relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast-paced, might be hard to follow a longer story told through several Tweets More anonymous; less authentic in some cases Fewer features for organizations (no events, apps, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn lingo/jargon (including memes and hashtags) to be a valued member of Twitter community (good nonprofit hashtags include: #nonprofit, #fundraising, #nptech, #sm4np, #philanthropy, #donors) Use URL-shorteners (like bit.ly) to save space and increase measurement power Share visual content



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 TWITTER (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User in more control of how to view Tweets 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast-paced and works well with live events Movement toward more visual features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New pinned Tweets feature does downplay relevance of being in real time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor often and look for opportunities to engage with people Have a personal voice
 YOUTUBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational channels allow you to create libraries of videos Videos can be grouped into themed “playlists” Nonprofit program gives customized and enhanced branding and fundraising opportunities, including ‘donate’ button on video, annotations that link to your website, campaign goal bars, and on-screen banners and calls-to-action, among other features Useful resources developed by YouTube include its “Playbook for Good” Easy to use, powerful analytics help pinpoint who viewers are and where they’re coming from, and how they’re engaging with your videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the U.S. YouTube reaches more U.S. adults ages 18-34 than any cable network One billion viewers worldwide per month 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limit to how many videos you can upload for free (but there is a 15-minute time limit on length) Nonprofit program has tons of useful, underutilized features for storytelling and measuring engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the amount of content available is so large, your videos can be difficult to find Distracting advertisements, questionable related video links at the end of your video Any video can attract unwanted attention and/or comments from “trolls” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upload compelling thumbnail images for your videos (rather than using the default ones) Include a standard tagline in all video descriptions to highlight your mission Offer helpful links such as information about your organization, how viewers can get involved, & where/how to donate Don’t forget to include a call-to-action to subscribe, share or like the video as a form of support Stay relevant by uploading videos consistently & refreshing your channel’s programming on a regular basis Consider creating and sharing serial content—a series of videos around a particular issue related to your organization Have a policy for responding to negative comments
 INSTAGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual storytelling via photo and short video creation and sharing with network of followers Fully integrated with Facebook, Twitter and other major platforms Unlimited photo uploads Video length: between 3 and 15 seconds (longer than Vine) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More popular among women Equal among Apple and Android smartphone users Ages 35 and under Most popular among urban users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for powerful showing (rather than telling) of impact Filters can make so-so images look more compelling Quick and easy to integrate with other platforms (and re-purpose content) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an understanding of good visual content Optimized for mobile viewing; not suitable for printing or displaying in larger formats Gap in information dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with Twitter, learn lingo/jargon (including memes and recurring hashtags) to be more easily found among existing Instagram users Import images you didn’t take with your phone for more content variety Experiment with uploading promotional photos to advertise events, fundraising campaigns, etc.



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 INSTAGRAM (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement through Likes and comments Searchable within the community using hashtags Users favor quality over quantity; relatively smaller amount of daily photo uploads as compared to other sites 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-the-go posting via mobile phone good for behind the scenes stories, events, volunteer days, etc. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize at events, especially to show prep work/behind the scenes details
 BLOG / TUMBLR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blogs can be either hubs for content that can be syndicated outward, or as collectors that showcase content others have created Flexible storytelling platforms that allow you to pull in various other types of content (photos, videos, text, audio, etc.) Engagement is built in More casual storytelling voice; it's not your website, so language can show personality and authenticity Tumblr is a specific type of blogging community that features short bursts of content It's searchable within the community using hashtags on posts It's mobile-friendly for easy uploading via an app Among the most engaging social media sites, in terms of average time spent on the site and average page depth 50% of content are photos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77% of internet users read blogs 75.8 million pieces of content are blogged each day on Tumblr Tumblr demographics: 67% of users are under age 35; skews slightly female (54% vs. 46%); nearly half of users have a college education; particularly popular among Hispanic internet users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement is built in (and expected) Easy to integrate blogs into your website Allows for versatile content Good for search engine optimization (companies that blog have 97% more inbound links, which is important in search engine rankings) Trustworthy source of content (81% of U.S. consumers trust advice/info from blogs) Tumblr allows for less intensive content – easier to curate or produce Easy to update on the go; excellent for behind-the-scenes type stories Searchable—people in the general Tumblr community can discover your content if you use good hashtags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bandwidth-intensive to plan for and develop consistent content Content can appear stale quickly (since everything is time-stamped) Readers need strong reasons to engage (and blogs look sad with no comments) Tumblr demographics are very specific; if your audiences don't intersect with them, you're better off having a regular blog Much Tumblr activity takes place on the platform itself; there's a strong community aspect, like Facebook. This can be isolating/confusing for non-native users. Need to integrate into your website to get over the barrier of user unfamiliarity with platform nuances—and this requires design support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan ahead for blog content; create an editorial calendar that ties in with themes, holidays, etc. Build “share this” feature into your blog—and then give readers a reason to share Take time to craft headlines that are shareable and Tweet-worthy Encourage conversation by posing questions Incorporate multiple perspectives into your blog—volunteers, staff, board, clients—to encourage variety and sharing within those individuals' networks.