

Discovery Social Media

Let's dive in and take a closer look at what it's like to work in the vast ocean of **social media.**



“We’re living at a time when attention is the new currency. Those who insert themselves into as many channels as possible look set to capture the most value.”

Pete Cashmore, founder of mashable.com

“Social networks aren’t about web sites. They’re about experiences.”

Mike DiLorenzo, NHL social media marketing director

“Our head of social media is the customer.”

McDonald’s

“When you give everyone a voice and give people power, the system usually ends up in a really good place.”

Mark Zuckerberg, CEO & founder of Facebook

“New marketing is about the relationships, not the medium.”

Ben Grossman, founder of BiGMark



Who Markets their Burger Better? Whataburger!

How did Whataburger beat out other colossal fast-food hamburger joints to be voted No. 1 in the nation? Well, it's no coincidence that Texas's beloved chain is also No. 1 in the nation for highest social media engagement! Whataburger has managed to rack up more than 2 million followers on Facebook, and it has amassed a legion of almost 1.4 million Twitter fans... All this in spite of the fact that they're only found in 15 states, most of which are in the South!

So how is Whataburger serving up so many wins in the game of social media? Consistency. Their brand voice is the same across all of their channels, and they maintain a constant and active presence online. Whataburger hamburgers are still made the same way they were back in 1950, but this company is a sizzling example of how important it is to keep changing with the times. And when it comes to social media, they've shown us that brand loyalty is everything!

Do you want fries with that?



Living the Dream

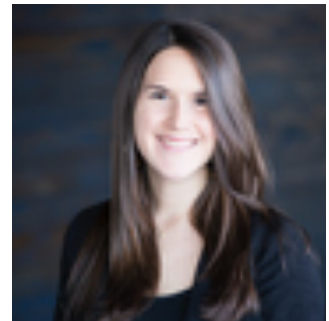


Rachel Kaplan, Director of Digital Marketing for Dream Hotels NYC

We think of social networking as a modern phenomenon that's made possible by computers and the internet. But did you know that William Shakespeare was wise to it way back in the year 1600? He knew how to gain a wide-spread audience's attention and keep it. Poor Romeo and Juliet can certainly attest to that!

But how do you keep an audience's attention today when people are spread out across the entire globe? And most of them never even see each other! The answer to that question is one that's sought by social media professionals on a daily basis.

So what do people with careers in social media actually do? More than can be explained in 280 characters, that's for sure. To get the big picture, let's turn to an expert who knows the ins-and-outs of social because she lives and breathes it every single day. Rachel Kaplan oversees all marketing for Dream Hotels NYC, and she first got her start as their community and social media manager. That's similar to a position that you might first start out in, if you decide to pursue it as a career. So if you like the sounds of what Rachel did, then picture yourself doing it, too. That's the first step in making dreams come true!



But
how do you
keep an audience's
attention today when
people are spread out
across the entire
globe?

What Did She Do?

When asked how she would describe a job in social, Rachel said, “Overall, social media jobs can range depending on the company and area. There are paid social media jobs (that are essentially paid advertising) and organic social media jobs (which is what I did, at first) where you oversee all of the social media accounts on behalf of the brand.” Rachel’s creativity and high writing-engagement level made her a perfect fit for this position. She was responsible for **copy writing**, which included penning articles, coming up with catchy captions for photos, and responding to questions and comments online. This role put Rachel right-out-front for Dream as the “voice” of the hotel. Using an **on-brand** communication style that reflected the tone and language determined by the hotel, she interacted directly with consumers and got real-time feedback.

This role put Rachel right-out-front for Dream as the “voice” of the hotel. ...she interacted directly with consumers and got real-time feedback.

By maintaining an active and daily presence online, Rachel aimed to establish **brand awareness** so that consumers would know about the distinctive qualities of Dream Hotels NYC. She then cultivated a relationship with the online community by positively interacting with people real-time. This included “Liking” and retweeting their posts about the hotel, personally responding to consumers’ comments, and answering questions one at a time on various social media channels. Sounds kind of like what people do on their own social accounts, only on a bigger scale!

copy writing: a job that involves writing articles, comments to customers, photocaptions, etc.

on-brand: reflecting the tone and language determined by the company


How Did She Do It So Well?

Rachel credits her success to constantly consuming social media. She was always online, seeing what other brands were doing, and checking out the new features and trends in the digital landscape. She also monitored the ways in which Dream’s **target audience** (or potential consumers) responded to and engaged with her content. Rachel kept track of follower-growth, Facebook “Likes,” levels of engagement, and content / advertising performance—all of which she shared in meetings with the rest of her Dream team. Never a dull moment when it comes to social media!

brand awareness:
making sure consumers know about a company’s distinctive qualities

target audience:
potential customers





So be
resourceful and
start rounding out
your skillsets now.
Dare to Dream!

Can I Do That, Too?

If Rachel's job responsibilities as community and social media manager sounded intriguing to you, then yes you can! Let's break down the traits that would help someone succeed in this position (It's okay if you don't have them all! You can still do it!):

- You can't get enough of social media, and you're on it like... well... like it's your job!
- You're a creative writer who can come up with captions that draw people in.
- You're good at taking **initiative** (which means that you don't need to be told what to do all the time).
- You don't take negative social media comments personally, and you can sort out the constructive criticism from the just-plain-mean stuff.
- You're up on the latest social and digital trends.
- You don't mind being on social media at all hours of the day and night!

If most of these phrases describe you, then you may want to consider a career in this field! If they don't quite describe you, but you wish they did and you're still drawn to social media as a career possibility, then you can learn those other skills. So be resourceful and start rounding out your skillsets now. Dare to Dream!

initiative: taking action
without being told to
do so

Ponytails and Partnerships: “Make it a Grande, Please!”

The internet almost broke when Starbucks teased its collaboration with Ariana Grande on social media. The pop star is well-known for her love of clouds, so when Starbucks began posting a series of clever cloud-themed interactives, fans were launched into the stratosphere. Starbucks’ marketing department pulled out all the stops with novel ticklers that generated users’ “cloud names” (Wispy M. Thunderbury, reporting for duty!) and secret messages that were revealed when cursors hovered over a cumulus.

While the coffee boss expertly navigated the nuances of Twitter, Ari also cryptically retweeted against a backdrop of clouds—building anticipation and excitement among Arianators. So what was the big reveal? An Iced Cloud Macchiato: a drink made in Instagram paradise that put the power of the celebrity-driven social media campaign on full display. There was no denying the hype generated by the well-executed, perfectly choreographed social media event. But what was the ultimate verdict on the drink itself? That’s right! “Thank u, Next.”

*So what was the
big reveal?
An Iced Cloud
Macchiato*

Talking Cars and Social Media

Have you ever seen the movie *Cars*? How about one of the *Toy Story* movies? You know the kind... where a Corvette can chat it up with a tow truck and a plastic astronaut can strategize with a gangly but honorable cowboy. Well, cars and toys aren't the only inanimate objects that can talk sometimes. So can restaurants, car manufacturing businesses, retail stores, technology companies, and any other business out there. 'How is this possible?' you may ask? It's all in the voice.

Companies spend a huge amount of money and time developing their logos and polishing the look and feel of their websites. From fonts to employee uniforms and everything in-between, these details help to shape the way people perceive a business. All of these are part of **branding**, which means representing a company using a certain type of feeling and design.

Let's take The Walt Disney Company as an example. The Disney logo is hand-written, which implies a certain level of informality. It consists of thick, rounded, overlapping lines that are almost childlike. Visually it is friendly and welcoming, which is exactly how they want you to feel when you look at it. And if you've ever read any piece of text, or **copy**, written by the company, the words are friendly and welcoming, too. That is their **voice**. It's the tone they want to convey to make you feel all the feels (so that you'll buy their products!).

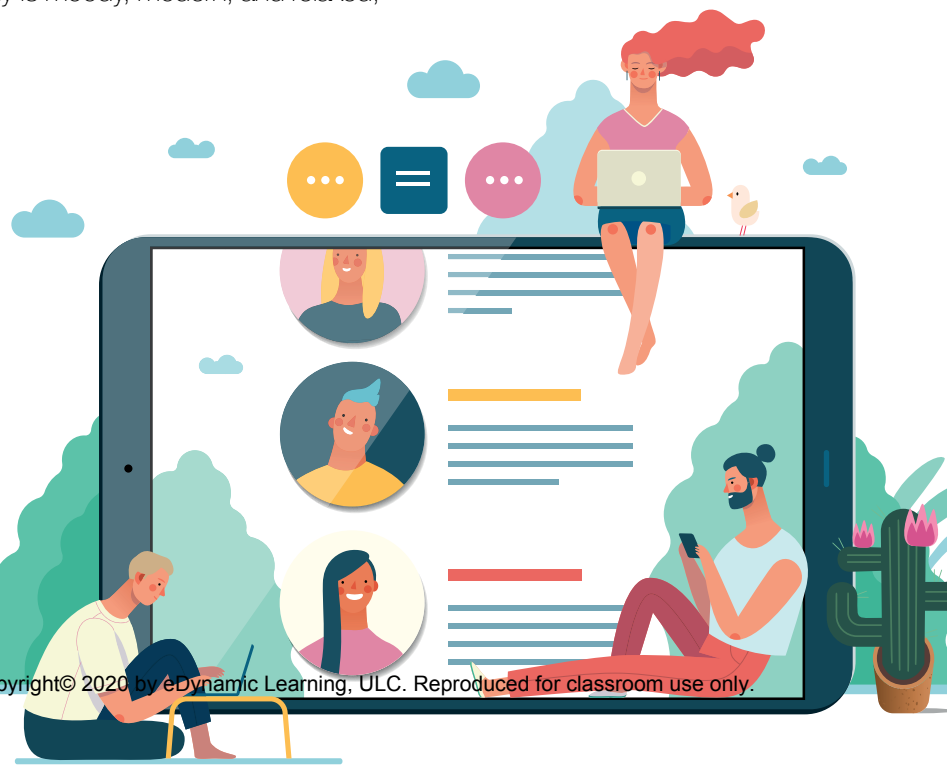
Voice is one of the things that is most overlooked when a company is developing its brand. If an interior design company is moody, modern, and relaxed, then their tone shouldn't be stiff and formal in social media. Instead, they would choose wording that is current, brooding, and casual. The social media manager might post a photo of their redesign of Beyoncé's kitchen and write: "Warm woods harmonize with cool stainless—a new vibe for the Queen's Beyhive." On the other side of the coin, you might feel a little uneasy if the US Department of Defense's website was written using this offhanded style! In social media, voice is everything.



branding: representing a company using a certain type of feeling and design

copy: text, written page

voice: the tone a company uses to best convey their message



Just for Fun: Voice Choice!

You're the director of social media for two businesses; one is a pre-school and the other makes Lego-style video games aimed at teenagers (like Lego Harry Potter, Marvel superheroes—you get the picture). You have to create a Tweet promoting each business that incorporates the words below. Choose four that might be used as part of the brand voice for the pre-school and the remaining words should be used for the game development company (no repeats!):

Kindness	Dreams	Tension	Imagination
Epic	Smiles	Networking	Emotes

Now, take the first letter of each word you chose for the pre-school Tweet. Unscramble them to make a new word. Do the same for the ones you selected for the video game company. You should end up with two words that relate to the target markets of each of your businesses. If you are choosing a career in social marketing, you should choose your words carefully, too!

A Day in the Digital Life



Ok, so you know what a career in social media is all about... but what do these folks actually do all day? Each situation will be different, but the essence of the job is always the same: to promote your brand as positively and as effectively as possible. Let's take a behind-the-scenes look at a day in the life of a fictional social media manager named Zane.

One of the first things Zane does is something that's done multiple times throughout the day: check Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds to see how the most recent posts are being received. Are people engaging with the content? Is it positive or negative? Are they sharing or leaving comments? These are some of the things that go through Zane's mind while comments are addressed and questions are answered one-by-one.

influencer: people who have the power to affect what their followers purchase because of their authority and product knowledge

Next, **influencer** requests are reviewed. Influencers are people who have sway over a ton of followers. They have the power to affect what their followers purchase because of their authority, their knowledge—or a combination of both. If a company partners with an influencer, it gains visibility and credibility with the influencer's followers. The company then has the opportunity to establish even stronger relationships with them. The goal is that some of the influencer's followers start to follow the partner company. So influencers are seen as social relationship assets, and it is wise to establish strategic collaborations with them whenever it makes sense to do so. Zane selects some potential matches and writes them down so that they can be discussed at the next company meeting.

Sharing, re-tweeting, or liking user-generated comments and photos is a great way to promote a business, so he'll also spend time scouring social media channels looking for them. Zane will also be thinking about ideas

for Instagram giveaways, feed color schemes, the next social campaign, and upcoming photo shoots, as well as what followers might want to see in the images, also called **assets**. Plans for promotional flyers will be roughed-out, and the blog will get two or three paragraphs added to it. The company also needs to partner with other brands for cross-promotional purposes, so selecting the right ones is on the agenda, too.

Social media content, comments, and questions are always being posted, and timely responses can make all the difference.

Zane eats lunch whenever he can and monitors the social channels in-between bites. Retweets and responses are flying. All the while, in the back of Zane's mind, a larger campaign is coming to life. This promotion will invite users to come to an open house where they can take a tour of the facility, win prizes, and interact face-to-face with other people who work at the company. It is Zane's responsibility to plan this entire event from beginning to end and promote it tirelessly in hopes that people will attend (and love it!).

assets: what followers will want to see in images

Although officially the work day might be over, Zane's job is one that really never ends. Social media content, comments, and questions are always being posted, and timely responses can make all the difference. It can be a challenge for professionals to step away from social channels for an extended period of time because you're still "sending a message" when you don't send a message. And in this day and age of instant response time, that silence can be actually mistaken for apathy! Hard to believe but true...

So, social media burnout is a real thing, and once you understand how much work goes into the job, you can see why people would be reluctant to take an hour, a day, or even a weekend off. There is some advice from fellow social media professionals that Zane follows that helps to combat this problem:



Pace yourself with posts.

Instead of churning out mediocre responses, thoughtfully prepare ones that provide value to your readers. Though it seems logical that frequent posting increases engagement, it can sometimes have the opposite effect and get annoying. It's tough to find a balance, but it's a good idea to remember that, sometimes, "less is more."

Learn how to identify a true crisis.

Just because a long string of people post negative comments that doesn't mean you need to engage with them. Sometimes you have to know when to let it ride. Otherwise you will be living in constant crisis mode, which will elevate your stress level and sideline all of the other things you wanted to accomplish during your day.

Capitalize on naturally occurring, high-traffic opportunities.

Is it National Siblings Day? Create a post that celebrates kinship and link it to something your company did or believes in. Superbowl Sunday? Promote the power of teamwork with an example that highlights the business you represent. These types of posts are relatively easy to create, and they're extra-impactful because they often tie into strong emotions that your followers are already feeling. Knowing your target audience definitely works to your benefit!

It's tough to find a balance, but it's a good idea to remember that, sometimes, "less is more."



Use your partnerships to your advantage.

Work with an influencer and have them create video content about your company. Then link to their post. This helps to keep your content interesting for the viewers. For example, Rihanna posted a beauty tutorial specifically for Vogue followers using her own line of makeup, called Fenty. This was a mutually beneficial arrangement because Rihanna was able to promote Fenty products to Vogue fans while Vogue gained visibility with Rihanna's followers. Win-win!

If you play it smart, a career in social media can last a long time. And you know you've arrived in social media when you gain a celebrity follower or your tweet goes viral. These are major wins that every professional longs for. If you stay in the game long enough, it could happen to you!



Fashion Influencer: Luka Sabbat

If you've ever seen *Grown-ish* on TV or the movie *The Dead Don't Die*, then you may know who Luka Sabbat is. In addition to being an actor, Luka is a model, stylist, and entrepreneur. He is also a sought-after influencer in the fashion world. With a unique style that highlights individuality, self-confidence, and risk-taking, Luka has worked with clothing powerhouses Calvin Klein, Diesel, and Timberland. On Instagram, Luka posts photos of himself at popular and exotic travel destinations wearing designer clothes. He has almost 2 million followers, so any company that gets sponsored content with Luka gains some serious credibility with his audience while he ultimately acquires even more people in his fanbase. Sounds pretty Styl-ish, doesn't it?

any company that gets sponsored
content with Luka gains some
serious credibility with his audience

*be prepared to volunteer your time,
knowing that the experience you
gain will be absolutely priceless*

Take the Plunge into a Career in Social Media

By now, you've learned how much work a career in social media can be. It can be all-consuming if you let it! With that in mind, think about how some non-profit organizations (like The American Red Cross, The Humane Society of the United States, and the American Heart Association, for example) could probably use some help! There might even be some smaller ones in your area that need a hand managing their social media feeds. You could even reach out to a start-up to get your footing in the industry.

If you're really serious about becoming a social media professional, be prepared to volunteer your time, knowing that the experience you gain will be absolutely priceless to you in the long run. Select an organization that you believe in and truly want to promote. Write to them, explain your aspirations, and offer to help them with their feeds and copy writing. Remember to dot your 'i's and cross your 't's because this initial correspondence will be the first impression you make. You don't want it to be riddled with spelling errors or wayward commas!

Ride the Wave

If you are lucky enough to be taken up on your offer, ask your overseer what the organization's social media goals are so that you know what you're working toward from the get-go! Then keep a record of everything that you are doing. What took up the bulk of your day? What were your biggest successes? And what are some opportunities for more growth? Make a plan for improvement and stick to it. Be sure that you express your gratitude to your coworkers, as well. This is a huge first-step!

Volunteering your time with a non-profit certainly won't pay the bills, but it will help you build a portfolio for your next serious gig. You'll have tangible wins that you can point to, and you'll also have practical knowledge about what it takes to manage social feeds. This can set you up nicely to earn a paid position. The internet is also a fantastic resource for learning more about this aspect of digital marketing. Take advantage of it! And remember: with a career in digital, it's very likely that you could come across opportunities to freelance or work remotely. Imagine getting paid to be on Twitter and Insta all day long... at the beach! Sun, sand, surf, and social. Seriously? Does it get any better than that!?

The Kardashians: Because, Of Course

Is there a family that has capitalized more on social media than Kris, Kourtney, Kim, Khloé, Kendall, and Kylie? Though they are known for their online domination, their initial fame kicked off on television in 2007 with the reality show *Keeping up with the Kardashians*. Since then, they have proven that they're glitzy, glammy, and glorious, and they're no flash in the pan. Each of the sisters has solidified their own staying power and turned the media attention into mega bucks. They've established serious ecommerce businesses, brands, lifestyle apps, and modeling careers. With a combined total of over 442 million followers, they have the potential to get paid upwards of \$500,000 per Instagram post. That's some serious Kash.

And then there's Kylie: the youngest of the group who started a cosmetics business out of the (albeit large!) garage. She used her presence on social media to promote her lip kits, ultimately becoming the youngest billionaire in the world at the age of 21. Kylie does almost all of her marketing through social media. She uses Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to reach her 175+ million followers instantaneously. Whenever there is a new product launch, a makeup tutorial, or a preview of a new item, they are the first to know about it.

To what does Kylie credit her immeasurable success? "It's the power of social media," she says.

Mic. Dropped.





So, You're Still Sold on Social...

If, after all this, a career as a social media professional still makes you swoon, chances are you'll want to give it a go. There are many different avenues you can pursue, depending upon your interests and skill level. One of the things you can start to do right now is gain a solid foothold in digital photography, graphic design, copywriting, and optimizing search engines. There are countless resources on YouTube. And there are even online courses you can take (many of them, such as those at Hootsuite Academy, are free!). There's no reason you can't get started today!

If you've checked those boxes and you're eager to put it all together, you can earn a college degree that specializes in the digital industry. You could sharpen your skills even further by getting your master's degree in social media. If you follow that path (and do well!), you would be qualified to hold the following job titles:

- Brand Advocate
- Brand Manager
- Social Media Specialist
- Social Media Strategist
- Social Media Marketing Manager
- Digital Marketing Manager
- Digital Media Supervisor
- Engagement Coordinator
- Content Manager
- Online Communication Director
- Social Media Analyst
- Public Relations Manager

The starting salary for those professions—depending upon where you live—can be anywhere from \$25,000 to \$60,000 a year. But with more experience, you could be earning six-figures relatively quickly.

One of the things you can start to do right now is gain a solid foothold in digital photography, graphic design, copywriting, and optimizing search engines



Climbing the Social Ladder

If you prove yourself in one of these positions and you're up for more responsibility and new challenges, you could advance to creative director, brand manager, digital marketing strategist, marketing analyst, or even chief marketing officer! To position yourself well in the industry, you can pay to join a professional group such as the American Marketing Association or the Search Engine Marketing Professionals Organization (which has reduced rates for students). These networks connect you to other social media marketers and can help you forge relationships with industry experts, employers, and prospective clients.

And maybe after reading all of this, you've decided that being a social media professional is not for you after all. That's totally okay! Maybe you'd rather start your own business—or become a farmer, an artist, or a yoga instructor. No matter what you choose, you can apply what you've learned about voice, presentation, networking, and consistency. Whether you're promoting yourself or your business, you now understand the power of building your “authentic brand” in order to have the most positive and effective impact possible on the world.

And so, we end where we began... with the words of the inimitable William Shakespeare:

“This above all: to thine own self be true.”

Key Terms:

assets: what followers will want to see in images

brand awareness: making sure consumers know about a company's distinctive qualities

branding: representing a company using a certain type of feeling and design

copy: text, written page

copy writing: a job that involves writing articles, comments to customers, photo captions, etc.

influencer: people who have the power to affect what their followers purchase because of their authority and product knowledge

initiative: taking action without being told to do so

on-brand: reflecting the tone and language determined by the company

target audience: potential customers

voice: the tone a company uses to best convey their message

Sources for Social Media Reader

Nicol, A. (15 April 2018). "The Kardashians: Queens of Marketing and Social Media." Retrieved from <https://medium.com/rta902/the-kardashians-queens-of-marketing-and-social-media-f0d1decb6161>

"What-A-Brand: Marketing Lessons from Top U.S. Burger Chain Whataburger." (29 July 2015). Retrieved from <https://advertisingsystemsinc.com/what-a-brand-marketing-lessons-from-top-u-s-burger-chain-whataburger/>

"What is Social Media Marketing?" (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.marketingcareeredu.org/social-media-marketing/>

Whataburger. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://twitter.com/Whataburger?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor



<http://edynamiclearning.com/>