



Using Social Media to Market Agritourism

This fact sheet is part of a series developed as a result of the East Coast Agritourism Webinar Series, a partnership between North Carolina State University and Rutgers University.

Gone are the days when people used a phone book to help them find a business and make a purchase. Today's consumers are using the Internet and search engines (such as Google and Yahoo) to find businesses, learn more about them, and make final purchasing decisions.

That is why having an Internet presence is one of the most important marketing strategies for any business. The Internet gives consumers access to business and product information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, dramatically increasing consumer choice set and awareness. Additionally, the increasing popularity of online social media makes it easier for people to use the Internet to share their opinions and experiences with friends, family, and businesses. If you have an agritourism business, you can use social media as a powerful marketing tool to engage with potential and current customers.

According to a December 2010 survey conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project (www.pewinternet.org), 77% of American adults are using the Internet (Figure 1). When examining how Americans are using the Internet, Pew found:

- 87% use search engines to find information;
- 82% search for maps or driving directions;
- 78% look for information about a service or product they are thinking of buying;
- 70% participate in social networking;
- 66% buy or make a reservation for travel.

Total Adults	% Who Use the Internet
Men	78
Women	76
Race/ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	80
Black, non-Hispanic	69
Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking)	66
Age	
18–29	90
30–49	84
50–64	76
65+	46
Household income	
Less than \$30,000/year	63
\$30,000–\$49,999	79
\$50,000–\$74,999	92
\$75,000+	96
Educational attainment	
Less than high school	40
High school	69
Some college	89
College +	93
Community type	
Urban	78
Suburban	80
Rural	68

Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, November 23–December 21, 2010, Social Side of the Internet Survey.

Figure 1. Demographic characteristics of U.S. Internet users, 2010.

Online Marketing

There are a variety of options for marketing an agritourism business on the Internet, such as websites, directory listings, and social networking sites. Many of these options are free or incur only a minimal cost. This fact sheet will focus on social networking sites as a way to market farm businesses online. However, keep in mind that a number of marketing services are available to farmers, including local convention and visitor's bureaus, chambers of commerce, tourism development authorities, and other destination management organizations.

In addition, offices within state departments of agriculture may provide free online listings for agritourism businesses. For example, the Marketing Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services has an Agritourism Office (<http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/agritourism>) that maintains an online "general store" of links for visitors looking for information on North Carolina agritourism farms (<http://www.visitncfarms.com>). There are also a number of state and national food directories, such as the 10% Campaign in North Carolina (<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/nc10percent/index.php>) and LocalHarvest (<http://www.localharvest.org>), that help customers find local farm products in their area.

Social Media and Social Networking

The term "social media" refers to a set of online tools for disseminating information to a broad audience, often with shared interests. "Social networking" refers to the use of social media to turn communication into an interactive, multidirectional exchange that creates engagement and builds relationships through community.

Social networking services, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, are primarily used to connect communities of individuals who are like-minded or who share interests. People use social media to share and discuss their daily experiences, including the products and services they purchase and which ones they do or do not like. When you get involved in social media, you can make your business part of that conversation.

The New Word of Mouth

During a recent webinar, Jane Eckert, CEO of Eckert AgriMarketing (<http://www.eckertagrimarketing.com/index.php>), made this observation: "Social media is not a fad but a shift in the way people communicate with each other." Traditionally, consumers learned about products and services primarily through word of mouth; thus, word of mouth is often considered one of the most powerful and effective marketing tools. However, with the rise in popularity of the Internet and social media, consumers now use social networking to share their experiences online with friends, family, and strangers. In short, social networking is a new form of word-of-mouth communication. Businesses can embrace this new word of

mouth by using social media to influence the information and perceptions being shared about them online.

For businesses, social networking is an engagement with online communities to generate exposure, opportunity, and sales. Successful social networking follows a marketing strategy to use social media as an outlet for broadcasting information about your agritourism business, allowing you to market your business to Internet users while connecting with them on a more personal level. Social networking sites allow farm businesses to engage with customers before and after they leave the farm—and even during the off-season.

Below we discuss some of the most popular social networking services and tools you can use to market your agritourism business and connect with customers online.

Facebook

Founded in 2004, Facebook (www.facebook.com) is one of many social networking websites based on the idea of connecting networks of friends, acquaintances, and groups with common interests so they can communicate and interact with each other. There is no charge to join or participate in Facebook, and anyone age 13 or older can sign up. Facebook members create Facebook profile pages that convey personal information about themselves and show their support of various groups, businesses, and causes. Your Facebook page has a "Wall" where you can post "status updates," photos, videos, Internet links, and reviews. Facebook members who are connected to each other as "Friends" can see and comment on each others' Wall posts, send messages to each other through Facebook's messaging service, and chat online in real time. Facebook is the most popular social networking site on the Internet, with 800 million users as of September 2011, making it a valuable resource for businesses marketing their products or services. Other social networking sites that cost nothing to join include MySpace (www.myspace.com) and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Just as individuals can create personal Facebook pages to connect with friends, a business can also create a Facebook page to connect with customers and increase brand awareness. When creating a Facebook page for a business, be sure to click on the "Create a page for a celebrity, band or business" link at www.facebook.com (Figure 2). Although you do not need a personal Facebook account to start creating a page for your business, during the development process you will be asked to create either a personal Facebook account or a Facebook ad. Whichever one you create will be linked to the business page as that page's administrator (controller of content). You can add or change administrators later if you need to. For more information on creating business pages on Facebook, visit <https://www.facebook.com/help/?page=721>.



Figure 2. Click “Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business” at www.facebook.com to create a Facebook page for your agritourism business.

Facebook makes it easy for businesses to engage with their customers. Facebook users who visit your business’s page and click the “Like” button will then see anything you post on your Wall, so you can use your Wall like a public bulletin board, allowing you to communicate with current and potential customers. As a result, posting on your business’s Wall is an easy, efficient way to get information out to many users quickly.

Business pages can be configured to include a number of useful features—such as reviews, discussions, and notes—that allow a business to provide pertinent or enticing information about their products or services. Facebook makes it very easy to post pictures and video to your Wall, and you can even track and analyze the activity on your page. Facebook will send you an e-mail every week detailing how many Wall posts, photos, reviews, and other forms of content were added to or viewed on your business page.

The Orchard at Altapass, an apple orchard on the Blue Ridge Parkway, uses its Facebook page to allow customers to supply helpful reviews (Figure 3). The farm also puts Facebook’s photo album features to good use and often includes a photo with its posts, which can help increase customer attention and awareness.

Facebook by the Numbers

- 800+ million active users (“active users” defined as users who have visited Facebook within the past 30 days)
- More than 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- Average user has 130 friends
- Average user is connected to 80 community pages, groups, and events
- 350+ million active users access Facebook via their mobile devices

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics> (visited October 14, 2011)

Figure 3. Facebook business page for the Orchard at Altapass. Shown are (a) the orchard’s main page, (b) photo albums, and (c) customer reviews.

Blogs

“Blog” is short for “web log,” a website that provides frequently updated content, usually in the form of text (often supplemented by photos, videos, and links to other content on the Internet). Blogs are typically created by individuals or organizations for the purpose of providing information about themselves. There are a number of blogging services called “platforms” that make it easy for you to start your own blog. A blog platform will host your blog site, usually for free, which makes platform-hosted blogs an easy, affordable alternative to a traditional website. Among the most popular blogging platforms are Blogger (www.blogger.com) and WordPress (www.wordpress.com). Blogs hosted by a platform usually have the platform’s domain name as part of the blog’s address, but many blog platforms give users the option to purchase their own domain name, allowing them to have an individualized web address for their blog (Figure 4).

Most blogs allow readers to comment on blog posts, which is why they’re so useful for marketing purposes. Platform-hosted blogs also allow you to track your blog’s “analytics,” which are the usage statistics on visitors to your blog: their e-mail address, how they found your site, and what content they’re viewing. You can use these analytics to track the success of your marketing efforts.



The screenshot shows the homepage of Cherry Grove Farm's WordPress blog. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to Home, Farmstead Cheese, Classes, Press, Apprenticeships, Local Shops, Our Farm, Calendar, and Contact. Below the navigation is a large image of two blocks of cheese on a wooden board. To the left of the image is a circular logo for "Cherry Grove Farm Lawrenceville, N.J." featuring a cow. On the right side of the image, there is a "Newsletter" sign-up form with fields for "Enter Email" and "JOIN". Below the newsletter form, there are sections for "New Winter Hours" (11-5 PM Mon-Thur-Sun) and "Visit Our Farm". A map shows the location at 3200 Lawrenceville Road, Rt. 206 N., Lawrenceville, New Jersey, 08648. There is also a "Get Directions" button. On the far left, there is a "Local & Grass-Fed + a recipe" section with a paragraph of text and a "Continue Reading..." link. In the center, there is a "A Classic Soup Made Local" section with a similar layout. At the bottom, there are links for "OLDER POSTS" and "Our Official Online Cheese Shop". The footer includes the date "09. Dec. 2011" and social media links for Facebook and YouTube.

Figure 4. Cherry Grove Farm (<http://www.cherrygrovefarm.com>) uses WordPress as their blogging platform. Many blog platforms let the user customize the look of their blog, turning the blog into a free or inexpensive website.



The screenshot shows the homepage of Goat Lady Dairy's blog. The title "Dinners at Goat Lady Dairy" is displayed in a large, stylized font. Below the title is a subtitle "Farm-to-Fork You've never tasted food like this." followed by a photograph of a group of people gathered around a farm garden. A descriptive text block follows: "This is why you have taste buds. Fresh, local, naturally delicious foods. Such colors and textures, amazing aromas, and delectable flavors—suddenly your senses become fully awake. When you dine with us at Goat Lady Dairy, you'll actually ‘experience’ your food. As you arrive, enjoy appetizers while relaxing on our porch. Then, you'll get a behind-the-scenes look at a working farm on our signature farm tour. Finally, you'll move leisurely into a ‘guided’ multi-course dinner, which includes a tasting of our nationally famous cheeses. This is genuine farm-to-fork slow-food eating. And once you get a taste of it, you'll have a whole new appreciation of where your food comes from." To the right, there is a sidebar with a "FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2011" section showing a photo of a dinner table, a "June Dinner Menu" section, a "On the Porch" section with a photo of a dish, a "Cheese & Wine" section with a photo of cheese, and a "PAGES" section with links to Home, Spring 2011 Dates, and Our Staff.

Figure 5. Goat Lady Dairy's blog (<http://dinnersatgld.blogspot.com>).

Blogs are excellent for agritourism businesses that spend significant time on education. For example, if you sell bedding plants at a farm stand and receive lots of questions on plant maintenance, you can easily post information on your blog to answer those questions, and you can give your online customers a link to the post. Blogs are also an easy way to keep information current and accurate. Information on prices, events, or promotions can easily be updated on a blog. Goat Lady Dairy in Climax uses its blog to post updates to its dinner menu (Figure 5).

WordPress by the Numbers

- 20,623,149 websites hosted by WordPress.com
- 301+ million people view more than 2.5 billion WordPress pages each month
- Users produce approximately 500,000 new posts and 400,000 new comments on an average day
- WordPress-hosted blogs are written in more than 120 languages; English accounts for the majority, at 66%

Source: <http://en.wordpress.com/stats>
(visited June 9, 2011)

Microblogging

Microblogging is similar to blogging but more concise. Whereas a typical blog post could contain a restaurant's entire dinner menu or a short essay about family farming, a microblog post might consist of no more than the date and time of an upcoming event, a link to an interesting page elsewhere on the Internet, or a single photograph. The most popular microblogging sites are Tumblr (www.tumblr.com) and Twitter (www.twitter.com).

Twitter's distinctive feature is that all posts, which Twitter calls "tweets," are limited to 140 characters in length. Twitter members can "follow" each other, so that when you post a tweet, your followers see it included in a stream of tweets from everyone they follow. Anyone on the Internet can go to your Twitter page to view your tweets (unless you opt to make your tweets private).

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for Sleepy Goat Farm (@SleepyGoatFarm). The profile picture is a circular painting of a goat and a person. The bio text is: "SleepyGoatFarmCheese @SleepyGoatFarm Pelham, North Carolina A Licensed Farmstead Cheese Maker, SleepyGoat Cheese produces many unique cheeses, fresh & aged, pasteurized & raw. We're also a fun agritourist destination! http://sleepygoatcheese.com". Below the bio, there is a "Follow" button and a note: "(i) Text follow SleepyGoatFarm to 40404 in the United States". The timeline shows three tweets:

- SleepyGoatFarm SleepyGoatFarmCheese Greens for the Summer Heat - Pasta with Tomatoes, Spinach, and of course Goat Cheese!! NYTimes.com <http://ht.ly/6xkN> 17 Sep
- SleepyGoatFarm SleepyGoatFarmCheese Goats for Sale! Need a friendly dairy goat to make life complete? We have pure Oberhasli, Obie-Kiko mixes, and... fb.me/14fGofeHj 12 Sep
- ThCheeseGoddess Aura [@SleepyGoatFarm](#) What's Cooking: Goat cheese with prosciutto wrapped asparagus <http://bit.ly/lII2kk> 14 May

Figure 6. Twitter page for Sleepy Goat Farm (@SleepyGoatFarm).

Every Twitter account has both a regular name and a unique "handle" that includes the @ symbol. For example, if users were interested in local foods, they might choose to follow the Twitter accounts named Shop Locally (@shoplocally), Raleigh Downtown Farmers Market (@RaleighEatLocal), or Farmers Markets (@farmersmarkets) to see what these users are tweeting about.

Microblogging is all about the conversation among like-minded microbloggers, not just publishing or broadcasting your own information. That means following other users, responding to their tweets (you do that by including their handle in your reply), and "retweeting" other users' content when it's relevant to your own interests or business. Being generous by retweeting is a great way to build a positive online reputation and add followers.

Microblogging sites also make content easily searchable so users can discover pertinent conversations in real time. Twitter users can include "hashtags"—which essentially

are search terms preceded by the # symbol—in their tweets to increase their findability on Twitter and the Internet. For example, an agritourism business could use the hashtags #agritourism, #ag, #farm, or #buylocal in its tweets. As a business owner and agritourism expert, you can add value to the agritourism conversations on Twitter and other microblogs by participating in them.

Agritourism businesses can use microblogs to broadcast information very quickly, even faster than updating a blog or a website. Another effective use of microblogs is to provide links to content on your other sites, such as your Facebook business page, your blog, your website, or a local news story of interest. Sleepy Goat Farm (@SleepyGoatFarm) in Pelham uses Twitter to highlight news about their farm and products and to provide interesting content from other sources (Figure 6). Perfect Christmas Tree Farm (@PerfectXmasTree) posts upcoming events on their Twitter page (Figure 7).

To learn more about how businesses can use Twitter, visit the Twitter for Business site (<http://business.twitter.com>).

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for Perfect Christmas Tree Farm (@PerfectXmasTree). The profile picture is a circular image of a tree and a person. The bio text is: "PerfectXmasTree PerfectChristmasTree Perfect Christmas Tree Farm - just a short drive from New York & Philly - is the perfect place to find your Perfect Christmas Tree! http://perfectchristmastree.com". Below the bio, there is a "Follow" button. The timeline shows two tweets:

- PerfectXmasTree PerfectChristmasTree Recycle Xmas trees @ Perfect Christmas Tree Farm on Jan 7. Bring the dog. perfectchristmastree.com 8:18 AM Jan 1st
- PerfectXmasTree PerfectChristmasTree NJ Monthly was here last week to do a photo shoot for next Dec. issue. perfectchristmastree.com 8:26 PM Dec 19th, 2011

Figure 7. Twitter page for Perfect Christmas Tree Farm (@PerfectXmasTree).

Twitter by the Numbers

- 106+ million accounts
- Users increase by 300,000 per day
- 55 million tweets per day, or 640 tweets per second
- 600 million queries to the Twitter search engine per day
- 55% of users are female, 45% are 18–34 years old, 69% are Caucasian, and 49% have no college education

Source: <http://www.onlinemarketing-trends.com/2011/03/twitter-statistics-on-its-5th.html> (visited June 9, 2011)

Photo and Video Sharing Sites

While many social networking sites allow users to share photos and videos along with other kinds of content, a number of sites are dedicated exclusively to sharing either photos, such as Flickr (www.flickr.com), or videos, such as YouTube (www.youtube.com). Most of these sites offer basic free accounts as well as paid accounts with a higher level of service. Depending on a user's privacy settings, photos and videos published on these sites can be viewed, commented on, shared with others, and rated by the public or specific users. These sharing sites give users a way to network around topics and content of interest. Most sharing sites will also provide usage statistics similar to those provided by blogging platforms, allowing you to learn more about the people viewing your content.

For example, Flickr allows users to upload photos (and, more recently, short videos) that can be organized into albums. Users can also search for photos, join groups based on photography interests, and post comments to discussion boards. Similarly, YouTube lets a user upload videos to a customizable channel and then share them



Figure 8. YouTube channel for Ganyard Hill Farm (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ganyardhillfarm>).

with specific audience members or the entire Internet. Visitors to YouTube can find videos by doing a generic YouTube search or by subscribing to channels of interest. Sharing photos and videos is an excellent way for agritourism businesses to show current and potential customers the types of farm products and services they offer and to let people know what they can expect when they visit the farm. Ganyard Hill Farm in Durham uses its YouTube channel to share videos of customers enjoying seasonally themed activities, such as a cornfield maze in the fall (Figure 8). Patterson Farm in Mount Ulla does much the same with photos on its Flickr page (Figure 9). Sharing sites also make it very easy for businesses to link photos and videos to their own website or other social media sites, such as Facebook.

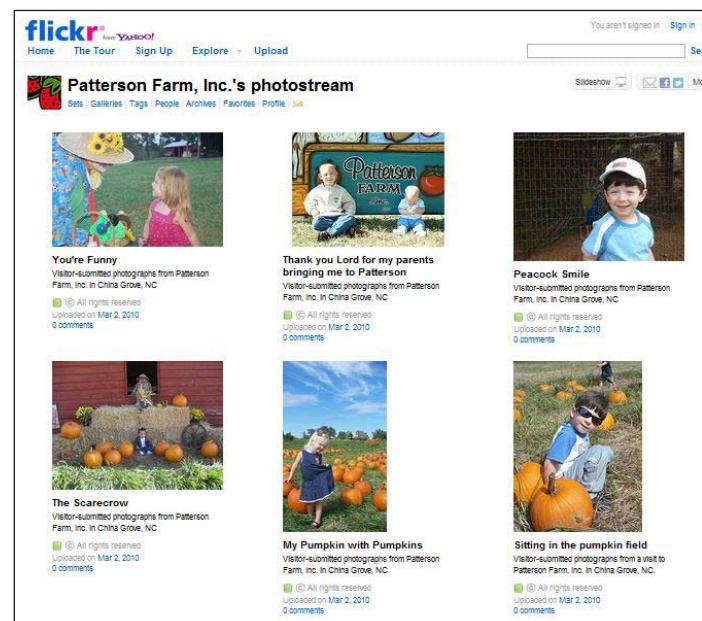


Figure 9. Flickr page for Patterson Farm (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/48013069@N05>).

YouTube by the Numbers

- 35 hours of video uploaded every minute
- 13+ million hours of video uploaded in 2010
- 5+ million people have found and subscribed to at least one friend or channel
- 4+ million people are connected and auto-sharing to at least one social network
- More than 50% of videos have been rated or include comments from the community
- YouTube mobile gets 100+ million views a day

Source: http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics
(visited June 9, 2011)

Other Social Media Marketing Trends

Deal-of-the-day websites send members e-mails containing coupons for discounts on products and services in their area. These coupons often involve some sort of purchase; for example, you might spend \$30 to buy a coupon entitling you to a 50% discount on skydiving lessons. Many of these websites also offer travel-related coupons for overnight and weekend trips to nearby attractions. Popular deal-of-the-day websites include Groupon (derived from the words “group coupon”; www.groupon.com) and Living Social (www.livingsocial.com). In addition, your local or regional magazine or newspaper may offer deal-of-the-day coupons. For example, *WNC Magazine* is launching a service called Asheville Deal of the Day (<http://www.wncmagazine.com/dealoftheday>). See Figures 10 and 11 for examples of agritourism Groupon offers.

The screenshot shows a Groupon deal for "Stingy Jack's Pumpkin Patch – Boyd". The deal is for a Fall-Festival Adventure for One or Four, starting at \$7. It is marked as "No Longer Available". The deal includes a photo of various pumpkins and gourds. The deal has been bought over 460 times and is still on. The deal ends at 11:59PM EDT on 09/26/2011. The deal is categorized under "Good for Kids" and "Fresh Air". The deal is located in Boyd, NC.

Figure 10. Groupon offer for Stingy Jack's Pumpkin Patch.

Deal-of-the-day coupon sites often require a certain number of users to sign up or buy the coupon in order for the deal to become available to all. Also, users only have a certain amount of time to purchase the deal before the offer expires and a new deal is offered. Once deals are purchased, users can print their vouchers or bring them to the business on their mobile device. Each coupon has an expiration date and can be given as a gift. Deal-of-the-day sites often facilitate user interaction by giving users the ability to comment and share feedback on the site. Groupon says that in January 2011 they had 500+ million subscribers and had sold 22 million Groupons in North America. (See examples of Groupon offers in Figures 10 and 11.)

Geosocial networking is a social networking service that uses geographic or GPS capabilities to enable users to submit location data or find information based on geographic location. Popular geosocial applications include Foursquare (www.foursquare.com), Facebook (with its “Check In” feature), Gowalla (www.gowalla.com), and SCVNGR (www.scvngr.com). This type of service allows users to check in with the site at various locations and businesses, share their check-in location with friends, and post comments and photos at the different locations. The user is typically awarded with points or badges for each check-in. Many businesses seek to attract users by offering deals or specials based on a certain number of check-in points earned. Additionally, popular review-based sites such as Yelp (www.yelp.com), TripAdvisor (www.tripadvisor.com), and Citysearch (www.citysearch.com) allow users to post descriptions, reviews, and recommendations on such topics as restaurants, shopping, nightlife, and entertainment for a designated city.

Google+ (www.plus.google.com), pronounced “Google plus,” is a social networking service launched in June 2011 by Google, purveyors of the most popular Internet search engine in the United States (www.google.com). Google+ seeks to integrate a variety of social-networking services into one application, including contact groups (circles), group video chat (hangouts), instant messaging (messenger), uploading and sharing of photos and videos (instant upload), sharing topics of interest (sparks), sharing websites of interest (+1), updates from contact groups or circles (stream), and games. Google introduced Google+ for businesses on November 7, 2011. To create a Google+ page for your business, go to plus.google.com/pages/create.

The screenshot shows a Groupon deal for "Connors Farm – Danvers". The deal is for a Corn-Maze Adventure for Four or Eight, starting at \$19. It is marked as "No Longer Available". The deal includes a photo of a large corn maze. The deal has been bought over 1000 times and is still on. The deal ends at 11:59PM EDT on 09/27/2011. The deal is categorized under "Party Planner", "Good for Kids", and "Fresh Air". The deal is located in Danvers, MA.

Figure 11. Groupon offer for Connors Farm.

Tips for Social Media Marketing

Now that you know your Facebook from your Flickr, what do you do about it? Here are some tips to help you make the most of your social media marketing efforts.

Link everything. Be sure to link all of your social media networking sites to your website and vice versa. You want to make sure visitors to one of your sites can easily find and connect to any of your other sites. Figure 12 illustrates how to integrate social-media applications on a website. The clickable icons allow visitors to a business's website to easily access the business's pages on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube, and to send the business an e-mail via Gmail, Google's free e-mail service. For instructions on how to add social media icons to a WordPress blog, visit <http://marketinggeeksinc.com/how-to-add-snazzy-social-media-icons-to-your-site>.

Be active and interactive. Social networking requires you to take an active part in an interactive conversation in the following ways:

- Update your various sites often (at least once a week).
- Listen to what your social media users and customers are saying. Don't just push information to them.
- Be sure to answer questions, respond to comments, and thank users for their participation.
- Use social media as a public relations tool for your business. Understand that posts, comments, and responses are forms of communication that offer another way to influence the perceptions of people who are interested in your business. Thus, when visitors make positive comments, respond and thank them. When visitors have questions, respond with an answer, even if it's to say that you are looking into their inquiry and will be in touch soon. If visitors make a negative comment, take the opportunity to apologize and recover. Service recovery is one of the best ways to keep a dissatisfied customer and potentially gain new customers. Be sure to respond to customer posts and comments in a timely manner (within two or three days).
- Be creative with your updates and posts, and provide information that is of interest to your visitors, such as pictures of your farm, recipes using food grown on your farm, information about your agritourism business, fun facts, links to stories about your farm, links to other stories of local interest, and quotes from recent visitors.
- Make some of your posts more interactive by requesting information from your visitors. For example, you could ask them to send you photos or videos from their recent visits, their fondest memories of visiting the farm, or favorite recipes using your products.
- Don't be afraid to have fun! Use your web presence to run contests (e.g., best photos, best stories) or scavenger hunts.



Figure 12. Clickable social media icons for a blog or website.

Visit your sites at least once a day. Take a few minutes out of each day to visit your sites and see if anyone has submitted a post, photo, or comment. Daily visits allow you to make a timely response.

Do your research first. Social media is not for every business. Before jumping into social media, do some research to see which social networking sites other local businesses are using and how they are using those sites for marketing.

- Ask other businesses about their experiences, likes, dislikes, successes, failures, and recommendations for using social media.
- Use Google to find answers to your questions, identify helpful resources for using and maintaining your social media sites, and discover creative ideas.
- Social media technologies and offerings are always changing, so be sure to keep up with ongoing changes and trends.

Develop a plan. Like any other kind of marketing, your social media marketing needs to be implemented according to a plan and a timeline if you want it to be successful.

- Plan ahead by thinking about upcoming events or seasons and how social media can be used to promote these events.
- Focus on the 4 Ps:
 - Product (or service): What are you offering to your target market?
 - Price: How much will you charge?
 - Placement: What distribution channels will you use to reach your market?
 - Promotion: How will you raise awareness of your product within target markets?
- Create a timeline to identify who is responsible for maintaining each of your social media sites, how often this maintenance is needed, and what type of maintenance to do (posting updates, responding to comments, etc.).
- Integrate your social media marketing with your larger plans for the rest of your marketing and your business overall.

For a more thorough discussion of marketing strategy, read "Marketing 101 For Your Agritourism Business," available at <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=E337>.

Additional Resources

North Carolina Tourism Extension

www.ncsu.edu/tourismextension

The Tourism Extension website makes available a recorded webinar about social media marketing that also provides step-by-step directions for creating a Facebook page for an agritourism business (<http://www.ncsu.edu/tourismextension/programs/webinars.php>).

Discover Your Social Web: An Ohio Farm Bureau Guide to Social Media

<http://ofbf.org/uploads/social-media-guide.pdf>

Your Guide to Social Media Survival

(Tennessee Department of Agriculture)

<http://www.tennessee.gov/agriculture/marketing/Agritourism%20pdfs/YourGuidetoSocialMediaSurvival.pdf>

The Ultimate Glossary: 101 Social Media Marketing Terms Explained

<http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/6126/The-Ultimate-Glossary-101-Social-Media-Marketing-Terms-Explained>

How to create a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/?page=721>

<http://mashable.com/2011/05/22/how-to-facebook-page>

HOW TO: Build Your Personal Brand on Twitter

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/20/twitter-personal-brand/>

7 Tips for Dealing with Upset Facebook Fans

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/7-tips-for-dealing-with-upset-facebook-fans/>

Abram, C., & Pearlman, L. (2011). *Facebook for Dummies* (3rd ed.). Wiley Publishing, Hoboken, NJ.

Dunay, P., & Krueger, R. (2011). *Facebook Marketing for Dummies* (2nd ed.). Wiley Publishing, Hoboken, NJ.

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Published by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

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