

Essay on Pros and Cons of Social Media

Raise your hand if you remember when MySpace and Friendster were all the rage. Today, we use Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and more. It has to be at least nine years since I logged into MySpace. Although, I created my Facebook account in 2007. Then, in 2010, I created my Twitter account.

It is amazing to think that, over the past year, the number of social media users has gone up by 176 million. In fact, 1 million new active mobile social users are added each day. The social media network with the most users is Facebook, with around billion. There are many uses for social media, everything from keeping in touch with friends and family to advertising and marketing.

In 2015, it is estimated that social networks earned \$8.3 billion from advertising. Yet, there is also a downside to social media including harassment and distraction. Of course, you should decide for yourself. This is why we have made a handy list of pros and cons for you.

Pros

Free to use. How can you beat a platform, with millions or billions of users, that has no access cost? Whether you want to keep up with friends, make new friends, or build a business—you have the opportunity to reach your target market without a cash investment. Then, if people like your posts, they tend to share them.

Increases web traffic. Social media is one of the most efficient methods of directing people to your website. Whether you are making your debut or a revamp—people need to know about it. Another benefit is that social media shares make a difference in search ranking. The more your content gets shared, the better it ranks for its topic.

Helps you build important relationships. Around 83% of Fortune 500 companies are on Twitter. The reason is that it gives a direct link to prospects and customers. Clients want a brand that resonates with them. What better way to do so than through direct communication? How can traditional advertising compare?

Allows for immediate feedback. With a Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or Instagram account, your customers can give you instant feedback. Having the right insights helps you make more informed decisions. This is why it is critical to understand how satisfied your customers are with your products and services. In addition, it might help you understand what motivates your prospects to make a purchase.

Cons

Takes time and effort. Though social media networks are free, it does cost time and money to develop innovative tactics for marketing your products and services. You have to create the right media and hire someone to continually post information. You can't just post once and hope for the best. Social media marketing requires continued effort and learning.

You have no control over what people say. If you post something on Twitter or Facebook, you may receive negative comments that can't be deleted. On Twitter, every post is public. Just like good news, bad news can go viral. Even with hundreds of positive reviews, one bad, viral review can do significant damage to your reputation.

Hacking. From identity to data theft—all of this can be hacked and shared on the Internet. What happens when your business suffers a social network data breach? You start to incur costs of mitigating the breach such as hiring a legal team, purchasing new technologies, and suffering a loss of business and customer trust. According to

IBM, data breaches cost companies around \$4 million per incident.

You can't take a break. Social media needs to be worked on a daily basis. The impact of one post lasts maybe a few hours or even a few minutes before consumers move on to something else. If you take a break from posting, customers might wonder if you have taken a break from them. As a result, you are constantly under pressure to come up with new ways to stay relevant and interesting.

Social media is here to stay. It is just a matter of time before new networks take over the current stable. Naturally, there are pros and cons to any outlet. Yet, if you take precautions and understand the benefits, you can utilize social media to your advantage.