

# Career Opportunities in the Realm of Social Media Management

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In India, increased availability of internet connections and access in recent years, propelled by the Central Government's Digital India initiative, has been directly proportional to the growth of social media users. Internet penetration has been on the rise with over 658 million Indians being able to access the internet (As of January 2022 Statista.com data), which makes India the second largest market globally after China.

For the common people, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp, and Snapchat and are fun diversions, but for others, social media is a serious business. For brands, having a social media presence is no longer optional; it is vital for survival. So it is not surprising that this phenomenon has led to the genesis of an entirely new career domain: social media marketing. Although the terms e-marketing and digital marketing are still dominant in academia,



Social Media Management (SMM) is becoming more popular for both practitioners and researchers.

Businesses, governments, nonprofits, celebrities, all need talented, insightful, educated people as social media managers - and they pay well to attract and keep them. Other than social media managers, there are many in-demand job profiles in the realm of social media marketing that will expand over the next few years; they include analysts, content creators, influencers, community

managers, etc.

## Goals of Social Media Management

- Increase brand awareness
- Drive traffic to your website
- Generate new leads
- Boost brand engagement
- Build a community around your business
- Provide social customer

service

- Increase mentions in the press
- Listen to conversations about your brand (feedback)
- Grow revenue (by increasing signups or sales)

## Perks of Pursuing a Social Media Career

- **Variety of choices:** As a social media professional, you can choose to be a marketer, a strategist, a copywriter, a designer, an analyst, an influencer, a customer service representative, and sometimes all of them.
- **You are never done learning:** One of the most challenging yet rewarding aspects about working in social media is that you have to constantly refine and develop your skills to

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## EN QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Readers' views elicited on important issues

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continue advancing in your career. An effective social media professional brings both hard skills and soft skills to the table. Hard skills like data analysis and copywriting can be more easily studied and learnt, whereas soft skills like being organized and making connections may be more difficult to learn, but are just as important. The more you focus on cultivating these skills, the more you'll be able to drive results, realize true business impact and level up your own abilities.

### • Monotony is out of question:

Social media platforms are dynamic, so marketing and management tactics must change along with them. This can make for a very exciting career, as you are always learning new things and meeting new challenges. You will certainly never be bored!

### • You can become an irreplaceable asset:

In a highly competitive market, uniqueness sells. Brands need to consistently engage with their audience with interesting and unique content and such content need to conform to the brand's image. This means that if you are skilled enough to bring to the table what the brand precisely requires, you will be an irreplaceable asset to any marketing team.

### • Creativity takes the front seat:

Having the opportunity to be creative at work is a huge plus for many young people. Social media combines so many different aspects - photography/video graphy, storytelling, writing, acting, music, visual communication, verbal communication, innovation, technology etc. Hence, there will be a lot of tactics, technologies, and skill sets that you may be required to exhibit.

## Most Popular Social Media Platforms for Marketing

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn
- Snapchat
- YouTube
- Quora
- WhatsApp
- Tumblr
- Qzone
- Line
- Telegram

## Categories of Jobs in Social Media Management

Social media management can be broken into three key areas: strategy, content, and community management. Typically, a task within a social media job will fall under one of these three categories.

**a) Content:** Content is the king as it is the thread that connects the audience with the brand. When done right, the content can help businesses and entities build a strong online presence, reach the right audience and ensure engagement (likes,

shares, re-tweets etc.). It is that facet of social media management that involves the creation and sharing of material that does not explicitly promote a brand but is intended to stimulate interest in its products or services. The most common type of social media management content includes user-generated content (images, videos, texts, stories created by followers). They may be in the form of product reviews, caption contests, and fun challenges etc. Other forms include videos, livestreams, infographics and educational/instructional content. In whichever format, the content has to resonate well with the target audience.

### Role of Influencers:

Influencer marketing is a buzzword in the marketing world and is no longer restricted to a few businesses or agencies. As a result, influencers have increased in almost every significant industry and brands are using them more than ever before. Hence, it has become common now to spot social media users who have given up careers in different domains and have chosen to exclusively devote their time to social media influencing. If we have managed to accept the fact that social media influencer is a real job; let us get on to the bit about why exactly this is a job that needs to be handled with a great deal of responsibility. Social media influencers have the power to change attitudes and mindset - which they can change for the better, and scarily, even for the worse. To become an influencer, you need to have a sound knowledge on what you claim to be your niche is and use that knowledge to influence people in believing and subscribing to the same set of ideas or thoughts- on social media.

**b) Strategy:** The key ingredient for engaging in social media management is having a strategy. Without a strategy, a business might be posting on social media platforms without understanding what the company's goals are, who the target audience are and what they want. Without a strategy, it will be hard to achieve results on social media. Another interesting point about strategy is that different social media channels may require different strategies, depending on the product or idea that is being promoted.

**c) Community Management:** Community management is about building relationships and how the brand seizes the opportunity to interact with its community on online public platforms. Your community consists of your current customers, target audiences,

and all the people who interact with your brand directly and indirectly online. Managing your community becomes more and more important the bigger your customer base becomes. It is the role of the community manager to manage customer complaints online, turn customers into loyal fans, win over influencers and prospective customers, network with other brands and partner with them, get valuable feedback, follow and manage discourse in the comments section.

## Common Job Roles

- Social Media Marketing Manager
- Social Media Analyst
- Community Manager
- Copy Writer
- Content Manager
- Influencer
- Blogger
- Media Planner
- Public Relations Manager
- Social Media Strategist
- Social Media Consultant
- Director of Marketing and Social Media
- Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)

## Skills Required for Social Media Jobs

- Excellent communication skills
- Copy writing
- Editing and Designing (graphics and videos)
- Public speaking (on-camera with live audience)
- Customer service and community management skills
- Data Analysis
- Basics of Behavioral Psychology
- Budgeting skills
- Curiosity, adaptability and business acumen as the most sought after traits

## Educational Qualifications

A degree is not always a requirement for a social media job. However, having one can be a great advantage, especially if it is a degree in creative art or marketing. Also, there are a plethora of short-term social media marketing courses which you can opt for to gain a better understanding of the social media realm. A diploma or certificate gained through such short term courses will place a candidate a notch over those not possessing such documents.

## Diploma, Certification, Online Courses

Before making social media your career arena, you are expected to have an understanding of how to develop a social media marketing strategy to generate brand awareness for your business; how to use social media listening to find out what works best for your followers; how to extend your reach on social media platforms and leverage influencers to attract new audiences; and how to get the most out of your social media investments. Institutes that offer courses in digital marketing encapsulate all these into specific modules designed for social media marketing.

For example, the Advanced Certification in Digital Marketing

and Analytics by Centre for Continuing Education (CCE), IIT Madras, is designed to help you master skills such as understanding the key fundamentals of marketing as well as essential digital marketing skills like organic marketing, paid marketing, marketing analytics, and more. This program also helps you understand how data science plays an important role in marketing analytics.

Courses like these teach you how to relate to and identify the social media channel that fits the requirement of a project. Such courses also teach the students strategies followed in the industry with proficiency and guidance, making them capable of solving complex situations while innovating. Some courses also offer the opportunity to engage in real-time campaigns providing hands-on training using domain name, website and budget for campaigns.

For those interested in the creative aspect of social media marketing, you should opt for courses that offer guidance in setting goals and success metrics and determine the target audience while offering avenues to test and polish your creative abilities, thereby, helping you create content that is not only entertaining but also one that ensures online visibility to the brand. For example, the Post Graduate Certificate Programme in Crafting Creative Communication (CCC) offered by MICA (Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad). It is a specialised programme designed to cater to the ever-evolving demands of the advertising, media and communication industry. Students are exposed to a variety of creative mediums such as film, photography, graphic design and art to enable effective execution of their ideas and stories.

"Is creativity a natural talent or nurtured skill?" - This question has been debated from centuries. Yet, in the context of social media content creation and marketing, the fact remains that even if you are born with intense creative acumen, you need to acquire the skills of marketing in order to gain maximum reach and recognition. Therefore, a carefully designed course in creative communication and marketing will help acquire the following traits and talents:

- Idea generation techniques
- Art of effective storytelling
- Writing with the visual and aural
- Drawing from life
- Ways of seeing
- Copywriting
- Art direction
- Writing creative briefs
- Campaign planning
- Semiotics
- Photography
- Film-making
- Film appreciation
- Animation & stop motion
- Tool learning
- Branding
- Customer-centric communication
- Advertising management
- New Media and experiential marketing

For beginners who have never been in marketing/communication/creative industry before and who would like to learn a bit of everything (including social media marketing), Google's Digital Marketing Certification course is best suited. The course includes Search Engine Optimization (SEO), content marketing, and web optimization. It also teaches you how to set goals for your chosen social media platforms and how to create a sustainable long-term social media strategy.

Advanced courses in social media management typically cover the following topics.

- What is social media and why is it popular?
- Leading social media apps and what makes them popular
- Rules and regulations related to social media
- Measurement of performance in social media
- Algorithms of various social media platforms
- Difference between organic and paid social media marketing
- Introduction to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Snapchat
- Introduction to Facebook Ads and Instagram Marketing
- Building a quality customer base online from scratch
- Audience targeting options - demographics, interests, and behaviour
- Facebook and Instagram ad placement and budgeting options
- Various types of ad formats on Facebook and Instagram
- Importance of landing pages and remarketing
- Setting up Ads on Twitter and LinkedIn

There are many institutes for social media marketing courses. But first, you have to decide what course is best for you. Which institute will give you the best learning experience? The best courses are those that focus on core principles and practices over specific platforms and explains how social media can be used to both complement and strengthen overall marketing and business goals; enable students to create engaging content, develop social media budgets, manage a thriving social media community and measure & optimize for overall improved performance. A candidate can pursue these Social Media Marketing courses after class 10th, 12th, or after graduation which varies as per the course format.

Some of the institutions/online platforms that offer such holistic courses (long term and short duration) are:

- Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta
- Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore
- Doon Business School, Dehradun
- Mudra Institute of Communications (MICA), Ahmedabad
- Indian Institute of Digital Education (IIDE), Mumbai
- Madras Christian College, Chennai

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- D Y Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune
- G D Goenka University, Gurugram
- Digital Marketing Guru (DM Guru), Gurugram
- Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai
- National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT)
- Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)
- Virtual platforms: Coursera, edX, Alison, LinkedIn Learning, Futurelearn, UpGrad, Digital Vidya, Shaw Academy, Udemy etc.

(The above list is indicative only)

If you do not possess a degree/diploma in creative art, communication or marketing, but

possess all the requisite skills for taking up a job role in social media marketing team, you can validate your proficiency by undergoing various online certification programme. Individual certification works in the way of the certifier providing training content to individuals and conducting online exams based on the content. Over the years, the certification has become a minimum or expected requirement for entry-level marketing roles for agencies and corporations.

By earning certifications, it will be easier for hiring agents/managers to recognize your ability to identify core components of social media

marketing, optimization skills, choose the appropriate campaign for your marketing objectives. You can show your current and prospective employers that you are a certified online advertising professional with a personalized certificate that you can print. Some of the most common certification programs for digital marketing are:

- Shopping Ads Certification
- Google Display Ads Certification
- Google AdWords Certification
- Hubspot Certification
- Google Analytics Certification
- Search Ads Certification
- Video Ads Certification
- Bings Ads Certification
- SEMrush Certification

## Building an Effective Portfolio

It is a must for a social media job applicant to have a meticulously compiled portfolio. A hiring manager will look for someone with experience in campaign planning and execution, creative talent, and community management skills, depending on the need of the organization. Therefore, before putting together a portfolio, deeply analyze your personal strengths - what do you enjoy the most? Creating content? Scouring the social media for identifying the best platforms for promoting your brand? Or making funny comments, using the perfect emoji in every situation, inciting a debate/contest in the comments section and finding the best way to

entertain your audience? Take advantage of your best skills and make them the focus of your portfolio so that hiring agents clearly see you seamlessly gliding into a role becoming an integral part of a social media marketing team.

A digital portfolio is best suited for any job role in social media marketing. Having a visualized form of data that is presented in a narrative manner allows the hiring manager to easily comprehend quite a bit of information in a short amount of time, while also giving them a peek into your creative acumen and convincing skills.

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Views expressed are personal.