

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN EVALUATION



Why Evaluate Social Media Campaigns?

Social media is an indispensable tool for organizations to communicate with the public. Evaluating and tracking social media campaign metrics will help you make informed decisions to optimize your content and achieve your communication goals. This document will help you to define your goals and objectives, identify key performance indicators, gather and interpret social media data, and develop recommendations for campaign optimization.

Define Goals and Objectives

Campaign Goals

To develop a plan to evaluate your campaign, it is essential to first define your campaign's goals. These goals serve as broad statements that outline the overarching strategic purpose of the campaign. By defining clear goals, you provide a sense of direction and focus for all campaign activities, ranging from brainstorming to content creation to evaluation. These goals should align with your organization's mission and broader objectives.

	Example Organizational Mission	Example Campaign Goal
Example	<i>Decrease the number of drug overdose deaths in the United States each year.</i>	<i>Educate the public about the lifesaving power of naloxone.</i>

Campaign Objectives

Campaign objectives translate your overarching goals into specific, measurable targets that allow you to determine if and when, you achieve your campaign goals. To write effective objectives, follow the "SMART" framework:

- **Specific:** Make the objective simple, clear, and concise.
- **Measurable:** The objective should be quantifiable, and you should have access to the necessary data.
- **Achievable:** The objective should be realistic, and you should be able to accomplish it by your deadline.
- **Relevant:** Directly relate your objective to each specific goal.
- **Time-bound:** Set a deadline to accomplish your goal.



Defining objectives requires you to identify **key performance indicators (KPIs)**. KPIs are metrics used to measure your progress toward your objectives. Each objective should include one KPI.

Common KPIs and what they can tell you about your campaign's performance are listed below.

KPI	Definition	What It Tells You
Reach	The number of unique users who have been exposed to a piece of social media content. A user who sees a post twice will be counted once.	The size of the campaign's audience, the number of people reached, and the visibility of the campaign.
Impressions	The total number of times a piece of content has been displayed to users. A user who sees a post twice will be counted twice.	The exposure of the campaign, the potential audience size, and the visibility of the campaign.
Engagements	The number of times users have interacted with a piece of content. This includes likes, comments, shares, clicks, and other actions users can take.	The level of user interest and involvement in the campaign, and how the campaign is resonating with users.
Engagement rate	The proportion of users exposed to a piece of content who interact with the content. Typically calculated as (engagements/reach)*100.	How interested users are in this content compared to other content.
URL clicks	The number of times users follow a link included in a post.	Whether the campaign is convincing users to visit a website to learn more.
Followers	Users who choose to subscribe to a social media account to see the content posted by that account.	How many people are interested in hearing more from the account. Net follower growth over time indicates whether an account is getting more or less popular.

	Example Campaign Goal	Example Campaign Objective
Example	<i>Educate the public about the lifesaving power of naloxone.</i>	<i>Receive at least 20,000 impressions on campaign content in the first 6 weeks of the campaign.</i>

Track Metrics

You can track your KPIs by using the social media platforms' built-in analytics reports (also called "native" analytics) or through a social media management platform. This section describes each approach. Although there are numerous large and small social media platforms on the internet, this guide focuses on the four social media platforms that are most commonly used by public health organizations: Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Using a Social Media Management Platform

Social media managers (SMMs) are third-party apps or websites that can be used to help you manage multiple social media platforms in one place. They enable you to schedule content for each of your accounts and often offer analytics modules to help you analyze social media data. [Sprout Social](#) is a robust SMM that offers content management, publishing, analytics, monitoring, and many other features. Although using an SMM is not required, free or low-cost SMMs are available. It may be helpful to consider the number of users, number of social media accounts, supported platforms, and scheduling when deciding whether an SMM is right for you.

NATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

The sites listed below are some of the most popular, far-reaching social media platforms today. However, the social media world is always changing and growing, and other platforms may be an ideal fit for your needs. Consider your organization's goals and resources as well as a platform's purpose, audience, and metrics/analytics when choosing a platform.



Facebook

Facebook is a social media platform used for sharing written content, images, and videos with a general audience. The platform aims to build community through tactics like Facebook events, Facebook groups, and posts that ask questions for the audience to answer. Facebook has the largest audience of any social media platform in the United States, with an estimated [243 million monthly active users](#) in the United States alone. Around 55% of U.S. Facebook users are older than age 34.

You can create a [Facebook Page](#) for your organization to disseminate content, and review the Facebook Page metrics using the [Facebook Insights](#) tab.



X/Twitter

X/Twitter is a fast-paced platform with real-time posts. It primarily revolves around written content and often includes images, videos, and shortened links for more information. It is often used for disseminating bite-size information with links to websites with more in-depth information. Content on Twitter tends to perform best when it can be tied to a current event or news story. X/Twitter has an estimated [95.4 million users](#) in the United States. Worldwide, about 63% of X/Twitter users are male and [38.5%](#) are between ages 25 and 34.

You can set up a [Professional Account](#) for your organization to access account metrics (see account [Analytics](#)). There are also [FAQ](#) instructions for converting an account to a Professional Account.



Instagram

Instagram is a visually focused platform with an emphasis on engaging images and short videos. Links cannot be shared on standard Instagram posts, so Instagram posts often direct users to visit the “[link in bio](#)” for more information. Instagram has about [143 million users](#) in the United States and has the youngest user base of the four major social networks, with [30.8%](#) of users being between ages 18 and 24. Although some Instagram account features can be accessed from a computer, the majority of Instagram’s functionality is only accessible on the mobile app. A unique feature about this platform is that it can be linked to Facebook, enabling posting to both channels simultaneously.

You can set up a [business account](#) on Instagram for your organization and find [instructions](#) to view metrics (on the mobile app only). Similar to Facebook, you can access and interpret your Instagram account’s [Insights](#).



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional networking platform designed for users to build professional connections and share career updates and opportunities. LinkedIn is frequently used for sharing thought leadership content in both short- and long-written formats. LinkedIn has about [206 million users](#) in the United States, with many users (39%) being between ages 30 and 39. LinkedIn’s audience is highly educated, with 98% reporting at least some [post-secondary education](#).

You can create a LinkedIn page for your organization to share job openings, organizational updates, new health information or guidelines, and other announcements intended for professional audiences. Instructions for accessing LinkedIn page metrics can be found [here](#), and tips for interpreting your metrics are available [here](#).

Tracking Web Data

Website data are valuable for evaluating social media campaigns. The data reveal how users are interacting with your website following exposure to social media posts. To track user behavior, consider tagging the links in your social media posts. The most common way of doing this is by including UTM parameters. These parameters are added to the end of a URL to create a tagged link, which allows you to track how a campaign, post, or creative drives traffic to your website. Data resulting from tagged links can be viewed and managed in a link tagging tool, such as Google Analytics or Adobe campaigns. You can learn more about tagging and tracking links [here](#).

Interpret Data

After collecting your data, the next step is to analyze and interpret it. Start by asking:

- Are you on track to meet the objectives you set for the campaign?
- Are there any characteristics that your top posts share that might explain why they’re performing well?
- Are there any characteristics that your low-performing posts share that might explain why they aren’t doing well?

Consider the following aspects when analyzing your data: tone of voice, call to action, hashtag use, image type, text on the image, publishing time, day of the week, and post length. Keep in mind there is no universal formula for each characteristic because the effectiveness of different post characteristics may vary depending on your audience and objectives. You can reference these guides for general recommendations on best practices for [posting frequency](#), [timing](#), [image specifications](#), and [post length](#).

Develop Recommendations

Once you've generated insights from your data, convert them into actionable recommendations. Consider how these insights align with your goals and objectives, and identify ways to improve, or course correct, your campaign based on the collected data.

	Campaign Objective	Insights	Recommendation
Example	<i>Generate 150 engagements on campaign posts in the first 6 weeks of the campaign.</i>	<i>Posts with images are getting more engagements than posts without images, but posts without images are reaching more people.</i>	<i>Prioritize publishing posts with images and limit text-only posts.</i>
Example	<i>Reach 15,000 users with campaign posts in the first 6 weeks of the campaign.</i>	<i>Posts with images are getting more engagements than posts without images, but posts without images are reaching more people.</i>	<i>Prioritize publishing text-only posts and limit posts with images.</i>

Establish a routine for monitoring your campaign performance on a regular basis. For example:

- Short-term campaigns (3 months or less), monitor weekly.
- Mid-term campaigns (4–8 months), monitor every 2–3 weeks.
- Long-term campaigns (8+ months), monitor at least monthly.

Iteration and evaluation are key. Each time you implement a new recommendation, establish a timeline for evaluating that change and deciding whether to adopt it long term. If your posts' performance does not improve after implementing the change, consider testing a new recommendation. Continue this process throughout your campaign to continually optimize your content and improve your campaign's performance.