How Social Media Algorithms Work
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Introduction

In 2017, a new style of post arrived on LinkedIn. Structured in strings of single line paragraphs that looked and read a lot like poetry, and pioneered by a certain type of male business guy, the Internet quickly called it broetry.

Josh Fechter, one of broetry’s originators, generated 25 million views in four months with his broems. And then, broetry fell back to earth. It wasn’t as if it no longer worked. Rather, it became one among many social media content presentation styles.

Why did the LinkedIn algorithm no longer favour broetry? The details aren’t as important as the insight broetry represents: on social media trends rise and fall in the time it takes to get your cell phone out of your pocket, and content creators who merely mimic the fashion of the moment end up wasting precious resources in the process.
Successful social media content creators, on the other hand, establish a clear, repeatable process that can be effectively managed. From this foundation they give their community members the opportunity to speak to each other. The specific activities and content styles are much less important than the fact that you are right there, in the middle of the ever-evolving conversation.

So far so good. Who wouldn’t want to be right in the middle of it all?

*Reality, however, is increasingly challenging. Millions of conversations unfold on social media every second. Some are wonderful, and some are not. Some involve your brand or organisation. Others don’t, but might, and not necessarily in a positive way.*

To get it all right, content creators have no choice but to figure out how each social media algorithm goes about its business. At the same time, it’s crucial to have a broad view of the social media ecosystem as a whole. Informed by these two perspectives it is possible to leverage a social media management tool that allows for strategic thinking, appropriate daily content creation and distribution as well as regular analytical insights - across all social media platforms, simultaneously.

This book offers some guidance on how to approach this process.
The Importance of Reactive Communication and a Central Management System

Communications campaigns of any type require a strong feedback loop between strategy (what you do) and tactics (how you choose to do it). Only once you have implemented a strategic concept tactically can you see how your thinking plays out in reality. Hard experience allows vision and strategy to be meaningfully revised, and thereafter your tactics can evolve accordingly and the cycle begins again.

Based on this thinking, a plausible social media content approach might look something like this:

VISION
Increase sales in British youth market.

TACTICS
Focus on London’s urban culture influencers by helping them tell unique creative narratives with Instagram stories.

STRATEGY
Boost brand presence in the UK fine arts scene through a social media campaign.

But… there’s a complication. Whether you’re a teenager, a pop star or a brand you have to be able to react to the many external forces coming at you while you’re pushing your own communication activities forward.
Working with social media algorithms has to begin with the understanding that the same algorithmic forces that drive positive visibility can deliver negative reputation shifts. Maybe global social politics changes overnight – as has just happened with the #metoo movement – and your supposedly edgy fashion advert becomes a target of gender activists. Or maybe your brand becomes wrapped up in an event (think, for example, of the impact a food poisoning outbreak can have on a food brand) that has nothing to do with its campaign, but that nonetheless impacts product, reputation, or both.

Regardless, understanding and working with social media algorithms requires you to be ready to act in two sharply different operating contexts: proactive and reactive. Crucially, you also need to be able to manage the inter-relationship between the two.
A central system is essential

Not only do you have to be able to work in proactive and reactive modes, but you also need to work across all the platforms at the same time. At the level of the individual it is possible to hop between platforms, always making sure you wear the appropriate hat. But for companies who have teams of social media coordinators this is ill advised. In this context, a central social media management system that offers a single dashboard lens of operations and analytics is essential.
Before We Begin…

A Few Important Concepts

Organic reach
A brand posts a light hearted video involving a cat and its product, planet earth falls in love and shares it millions of times. By definition the brand has achieved organic reach, because its product has been seen across the world without it paying for this to happen.

In the early days of social media there was a lot of organic reach on offer, but as more and more advertisers arrived the range fell dramatically, and it keeps on falling. Still, organic remains a content creator’s conceptual holy grail. Get everything exactly right, and compelling organic returns remain possible.

Clickbait
Clickbait (whether political, commercial or arbitrary) used to be that strange piece of content we laughed at and clicked on, only to end up nowhere in particular. But despite its seemingly random origins, clickbait has become become a crucial strategic idea in social media. There is much to talk about with respect to this change, but practically speaking the upshot has been singular. Today, content that seeks to lure users away from social media platforms is viewed by the algorithms as inherently suspect, and is often demoted.

This phenomenon matters a great deal to commercially minded content creators, many of whom have perceived themselves to be in the business of drawing attention away from social media platforms. As we will see, that perception will have to change.
Native content, influencers and communities

Native content refers to words, videos and pictures hosted on the social media platform itself. To social media algorithms, native content creation is a hallmark of authentic community activity.

The quest to reduce levels of social media clickbait by rewarding native content creation has significantly boosted the already powerful status of social media influencers: people with extremely engaged, relevant and organic communities, who set social media trends and shape conversations. Simply put, influencers are getting more influential because social media algorithms actively recognise their community power.

Benchmarking

In our personal lives we understand that social media is as much about watching others as it is about telling our own stories. That said, it’s surprising how often commercial social media campaigns ignore the power of social media to follow competitor activity.

Social media analytics allow you to hone-in on competitor activity, in relation to your own work. This process is called benchmarking, and if doesn’t feature in your strategic thinking it really should.

AB testing

Social media companies are masters at creating different types of content and content delivery methods and testing them to see which performs better. Social media is the perfect medium for this thanks to its advanced audience segmentation ability.

We should all follow this example. No matter how good a creative team is they will never develop content that always hits the right spot with a specific audience, or set of audiences. Content mastery requires routine AB testing. In this book, when we talk in general about creating content, AB testing is assumed to be part of that process.

The content an algorithm shows you can be personalised

Once you understand how an algorithm works you can personalise the content it shows you very effectively. You do this by only clicking on content that genuinely interests you, and engaging authentically in personally or professionally meaningful conversations. If you set the tone, the algorithm will follow.
Factors Common to Most Social Media Algorithms

Authenticity is the central algorithmic focus point

In 2017, following the 2016 American elections and the UK Brexit vote, a fault line in the relationship between global politics, business and social media emerged. This has profoundly influenced the evolution of all the major social media algorithms.

Indeed, across most social media platforms there is now a single, vital strategic idea at play: authenticity.

In the simplest possible terms, social media algorithms are currently being developed to explicitly favour and support authentic community interactions, in an effort to weed out the fake news and fake engagement coming from bots.

Paid for content isn’t threatened by current changes to social media algorithms

It’s important to note when an advertiser pays for exposure they will still get exactly what they paid for, and that changes to the way algorithms filter content do not impact the social media advertising model.

Crucially, however, other forms of generally self promotional content which used to drive strong organic reach (such as posts that ask users directly to share, click and like) now lose out to authentic, native content.

In summary, paid advertising hasn’t changed, but the ecosystem surrounding it has.
**The Mechanics of the Change**

Let’s presume that you, an ordinary Facebook user, are exposed to content from three different sources. The first is for a new, feisty political group. The second is for a quick service restaurant in your town. The other is a page for your golf buddies.

The political page posts a link to a story from a website you don’t recognise. Lots of people are quick to comment on this and furious debate begins. At the same time, the restaurant adds a picture advertising a new breakfast special, while your golf buddy page posts details for a new tournament - to which twelve of your friends add nervous comments about their impending performance.

**So what?**

The political page is clearly being punished for being inauthentic, but the restaurant is being punished in a similar way. Its inauthenticity may be commercially minded rather than politically motivated, but the consequences are similar since both examples seek personal gain. The restaurant needs authentic likes, comments and shares. Only if it finds a way to behave like a true community on Facebook will its content status in the eyes of the algorithm improve.

Content has been king for some time, but today *authentic content* occupies the social media throne.
Four other common algorithm focus points

Underneath authenticity sit four other ideas that are common to most social media algorithms:

- **Frequent daily activity is rewarded by the algorithm.** Part timers are penalised.

- **Native content creation is rewarded and an 80% native content to 20% external content split is ideal.** As soon as externally linked content levels push past 20%, the algorithm is likely to punish you.

- **Posts are initially only served to small percentage of users within a network, and the algorithm watches their reactions carefully.** Vigorous engagement is rewarded, but if users don’t engage the content gets a low score and easily disappears from view.

- **Content from users with detailed, credible profiles is rewarded.** This isn’t only because the algorithm seeks to encourage engaged, active communities, it’s also because fake accounts are frequently characterised by poor attention to profile detail.
Facebook

In 2018 Facebook summarised its strategic focus with a simple phrase: “meaningful interactions will be prioritized”.

What is a “meaningful” interaction?

- Commenting or liking a person’s photo or status update
- Average time spent on content
- Completeness of user’s profile page
- Sharing links over Messenger
- Engagement with a brand post shared by a friend
- Multiple replies to people’s comments on a video
- How informative the post is
- Engagement

The Basics

For each piece of content that could potentially appear on your timeline, Facebook considers a set of signals, which centre on:

- When the content was posted
- The device used to post it (phone, desktop etc.)
- The nature of the entity posting the content, including the strength of their connection to you
On this basis, the algorithm creates a relevance score for each item, and delivers the highest ranking content to you first. This decision is framed by two important concepts:

**YOUR PAST:**
The content you have engaged with historically (ranging from content you’ve posted yourself to content from others you have liked, commented on, shared and so forth) has a massive bearing on the content you are currently offered by the algorithm.

**YOUR FUTURE** (according to Facebook)
Facebook uses its detailed understanding of all your previous activity to predict, very accurately, the kind of content you are likely to enjoy.

### Other Important Points

1. Content that stimulates conversations within personal networks is prioritized.
2. Links shared over messenger are also prioritized by the algorithm, as this activity is a clear marker of strong engagement.
3. Long comments rank better than short comments, because length indicates strong engagement.
4. Clickbait is punished, as are all obvious forms of self-promotion, especially those explicitly asking users to like, share or comment.
5. Live video is rewarded, because it reliably delivers great user engagement.
6. When a user likes a page they are effectively asking the algorithm to treat the content provider as ‘See first’. Updates from this provider won’t be subjected to the same rules as general content, because the user has actively asked to see the content.

### The Facebook Algorithm and You

**Build communities and please the algorithm** If authentic community conversations are the strategic priority, you need think beyond simply posting content that brings quick laughs and likes, and dig deeply into the ethos of the community. What do community members really care about? Which ideas are most likely to inspire them to communicate their thoughts, and interact with their peers? Develop content with the ability to spark and then sustain conversations around these pillars and the algorithm will be your friend.
Create content that can be updated If you focus on content themes and subjects that change naturally over time you automatically have the right ingredients for good engagement. Long running events where details evolve are excellent - these can be news focused, community focused and much else besides.

Use your external content allotment carefully The Facebook algorithm will treat your external links with respect if you keep to the 20% limit. But how do you stick to the limit? Instead of posting external links on instinct and praying, it can help to develop a scoring system that guides your team’s external link decision making.

Paid content as a booster Running perpetual paid content campaigns on Facebook is likely to be as expensive as it is ineffective. Instead, develop a broad content strategy and use paid placements to spike engagement in strategically important places and times.

Post quality, not quantity When you post quality content people are quick to engage, and when people engage with your content they will start to see it more often. What defines quality? Start a conversation with your community and find out.

Sharing remains a big driving force Yes, there have been many changes to the Facebook algorithm lately, but don’t forget the basics. Sharing is still a big factor in how the algorithm assesses you and your content. Which means... post quality!

Live video links real world and online communities Live video is a powerful driver of engagement, but it also provides a fantastic link between a community’s real world and online experiences, which can be a dynamic force in any communications campaign. If you can fit it into your planning, you should.

Facebook Case Study
Always #likeagirl

The Always #likeagirl campaign delivered authentic, engaged community activity in 2014, long before the Facebook algorithm began explicitly prioritising meaningful interactions. The core advert video for the campaign is hosted on Youtube, but it was the basic conversational idea that worked so well on Facebook.

With #likeagirl, Always took up a position as a facilitator of a global conversation about gender stereotypes. The public did the rest, and the #likeagirl conversation spilled out into thousands of different Facebook communities. Facebook loved the campaign, and gave it it’s top award in 2015.

Read about it here.
Twitter is an “in the moment” platform. The timing of posts is central to content visibility, as is the user’s ability to take advantage of the full 280 character count.

Twitter wants to bring people with common interests together around events happening in the immediate moment. To achieve this, its algorithm pays a lot of attention to the detail and credibility of a user’s profile. It assesses the members of the user’s Twitter network with similar intent.

The easier it is for the algorithm to verify that members of your network are credible individuals with real world lives that relate to the content they share on the platform, the higher it will rank your content.

The Basics

According to Twitter (You can read Twitter’s 2017 guide to how its algorithm works here) their algorithm initially considers three key content factors:

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TWEET’S AUTHOR
The general strength of your connection, and the type of connection (what type of content you have in common, etc.)

THE TWEET ITSELF
How recently it was posted, whether it contains images and/or video, and how much engagement it is getting

YOU
What kind of user you are (how often you are on Twitter, the type of content you prefer, etc.)
Once Twitter has decided on the content’s relevancy, it must choose from three possible presentation categories:

- **Top Ranked** The tweets with the best relevance scores, presented from most recent to oldest
- **In case you missed it** Content Twitter thinks is especially relevant to you (if there is a lot of relevant general content around, Twitter may not choose to show you these)
- **Reverse chronological order** All the rest, with the latest tweets from people you follow first

### Other Important Points

1. **Timing is crucial on Twitter** - you can’t expect something posted yesterday to make it onto today’s feed, unless you achieved massive engagement with a post. Twitter seeks content relevant to the moment, the hour or, at most, the day.
2. The algorithm wants you to build a network that fits your area of expertise and interest. It also wants you to post content that aligns with these.
3. The more you engage with people, the higher on your feed their content will be. And vice versa.
4. As soon as you engage with a user, the algorithm will present more tweets from them in your timeline.
5. The algorithm monitors how much time you spend reading someone’s profile and tweets, and prioritises content from these people on your feed accordingly - even when you don’t engage directly with the user or their content.
6. The longer a tweet is, the higher the engagement rate is likely to be. So, the more of your 280 character allotment you use, the better your content scores with the algorithm.
7. Twitter allows you to turn the algorithm off and go back to classic reverse chronological order. Just go to settings.

### The Twitter Algorithm and You

**Engage: Twitter isn’t (or shouldn’t be) a megaphone** When you retweet and @reply and others do the same to you, the algorithm sees you as an active part of a community, which is exactly the behaviour it is designed to reward. Conversely, merely blasting out unguided tweets one after the other, well... it’s not what Twitter wants.

**Respond when people mention you** The algorithm pays attention to all replies and mentions. There is always value, therefore, in responding when mentioned. Many branded Twitter accounts miss out on the opportunity to build their status in the eyes of the algorithm by offering a final thank you or goodbye to people engaging with them.
Twitter timing is about more than tweeting in the moment. Yes, Twitter is a short-term medium, but that’s only half the timing puzzle. The other half is figuring out when your people are using the platform, and tweeting at that time. Putting effort into this brings rewards.

Understand what types of content your followers respond to. Twitter provides a good set of essential analytics for your account (just go to https://analytics.twitter.com) and there are many other useful analytical tools, such as Meltwater Engage, which provide a wealth of crucial information about your followers and their habits. Arm yourself with this knowledge, and then create content to appeal directly to your audience’s preferences.

Re-share top tweets. If a particular piece of content has attracted engagement, re-share it! Twitter is so fast paced even committed, regular users easily miss out on the good stuff. Make sure they have several opportunities.

Leverage emotion (carefully). Strong emotion drives engagement, which is why some pundits say you should leverage so-called ‘power words’. This can be risky, though, because strong negative emotion can also damage reputation. The risk averse may want to consider focusing on humour and inspiration only.

Think multimedia. Twitter began life as a medium characterised by 140 characters of text. But that’s the past. Live video and multimedia drive engagement levels up, and are rewarded. Tweet, in other words, with an eye on the future.

Twitter Case Study:
Nike #Breaking2

Nike recently smashed Twitter engagement records with its #Breaking2 campaign, which centred on a coordinated effort to beat the 2 hour marathon barrier. Notably, #Breaking2 was a huge success even though the 2 hour marathon barrier wasn’t eventually broken.

Nike engaged publicly for months with elite athletes to prepare for the event, which was watched live by a record breaking 13.1 million Twitter viewers, making it Twitter’s biggest ever brand-driven live streamed event.

At the core of the campaign’s success was it’s real time nature. Twitter is a now medium, and this was a big, carefully composed moment that resonated across the world.

Read Wired Magazine’s coverage of the event here.
Understanding the LinkedIn algorithm means working with the viral power of first and second degree connections. Content creators should also be aware that the LinkedIn algorithm is unique in its use of human participation in its ranking system.

The LinkedIn Algorithm is a Little Bit Different

The LinkedIn algorithm follows a slightly different structure from the other key players. It deals with content in four stages, one of which makes unique use of human beings.

1. Content creation
   As you post new content, an automated system decides whether what you posted is likely to be straight spam, low quality content or ‘clear’ content.

2. User flagging
   The content is served up to small segment of your network for engagement assessment. If users flag the content as spam or hide it from their feeds the algorithm is likely to classify it, initially, as low quality or spam.

3. Universal Content Filtering (Virality check)
   The algorithm examines the quality of the poster and their surrounding network, including the relevance of the content item to the network in terms of subject matter.
At this stage the algorithm will either demote the content, give it the thumbs up or flag it as suspect. If this happens, the content doesn’t disappear entirely, but is pushed down a user’s home page feed. If it eventually receives some positive engagement, the algorithm may revise its ranking and nudge it up a bit.

4. Human editors weigh in
At this stage, human editors assess the content. If they like it, it could gain prominence over an unusually long period, or even be bumped up to a LinkedIn channel.

Don’t forget the influencers...
LinkedIn has explicitly stated that its feeds will include content from LinkedIn influencers. These are high profile business figures, often CEOs, writing content that is viewed and approved directly by LinkedIn’s editors, and which automatically skips over the four phase content filter.

How the LinkedIn algorithm processes content
Source: LinkedIn
The LinkedIn Algorithm and You

Keep connections and content industry relevant
For your content to stand a chance of being visible to 2nd and 3rd degree networks, it has to appeal to a particular sector or industry. This means:

- If it comes from an external source, that source must be credible
- The more positive value content has for someone’s career trajectory, the more the algorithm likes it
- Inspirational content also scores well – especially when relevant to your industry

So, if you want your content to score well, it’s wise to focus on accepting and sending invitations to people operating in roughly the same field as you.

Humanity, emotion and humour are rewarded
Personally illuminating posts that discuss work challenges honestly, or that tell inspiring stories, often do well on LinkedIn. This could be due to the influence of human editors seeking to support a particular type of engagement.

The status box matters
Status updates receive attention from the LinkedIn algorithm. This may change, but for now the status box shouldn’t be ignored.

Innovative and varied content styles impress the LinkedIn algorithm (and the LinkedIn humans)
Make sure to mix up content topics, as well as the presentation style. Don’t fall into the trap of creating only broetry posts based on the fact that your initial broems did well. Instead, look to develop a varied mix of strong presentation styles and relevant subject matter.

Try to become an influencer
LinkedIn influencers is an invite only club, but there are clear steps you can take to create content that might crack the nod. The guidance is provided by the LinkedIn team, so even if you never get the invite you know you’ll be generating content the algorithm likes.
Participate as a company
Company pages rank in the bottom quarter of all LinkedIn content when it comes to engagement - but one shouldn’t blame the page for this. In theory, the LinkedIn algorithm doesn’t actively discriminate against company pages, but lot of businesses post generic or bland, self promotional content to their pages without much thought, and are punished by the algorithm accordingly. Used correctly, a company page is a powerful tool able to bring the different individuals involved with the business together to share experiences and content.

The trick is to think of employees as your audience, along with business partners and potential and existing clients. If you post compelling content for these audiences you will encourage the many stakeholders surrounding your business to drive engagement by participating in discussions, suggesting people and business to follow and giving and receiving recommendations. In short, if your company gets involved, the people within it will too. And so will the algorithm.

Remember the followers
While connections are the primary force on LinkedIn, followers matter too. LinkedIn influencers are most likely to have large groups of organic and relevant followers, but keep in mind that its industry relevance that makes the size of a group of followers powerful, or not. With this in mind, one of the easiest ways to attract followers is start following relevant people, and pages, yourself.

LinkedIn Case Study:
ETF Securities
Building management is hardly thrilling stuff, but ETF Securities achieved success on LinkedIn by creating a campaign featuring a mix of educational content and practical demonstrations.

Crucially, the ETF campaign made heavy use of rich media, which helped the content stand out on the LinkedIn feed. On this foundation, ETF used Sponsored Content to push general awareness levels. The result? 95% year on year growth in LinkedIn followers.

Read about the ETF campaign on LinkedIn's business marketing solutions blog
Instagram posts used to have a very short life span, but today users see posts from the people they engage with the most at the top of their feeds – even if that person posted a full day prior. Engagement, in other words, rules.

The Basics

According to Instagram, three primary factors control what you see on your feed:

- **Interest**: Your past behaviour gives Instagram a good idea of the content you might want to see
- **Recency**: The more recent the post, the more likely you are to see it – presuming all other factors are equal
- **Relationship**: Content from people you’ve interacted with ranks higher than content from those you haven’t interacted with

Within this context, there are three other important forces:

- **Frequency**: the algorithm will try and make sure you see the best of the content posted in your absence
- **Following**: The more people you follow the more diverse content you will see. If you follow strictly within a specific genre, the content presented to you by the algorithm will be shaped accordingly
- **Usage**: The longer you use the app, the further the algorithm will cast its content net on your behalf. If you’re on and off quickly, you’re more likely to get a greatest hits presentation
Other Important Points

1. The longer a user spends looking at your post, the better score it receives from the algorithm.
2. Instagram doesn’t hide posts. Scroll for long enough and you’ll see everything posted by everyone you follow.
3. Posts sent between users via Direct Message score particularly well.
4. Video and imagery aren’t explicitly favoured, but the algorithm pays attention to what people do. So if you never watch videos you will see fewer of them. And vice versa.
5. The algorithm doesn’t punish users for posting a lot of content at one time, but it might scatter some other content in-between post avalanches to ease the pain.
6. Users can now follow hashtags as well as people. If you categorise your content well with hashtags you allow it to be found by new users, you make sure it performs well in searches and you allow it to feature in thematic hashtag follows.
7. The more credible and active your community is, the better your content scores. Participants in established and active sectors such as journalism, fashion or photography will therefore outperform equally active users from fringe sectors such as scrabble, or stamp collecting.
8. Instagram launched IGTV in June 2018, catering to long-form videos of up to an hour long. On Instagram itself video posts are limited to 1 minute, and stories to 15 seconds. While there is a theoretical clash between the fast paced nature of the original Instagram and the extended format of IGTV, as smart phone technology evolves long-form video could still have a big impact on the overall Instagram experience.
9. If you edit a post, the Instagram algorithm will decrease its visibility. The reason behind this isn’t crystal clear, but the rule is. If you need to make changes, create a new post.

The Instagram Algorithm and You

Engage with the right people, and content
It can be a good strategy to engage mostly with content that is relevant to your focus area, and to avoid following others too wildly, or widely. In summary, a relatively strict industry/sector focus can be beneficial to building a profile that resonates in the right way with the algorithm, and that delivers returns that matter to you, and your business.

Use the tools provided to create native content
Instagram Stories allows for the creation of narratives that only last 24 hours, Instagram Live is the place to host live video and Instagram Carousels allows you to create image albums. The algorithm doesn’t score this type of content better than any other, but these tools have big audiences that are differentiated from the standard Instagram experience and shouldn’t be ignored. The Instagram Stories audience, for example, is double the size of Snapchat’s.
Timing still matters
Engagement may rule, but timing still matters. If you post at the time your audience is actively using the platform, your content stands a better chance of being seen.

Put time into hashtagging – and track successes and failures
With hashtags, as with most content, a trial and error approach is required. There is plenty of software out there, including Meltwater Engage, that will help you assess which hashtags are working, and which aren’t.

Hashtags and captioning: less can be more
Instagram has always encouraged the use of hashtags to drive better content reach. However, new research from social media analytics firm, Quintly, suggests that less might be more. Discussing the Quintly research in an article on Social Media Today, tech writer Andrew Hutchinson makes three key observations:

- most Instagram profiles use between 1-3 hashtags per post
- profiles with less than 1000 followers saw the best engagement levels when they used the 1-3 hashtags approach...
- but profiles with more than 1000 followers achieved the best engagement when they didn’t use any hashtags at all

A similar rule of thumb applies to Instagram caption length. While close to a third of users choose to use more than 300 characters in their captions, Quintly’s research shows that short captions (1-50 characters) actually deliver the best engagement.

**Instagram Case Study:**
Adidas originals

Adidas has long been an iconic footwear brand, and its recent Original is Never Finished Instagram campaign put the power of influencer marketing to full effect. The campaign saw major urban culture celebrities such as Snoop Dog enlisted by the brand to create original content.

Apart from the powerful impact of influencers and their creative contribution, ordinary users keep adding to the momentum. As of August 2018 there were over 43 000 posts on Instagram featuring the #addidasoriginals hashtag.

[Read more about the Cannes Award winning campaign here](#)
Conclusion

If content creation can be compartmentalised conceptually, it can managed effectively. Even if you’re running a one-man business, managing social media content becomes much easier when you are clear about your roles and intended outcomes.

With this in mind, working well with social media algorithms requires you to:

1. Get your strategic thinking right
2. Work proactively and reactively at the same time
3. Give each algorithm what it wants (even when it wants something new)
4. Use social media management tools to improve efficiency and provide analytics

Get these four things right, and you’ll be in a great position to add a little more magic to our increasingly odd, yet always compelling, social media world.

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**STRATEGIC FOCUS: AUTHENTIC, ENGAGED COMMUNITIES**

Keeping in mind:
- Initial serving to small user set matters
- 80/20 content split ideal
- Regular activity always rewarded
- Detailed profiles define credibility

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**Governing Social Media Management Tool**

Tactical execution on individual social media platforms

**Proactive Campaigns**

- Create content that can be updated
- Live video
- Personal networks win
- Use paid content as booster

**Reactive ability**

- Tweet on time and in the right moment
- Credible networks a priority
- Engage, don’t shout

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**LinkedIn**

- Career development focus
- Varied content styles rewarded
- Factor in human editors

**Instagram**

- Engagement now trumps chronology
- Algorithm focuses on coherent genres
- Users can follow hashtags
- Don’t forget Instagram tools