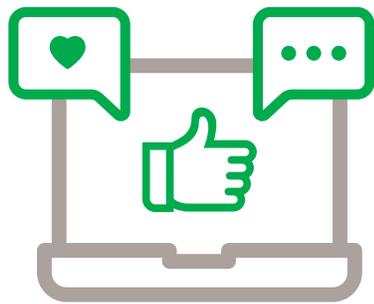


E-BOOK



ADAMA SOCIAL MEDIA FOR RETAILERS

SOCIAL MEDIA 101:
What Ag Retailers Need to Know Before Logging In

ADAMA

ADAMA.COM/CANADA
1.855.264.6262

🐦 @ADAMA_CAN
📘 @ADAMACanada



CANADIAN GROWERS ARE MORE DIGITALLY-SAVVY THAN WE REALIZE

More than 80% of Canadian grain farmers use a smartphone — a higher adoption rate than the general public, [according to a recent study by Ipsos](#). That same study also showed that 47% of growers use social media for farming purposes, and more than half of mobile users have clicked on a farming-related ad in the past 12 months.



of Canadian grain farmers
use a smartphone

also



of growers **use social media
for farming purposes**

Yet, for most of us in the ag industry, social media doesn't seem to be a priority. And that's unfortunate, because with the [number of worldwide social media users](#) expected to reach 2.95 billion by 2020, it is quickly becoming the most effective way to reach your current and prospective audience.



HERE'S HOW BEING ON SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS:

1. Social media marketing is cost-effective



If you are looking for a way to market to more people for less money, you've come to the right place. Social media advertising allows you to customize your target audience to an incredible degree of specificity, using demographic information like region, age, gender, profession, interests, etc. So instead of paying \$1,000 on a billboard that every Tom, Dick and Harry will see, you can spend \$100 on a targeted ad campaign directed

only at growers within a 25-mile radius of your retail location.

While paid campaigns can help stretch your marketing dollars substantially, you don't necessarily have to pay to play. The shareable nature of social media content means that once you post something, it's easy for your audience to share it with their network as well — which is free marketing for your business!

2. Social media can build brand loyalty



One of the best things about social media is the direct access it gives you to your audience. When you start posting and interacting with your followers regularly, your social networks become a virtual community of sorts, where you can respond to your customers' needs regardless of whether they're in the field or the office. This individualized attention creates a personal relationship that feels authentic and genuine, which will further draw followers to your social sites and paint you as an authority or trusted advisor.

A great example of a company that successfully built their brand on social media is Wendy's. Their Twitter account has over two million followers and sky-high engagement

rates. But this level of engagement didn't happen overnight (although their [viral roasts of competitors](#) haven't hurt). Wendy's has always maintained an active social presence by replying to users in a way that feels personal and authentic to their brand, cultivating a community of people who enjoy interacting with the fast food giant.

But you don't need to have Wendy's biting wit (or millions of followers) to be successful. By sharing relevant, useful, shareable information with your followers and responding to them in real time, you can create a personal connection that keeps your customers coming back for more.



3. Social media gets you more sales



Did you know that 74% of consumers use social media to help them make a buying decision? Or that 81% of social media users are likely to make a purchase because a friend or family member recommended it online?

The internet has completely changed the way people shop. Customers are more educated than ever before, often doing research on their own before heading to a store. Think about it — when's the last time you made a major purchase without first looking up reviews on Amazon?

Your grower customers are probably researching crop protection solutions online right now, so why not meet them where they are? After all, social media marketing doesn't just keep you top-of-mind with your current customers and followers; it also gives you access to customers who don't know you exist!

By using keywords and hashtags to make your posts more searchable, you're just a click away from your next new customer. And growers are searching — on Instagram alone, there are currently 1,323,519 posts tagged with #agriculture — so by simply being present online, you increase your chances of them stumbling on you.



of consumers **use social media** to help them make a buying decision.



of social media users are likely **to make a purchase** because of a friend or family member recommendation.



SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS STARTS WITH A GOOD STRATEGY

Before you type your first post (or even create an account), you'll want to have a social media strategy in place. And that all starts with your objective: what is your business hoping to achieve on social media?

Some common social media objectives are:

Increase brand awareness

Generate new sales leads

Grow revenue

Build a community around your business

Drive traffic to a company website

Provide improved customer service

To get started, you might want to look at your marketing objectives for the year. Often, they'll translate well into what you'd like to achieve on social.

Once you've identified your business goals, you can begin fleshing out your strategy. This can be as complex or simplistic as you'd like, but it should cover the following areas:

1. Which platforms to use
2. Content themes
3. Posting frequency

As you go through the next few sections, keep your ideal customer and social media objectives in mind. They'll help ensure your strategic decisions support your overall business goals.



Choosing a Social Media Network



Twitter. LinkedIn. Instagram. Facebook. YouTube. Google+. Pinterest. The number of social media sites is overwhelming — but luckily, no one expects you to master them all.

After all, not all social media sites are created equal, and not all social media sites will work in the same way to help achieve your goals. Finding the social media platform that's right for your business depends on many factors, including your objectives, your products, the type of content that will be easy for you to produce, and what your ideal customer is most likely to use.

For ag retailers and other businesses in agriculture, we suggest focusing your efforts on Facebook and/or Twitter. They're [the top channels](#) where our grower audience tends to congregate, so whether you utilize one or both, they'll give you the most opportunity to engage meaningfully with your customer base.

FACEBOOK



If you're looking to get established as a brand, drive traffic to your website and provide improved customer service, Facebook is a great place to start. In Canada, the social network has over [18.2 million users](#), and there is nearly a 50/50 split by gender. Its user base also tends to be quite broad, with ages ranging from 18-65+ (with some drop-off happening around age 55). Because of its broad reach and wide popularity across the country, it's a trusted source of business information and reviews, and often one of the first places a consumer looks when researching a company or product.

But with 18.2 million users (and growing), it can also be a difficult place to get noticed.

Fortunately, Facebook provides businesses with analytical and tracking tools that can help you find the right people and start a conversation.

Users share lots of information with Facebook — their location, age, gender, profession, interests, and dislikes, just to name a few — which the network uses to help your business learn more about your audience's demographics, interests and behaviors. For instance, a tool called [Page Insights](#) allows you to see information about the types of people who follow and interact with your page, while a tool called [Facebook Insights](#) allows you to gather data on your current or potential customers across Facebook, regardless of whether they're following your page.



This information enables you to see what your ideal customer is interested in and shape your social media content based on the types of people you want to reach.

These analytics also help when it comes to paid social media ad campaigns. With [Facebook's targeted promotion building](#), you can increase the odds of getting your content in front of the right people.

TWITTER



Although Twitter has a significantly smaller number of users — 7.4 million in Canada — its impact is still huge.

Over [400 million tweets](#) are sent every day, and the network is used for everything from complaining about your commute to real-time news reporting. Consider recent events in America: how much influence has Twitter held over political discourse? For better or worse, the platform has become the go-to place to join the conversation — after all, if it's newsworthy, it's on Twitter.

Twitter's unique impact is due in large part to the niche it has carved for itself. Unlike social platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn, which facilitate conversations within a personal network, Twitter is built for public dialogue. Use of hashtags and the burgeoning popularity of [weekly Twitter "chats"](#) help people around

So while Facebook's 18.2 million users may feel overwhelming, the social network offers great tools that help you reach your target customer. Setting up a Facebook business account is easy and free — check out this [handy how-to](#) to learn more.

the world find and converse with others who share their interests. And as long as your profile is set to public, anyone can retweet or reply to you, regardless of whether you're following each other. So when something starts trending, it's often due to the platform's public, shareable nature.

This makes it the ideal channel for interacting directly with other ag-minded folks, which can help increase brand awareness, build community and promote any external content that is relevant to your business. One great place to start is participating in weekly [#AgChats](#) on Twitter. With over 72,000 weekly users, it's a great way to network, gain recognition and build brand loyalty.

Like Facebook, setting up a Twitter business account is easy and free. [Here's how to do it.](#)



Developing a Content Strategy

So you've set up your Twitter and/or Facebook account? That's great! Now step away from the keyboard, because there's an important question you should answer first:

WHAT SHOULD I POST?

Before you start typing, it's important to figure out exactly who you're typing to. Who is your ideal customer? We're guessing it's probably a grower within a certain radius of your retail location. Do they grow cereals? Pulses? Are they mostly male or female? Over 40 or under? When they visit your shop, what kind of questions do they ask?

Content is what you give followers in return for their support and interest, but it's also what you use to get them to hit the "follow" or "like" button in the first place. It helps retain customers and assists in building your brand. That's why it's crucial to define your audience and use that understanding to shape the kind of content you create and share. For example, if your business caters to mostly young male farmers who are taking over the family farm,

perhaps your content would focus on tips for growing their business and how your products and services can impact that.

Your content strategy isn't just about the types of posts you'll be publishing — you also have to ask yourself where you're getting that content from! For small businesses especially, it's just not sustainable to publish original content all the time. And no one wants to see promotional posts all the time.

A good mix of curated content (information from external sources that are relevant to your business) and original content (information you produce that represents your company's point of view directly) is what you should aim for. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Original	Curated
promotion of products or services	links to seasonal articles
images of staff or staff bios	agriculture related facts
event-related content (tradeshows and conferences)	retweets from product partners
current promotions your business is offering	retweets from followers
new products or services	market performance links
customer testimonials	links to business related news



A good place to start looking at what content to post is to have a glance at what your competitors are posting on social media. They will be trying to reach the same audience you are, so having a look at what kind of information they are publishing is good way to gauge if your content ideas are on the right track.

Below is a list of ag resources you can head to for curated content:

<https://www.grainews.ca/>

<https://www.agriculturemorethanever.ca/>

<https://www.producer.com/>

<https://www.realagriculture.com/>

<https://www.canolacouncil.org>

<https://globalnews.ca/tag/agriculture/>

<http://www.farms.com/>

<http://farmmarketer.com/>

<http://www.cbj.ca/agriculture-news/>

<http://www.realdirtblog.ca/>

<http://croplife.ca/>

WHEN SHOULD I POST?

Once you know the direction you'd like to take your content, the next step is to determine how often you should post. [While each network is different](#), we recommend daily posts on Twitter and 3-4 posts per week on Facebook as a minimum. However, this will be dependent on your capacity and if you have enough content to fill the week. It's better to take a day off from publishing content than it is to post something just for the sake of posting.

After deciding on post frequency, you'll want to have a rough idea of how often you should publish original, curated and promotional content. We recommend a 70/30 mix, where at least 70% of the content on your social page is educational, informative, entertaining or useful to the reader, and a maximum of 30% of the content is posts promoting your business. Any more than this, and you run the risk of alienating followers by having a feed that seems sales-y and self-serving.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ALL ABOUT MAKING USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONVERSATIONS YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE MOST INTERESTED IN

On social, your goal should be to establish your business as an authority on all things ag. And you can do that by delivering information your audience finds helpful, relevant and engaging. After all, when your posts resonate with your ideal customers — when they address their challenges, their victories and their interests — they take notice.



Remember, keep the self-promotional posts to a minimum, and always ask yourself, **“what purpose does this content serve?”**

By putting your audience’s interests and needs first, you will not only ensure that your business will attract and retain the right followers; you’ll also establish your business as a trusted source of information, which people will engage with and come to for advice — both on- and offline.





About ADAMA Canada

At ADAMA, we lead an alternative approach in the Canadian agriculture landscape by doing three things better than anyone else:

1. We offer an alternative choice for active ingredients.
2. We champion an alternative approach by simplifying the way we work with customers.
3. We support ag retails and respect the relationships they have with growers.

What this means is, we keep things simple. We bring choice and simplicity to crop protection, allowing farmers and retails to do what they love instead of managing complicated, time-consuming rebate programs or bundling.

We also understand the value of the relationships retails have with their growers, and we respect those relationships. We are here to supply retails with what they need to be successful in their business – quality products with the passionate and experienced team that backs them.

To learn more about us, visit ADAMA.com/Canada.