

Social Media for Artists

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS include Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Google+, Flickr, Blogs and more. These are all valuable platforms upon which to promote yourself and your work. Keep in mind that you may not get direct sales through your participation in any of these channels, but letting people know what you're up to, and what you do, on a social plane, is an important part of building recognition and a meaningful customer base.

Choose two or three channels that are popular, relevant and effective. Look into each social media channel and determine which will work best for your business. Some of them are intended for longevity (Pinterest), some for immediate interest (Twitter.)

Work out a plan based upon how much time you want to spend in promoting yourself each day, or what you want to accomplish.

My choices: Facebook – Instagram – Pinterest – Flickr

- I post one image every day to Instagram, a picture-sharing app using your mobile device. When I post at Instagram, I am able to share it immediately, at the push of a button, to Facebook.
- I make several posts every day to Facebook, alternating posts of my art with art-related and interesting articles and websites I'd like to share.
- Weekly, I pin (post) images from my Instagram to Pinterest. It only takes a few minutes. Having a Pinterest button in my taskbar helps speed up the process.
- Every couple of months, I post a collection of carefully curated photos to Flickr. I can share any Flickr photo to Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, Pinterest at a later date.

Facebook - Treat it as free advertising. It is show & tell, visual storytelling. You want to engage interest.

1. Your personal page is called a Profile, any other pages you create are Facebook Pages. You can create several, for instance, one of Maine Coon Cats, one all about your art, another for something else.
2. In the blue taskbar at top, is an icon with your name next to it. Click on it to access your own Profile and Timeline. Your Timeline is where you can see your posts, displayed by date.
3. The word 'Home' leads you to the homepage, which is where you land whenever you sign in to Facebook. I think of the homepage as my home in which a lot of invited guests hang out and share the latest gossip. All of these posts are called the News Feed, which shows the things your friends have posted on Facebook. The homepage also allows you to navigate to other parts of Facebook.
4. You can toggle back and forth between your personal page and business page a couple of ways. Upper right-hand corner, click on small triangle, see Your Pages in pulldown. OR Left-side gray column has shortcuts you can organize. Once on the business page, you can return to your personal profile page by clicking on your name at top of the page, in the blue bar.

How I use Facebook: I change my cover (the banner) on my personal Facebook Homepage weekly, or to be current (if it snows, I'll change it to a snow scene.) I change my profile picture now and then but you don't have to, especially if it is your logo. All of the images you use for your cover and profile are automatically saved in folders in your Photos. This makes it easy to change/rotate them.

You can create a new Photo Album and add images to it that represent your work. This makes a handy online portfolio. People who work in publicity or media often look at your Facebook images for pictures - of your art, studio, headshot, of you painting or teaching a class. Providing large representative images in one handy album, that they can download as needed, is ideal.

Although I have a business page at Facebook, I also use my personal FB page to interact with people,

and to share my art with everyone. It is rare that I do not accept a friend request. It's important to not post anything highly personal to Facebook if you are using your personal page for business. The world can see your posts unless you specify that you are posting only to family, or specific friends.

One advantage to having a business Facebook Page is that you have access to 'Insights,' showing you how many visitors saw your posts. There are also tools such as Create Event, Add a Slide Show, Advertise, etc.

- I post daily at Facebook, adding my own images and original content. I always spend a few minutes liking and leaving comments on friends' posts. Engaging with others means more people are likely to like or share your posts in return.

- Facebook algorithms change all the time. Basically, what you see is determined by Facebook, so our goal is to increase the chances of your posts being seen by as many people as possible. Post relevant, timely posts, made up of text and a picture, information with entertainment value.

<https://blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-algorithm/>

Bottom line: If you click on and like silly cat videos, from then on you're likely to see nothing *but* silly cat videos. Visiting pages and people who are involved in the arts, and liking or leaving comments on them, will establish your interests with Facebook.

Example: My sister said she wasn't seeing my FB posts on her feed. I explained it was probably because she had stopped interacting with me. As soon as she started leaving comments, liking and sharing some of my posts, she saw many of my posts on her feed.

Instagram – This is an online mobile photo-sharing site. The emphasis is on pictures that are immediate. You are on the beach, take a shot of the sunset and you post it immediately to Instagram, via your phone, (using the Instagram app). Show off your personality, be natural and in the moment, have some fun. You can showcase your products, show your work area and your work in progress, remind people about your upcoming events. No links allowed in your post though.

You can *only* add pictures from your phone, mobile device, iPhone, iPad, etc. You cannot load pictures to Instagram from your laptop or home computer. However you can view Instagram, and like or comment on everyone's images, on your desktop computer.

Instagram posts are supposed to organic, on-the-spot, 'this is what I'm doing right now' posts.

However, sometimes I email myself photos from my computer, access them on my iPhone and save them there, in photos, and post at Instagram later on.

All images are square, whether you crop them ahead of time or let IG (Instagram) do it for you. They provide a variety of filters you can add, if you choose, during the process. You can also use outside apps like Prisma to create strong effects like 'stained glass.'

You can write a short profile and that is the only place you can add a link.

On Instagram you follow people, and many follow you back. If they follow you, they will likely see your pictures in their feed. Because millions of posts are made every day, IG chooses the posts you see based upon your actions. If you liked or commented on travel photos, that's what you'll see mostly. There is a tool on IG to find your Facebook friends who are on Instagram. I sought out people to follow by looking at the IG for area chambers of commerce, and followed businesses, galleries, people who looked like potential customers. I followed restaurants, foodies, breweries, photographers, inns, magazines, art directors, etc. They don't all follow you back, but I gained over 1000 followers within four months by leaving comments and interacting with them. There are a lot of people seeking followers whose Instagram feeds are below par - they're usually out for a quick buck - ignore them. I follow someone back if I like their images or style, or if they're a business I might develop a relationship with.

Use of hashtags is important, as is using the geo locator. If I use hashtag #kennebunk, or #ilovemaine, anyone who searches for that tag will see all the images ever posted at the site. Same goes for searching for pictures geo-tagged at a location. Search for 'Kennebunkport.' You arrive at a map and can see all

photos taken (or geo-tagged) at that location. When you are posting, and start to type in a hashtag, IG makes suggestions. You can see that there are 65,000 tags #kennebunkport. 46,000 for #pastelart. 7,500 for #pastelartist.

Pinterest

Because of the highly visual nature of the site, quality images have a greater chance of becoming “viral” – that is, shared and re-shared and re-shared further – to thousands of people. An image pinned (saved to a folder you make called a board) by a highly-followed Pinterest member has the potential to reach millions of viewers. There are 150 million users on Pinterest, mostly women (80%) between the ages of 25-45.

If your business is image heavy – say, a studio or artist, retail shop or an e-commerce site – then Pinterest for business makes sense. But what if your business doesn't make or sell pretty things? Don't overlook the appeal of a good “how-to checklist” or a step-by-step guide (infographics). Tall images are easier to read than horizontal ones, especially if you're including text. Once someone pins the image, the web address associated with that pin can serve to draw in new customers. That's why it's best to pin your images from your website, online photo site or blog, etsy, ebay, etc. You want to draw people over to your permanent site. You cannot pin a picture from Facebook.

You should create boards (folders) for your art, but you can draw in an audience by creating boards that have nothing to do with your art. Pastel techniques, pastels by the masters, artists in their studios, cats in art, tiny houses, DIY crafts, business tips, wicker furniture, or gardens of New England.

Name the boards with keywords – not 'My Art,' but 'Pastel Art by Maine Artist Bea Jones.'

After pinning, go back and add a brief caption using keywords so the picture can be found on Pinterest.

There is an edit button when you hover your cursor over the pinned image. You might say: “Pastel painting, Lupines in Garden, by Maine artist Bea Jones, known for her florals and seascapes.”

Flickr – Online photo sharing site. You can organize your pictures into albums. It is free but you need a Yahoo account first. You can include images of your art, crafts, goods you sell, or photographs of anything you like. I upload large images, and add a caption with key words.

You can belong to groups, which are basically collections of photos such as these I belong to: Essence of Maine, Old Textile Mills, Southern Maine Photography, Lensbaby, and a camera club. Some host discussions or invite you to add pertinent images to their group.

I looked up 'pastel painting' and see 210,000 results. A quick check told me the pictures most have tags including pastel illustration, artwork, painting, or similar.

Twitter is a platform for breaking news, as told in 140 characters. Add an image, link and hashtags. You can connect with your customers, share things going on right now at a weeklong festival, e.g., or sell your goods by posting images and giving a link to a place they can purchase them. Twitter is about what's happening now. Hashtags are important. Tweets are short-lived.

Google+ Remember: Google+ is Google, which means great search engine results for your business. If you have a Google+ Page and someone searches for your business (whether they follow you or not), your Google+ Page and its most recent posts will be displayed on the right side of their personal search results. These search ranking benefits makes Google+ an important social media site to consider for your business.

Blogging - A blog is a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to express yourself to the world. A place to share your thoughts and your passions. You can use your blog as your website.

~ For creatives, blogs are an immensely popular source of information offering new ideas, advice, and inspiration. For design professionals, it's the creation of a blog that offers the greatest opportunity – a means of cultivating a following and increasing awareness of and interest in their work.

- ~ But doing it well is a whole other story, one that requires a time commitment. A good blog is updated regularly and has compelling content. It's a bit like running a magazine, all by yourself, and blogging regularly can be difficult.
- ~ There are ways to monetize a blog, with ads or endorsements, but first you need to build a large audience. You can also use your blog to show your latest work and to sell directly to people. Letting friends at Facebook know every time you've posted a blog entry is easy to do and is a good opportunity for getting more readers. You can invite blog followers to sign up for a newsletter or for notifications by email of your shows e.g.
- ~ Make sure you use a widget that shows your latest Facebook posts on the side column of your blog.

MORE ABOUT FACEBOOK

As of January 2017, worldwide, there are over 1.86 billion monthly active Facebook users, which is a 17 percent increase year over year. What makes Facebook unique is the ability to connect and share with the people you care about at the same time. For many, having a Facebook account is now an expected part of being online, much like having your own email address. And since Facebook is so popular, other websites have worked to integrate Facebook. This means you can use a single Facebook account to sign in to different services across the Web.

See updates and posts from friends. Share photos and videos with the world. Invite friends to join groups and events. Join communities with similar interests. Connect with businesses, museums, galleries. Share any page on the web by using the FB icon, if they have one (Etsy, ebay, and others have a FB icon on every page.)

Parts of Facebook include:

The Home page - appears whenever you sign in to Facebook. The Home page displays your News Feed, which shows the things your friends have shared on Facebook. The Home page also allows you to navigate to other parts of Facebook, such as your Timeline.

The Timeline - (also called your profile page) is where you'll write posts including text, pictures, videos. Your friends can also share posts on your Timeline.

Using Facebook's privacy settings:

You may choose to limit who can share your posts, but if you want to be available to a broad audience, you need to make all of your posts public.

To access the Privacy Settings and Tools page:

Click the drop-down arrow on the Toolbar, then select Settings. The settings page will appear.

Next, select Privacy. The Privacy Settings and Tools page will appear. Select PUBLIC.

Likes, comments, and sharing:

Sharing on Facebook - Facebook is all about sharing with your friends. You can share lots of things, such as status updates, photos, links, and even your location. You can also share something directly with your friends by posting on their Timelines. You can also like, comment, and reshare the other posts and stories your friends share on Facebook.

Likes - Whenever your friends share something on Facebook, you can choose to like the post. This is just a simple way of showing your friends that you enjoyed what they shared. To like a post, simply click the Like button. You can hover over the 'Like' and choose an emoji instead.

You can also like the Facebook page for businesses and organizations to receive updates about them in your News Feed. Whenever your friends share on Facebook, you can leave a comment in the comments. Facebook makes it easy re-share the things your friends post. Just click Share at the bottom of a post to share it with your other friends. Some people have settings that prevent you from sharing

their posts.

TURN YOUR FRIENDS INTO FANS

When you post at your business page, go ahead and share it on your personal page, too.

You can also post a short version of that same information, and upload a new image, directly to your personal page. Include a link to your business FB page. Say: Hey, I just added some new images over at my Aikman Design page. Let me know what you think! (I upload picture from my computer) (I add URL)

FILL IN THE 'ABOUT ME' SECTION

Do this is both personal and business FB pages. Include info, hours, links, how to get hold of you, etc.

SECURITY TIP: I know it's nice to get all those happy birthday wishes, due to your birth date being visible to your friends, or to the whole world, but you should consider hiding it, or make sure your birth year is hidden.

To change your birthday:

1. Go to your profile and click Update Info at the bottom of your cover photo.
2. In the left column, click Contact and Basic Info.
3. Scroll down and hover over Birth Date or Birth Year, and then click Edit to the right of the info you'd like to change.

BE ACCESSIBLE

There is no point in showing your artwork on your personal page, yet making your posts visible to "friends only." The same goes for sharing. When I'm acting as the admin for the Pastel Society and I want to share one of your posts of recent work, or about a show you've entered – and I can't share it – you've lost the opportunity to share to a wider audience. Remember that you can choose to make each individual post visible to Friends, Public Only, or More Options.

CREATE A PHOTO ALBUM

Why is this a good idea? Because these albums of images are ready for a client to view, or for a newspaper to view and download. Make an album of ten of your best pieces. Or an album of art you're putting in a show. Head shots, pictures of your process, or pictures of you at work are a good idea. Tip: You can access the album, find the picture, and 'share' the picture with whatever you want to say. Photos - albums - locate picture - share on your own timeline or elsewhere.

ENGAGEMENT

- Tell a story. It doesn't have to be perfect so stop worrying about every word. You can always go back and edit. Be fun, creative. Ask people questions, to choose between 4 images you post, e.g.
- Respond to all comments. Engage people. Ask questions.
- Include a hashtag for an event, such as #pastelpainter or #pastelmonday

TIP: Write posts that are under 80 words. If longer, use keywords and important info in the first few lines. (Tulips by Geraldine Aikman. I'm showing my flower photography at the Spring Fling Show at the Grace Gallery, Portland, Maine. May 1-15. Looking forward to seeing you there! Can you believe it's spring already? Details below.)

Posts that give people a glimpse into how you create your work as an artist always prove popular; people love to read something personal. "How did you do that?" Posting images of your studio, sketchbook, materials, even a piece of work in progress, that you've having trouble with, can greatly enhance how 'real' you seem and get your content more widely shared.

You can post things other than your art. Inspiring quotes, a picture of you as a child, a drawing you did when you were starting out, food or a recipe, a ‘flat lay’ image, your pet. Just add something different now and then. And, as always, write something compelling, as if you're talking to a good friend.

TELLING A STORY

You may have heard the importance of storytelling in marketing.

- Stories are personal. Build a personal connection with your audience. Stories are far more relatable and help your audience see the real people behind your brand.
- Write out the story of how your brand or company was born. What was going on in your life that led you to start your business? How did you feel when your product was first launched? What needs or issues in your own life did your business or products seek to fill?
- Share this story on your blog, on your website’s ‘About page,’ and on social media. It will help your audience immediately feel an increased connection to you and your brand.
- What to try: Share stories, anecdotes, media mentions and testimonials from your customers to build trust with your audience.

HOW TO GET FOLLOWERS ON YOUR BUSINESS PAGE

Invite Friends: Right-hand column -- > Page Tips

Know friends who might like your page? Invite friends (click). Choose friends.

TIP: Post something new prior to inviting new people to your page. You want them to see you’re current and active.

NOTE: Just because you don’t have a lot of followers doesn’t mean people aren’t reading your posts. Check Insights link (in the white banner near top of page) to view how many engagements you’ve had, what time of day, what types of posts visitors seem to like.

- What time of day do people use Facebook? Around breakfast, lunch, and after dinner, Eastern Time. I’ve seen it peak around 9 PM EST.
- Search for local businesses, chambers of commerce, galleries, anyone who might be a potential customer. See who is leaving messages on their page – maybe they’re someone you should engage with. Leave a comment, tell them you like their product, ask a question about it, be friendly – this isn’t time for a self-promotion.
- Share a business’s post to your page. I have some steady followers, such as when I took the time to compliment an inn on their food photos, and share their posts. In response, they thanked me and it appears on their page. I’ve seen them like or comment on many of my pictures since then.
- Click on the list of people who like a business’s post. You can scroll down the list on the handy button. You can click on any name then leave a comment on their posts as yourself or as a business.
- Join a community, visit a group, and friend people who are in it. Look into their friends. Some groups allow you to post without joining. Join in conversations.

TIP: Before liking or posting at someone’s page, make sure you’re doing so as your business - or yourself if that’s what you want. A very small icon with your profile picture appears to the right of any post you make. You can use it to switch over to yourself, or to your business. (“Posting as Aikman Design,” e.g.)

INSIGHTS

~ Facebook reach shows you how many people, followers or not, actually saw your posts. This includes eyes on your content as an organic post in a News Feed, a promoted post, or a post a friend commented on.

~ Engagement is the number of actions your fans have taken as a result of seeing your post. This would

include likes, comments, shares, video views, and link clicks. FMI pertaining to reach and engagement, visit: <https://http://www.facebook.com/help/355635011174004/?ref=u2u>

~ Page Views section allows you to see data about the individuals who choose to browse your Facebook page. This information can indicate people are using your page to look up your contact information or to find out about upcoming events. An actual visit to your profile marks a higher level of engagement than simply liking a post in the News Feed. This suggests a more active interest in who you are and what you're doing than a convenience-based like.

ADVERTISING - Boosted Posts are just one of twenty different marketing objectives Facebook offers advertisers. Many of its other marketing objectives will help you achieve business outcomes that Boosted Posts will not, such as leads, sales, brand awareness, increasing video views, and more. You can try a \$5 boost and see if the reach it gets is worth the small investment. Choose one of your posts that has a strong message, or sends people to your website or shop – and invest a few dollars to boost it. Follow up on the results, viewing the Facebook insights and gauging if the post has sent more people to your page or chosen destination.

To access advertising choices:

- Use pulldown menu at right (small inverted arrowhead). Scroll down to 'create ads.'
- Create a campaign. Choose your marketing objective – there are 20 marketing choices here.
- Follow the choices and expect to spend \$20 a day/ no more than \$140 a month, for instance.

FMI: <http://www.39celsius.com/why-facebook-boosted-posts-are-a-waste/>

OTHER FEATURES

On your business page you will see a series of rectangular icons in the center.

You can post a photo or video by any of these means:

Upload photos or videos. Create a photo album.

Create a photo carousel - I added the URL to one of my website pages and it only recognized a few of the many pictures on that page - but it made a sort of slide show on my Business page - of 10 pictures and a link to my website.

Create a slideshow - I decided to upload larger pictures from my computer. It took a few minutes but once they were all on the FB template, I could change the order they were going to be seen in.

Create a canvas - Combine images and videos.

Advertise your business:

Go down to the last item - Share Page with Friends.

It is the only action under Advertise that won't cost you anything.

~ Here you can scroll down the list and invite your friends from your personal Facebook page. (Note - take some time every couple of weeks and friend people on your personal page. See who your friends are friends with. You'll probably see some familiar faces. I like to friend local businesses and members of the Chamber of Commerce. You need friends who are not just artists.)

Get phone calls. Get messages.

Help people find your business - You pinpoint your location on a map.

Create an event - You add a photo, location, start and finish time, and details.

There is a link at bottom "Event Tips Website," with more helpful info.

Create an offer - An offer is a discount you can share with your customers on Facebook.

You can create an offer from your Page or Ads Manager for people to see in their News Feed. When people click on your offer, they can either go to your website to start shopping or read more details about your offer. Your offer will also be saved to people's Offers bookmark in case they want to use it later. They'll get Facebook notifications about your offer before it expires. The amount you pay is based upon the amount of people you want to reach.

Write a note - This is just another way of posting text and an image.

POSTING VIDEOS

You can post a video to Instagram, and share it (at the same time) to your Facebook page. The ability to share in 2 locations at the same time is great, but remember that posting that same video directly to Facebook will get you more of a reach/views.

Any kind of direct post (not a share) garners more views. You can see how many people have seen your video on a business page. Unfortunately, there is no gauge on your personal page, other than likes. An example of the ability to reach more people through a video: A photo I posted at the Tourist News Facebook page - of waves during a storm - has reached 263 people. (Usually my posts get around 40-70 reach.) The video I posted around the same time - 30 seconds of waves - currently has 792 views.

- Facebook's algorithms change all the time, but generally, FB wants you to post relevant text and pictures. If you share a news article or a friend's post, the chance of it being seen by a lot of people is less than if you post an original text + picture.
 - Don't promote using words or phrases like "Buy this." Be subtle. (I'm looking forward to seeing our summer visitors at the gallery this weekend. I plan to do a demo.)
 - You can add a link and once it connects and the image of the website appears in the post, go back and delete the actual text of the URL. You'll see that the picture of the website remains. This is supposed to help your chance of the post being seen.
 - Tip: You can leave a comments to your own post and ad links and a harder sell there.
- Use the geo-button (called 'Check In') to tell people where you are - because all of your viewers may not be from the area; someone may have shared your post.
- Post only once a day and make it count. Use an occasional emoji and exclamation point.
 - Write a post that asks a question, and uses the word 'you.' "Have you thought about cutting up your least favorite painting and using it as part of a collage? This is my latest re-purposed artwork!"

Facebook offers a free shop. Adding a shop section to your Page is free and lets you sell products to your customers right from your Page. "We never take any percentage of what you earn through your shop section." <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/912190892201033?helpref=related>

Geraldine Aikman website: <http://www.aikmandesign.com/>

My Facebook (personal): <https://www.facebook.com/geraldine.aikman>

Aikman Design: <https://www.facebook.com/aikmandesign/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/>

My Instagram this.is.maine (my photos of Maine): <https://www.instagram.com/this.is.maine/>

My Instagram Aikman Design (my art and crafts): <https://www.instagram.com/aikmandesign/>

Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/>

My Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/geraldineaikman/>

Flickr: www.flickr.com

My Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dinidesign/albums>

Free Facebook Tutorials: <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/facebook101/>

Rosemary Farm - an example: <https://www.facebook.com/RosemaryFarm/>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Use-Facebook>

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/how-to/how-to-use-facebook/2/>

<https://www.lifewire.com/tutorial-how-facebook-works-2654610>

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<https://megalytic.com/blog/understanding-facebook-page-insights-likes-reach-and-page-views>

<http://kimgarst.com/5-reasons-storytelling-must-marketers>