



MENTOR•HER

MARKETING YOURSELF

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO BUILD
YOUR IMAGE

PUBLISHED ON
WEEK FOUR

FOR
FREELANCING

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Week Four of the Freelancing Mentor Her Programme. Last week, we looked at making a plan to get to your next level. Our last point of this manual was about Connecting and finding the right decision makers to help you get ahead. Next week, we'll be delving in deeper about how to position yourself as the best woman for the job by perfecting your freelancer pitch. This week, we'll be looking at ways you can make those important connections online by taking advantage of social media.

In 2020, the world of 'normal' business interactions changed drastically with the restrictions on business travel, the lack of people in offices and events around the globe. In the age of shut doors, offices becoming Zoom calls and meetings becoming chat rooms, your ability to make that connection has also taken a hit. Whether you've already started your freelancer career or desire to begin it, we want to give you some ways that you can still be making those important connections even if you're at home. By bringing your passionate, ambitious spirit online and representing yourself in a way that benefits you to make connections over the interwebs, you might just be able to continue to progress in this new, unfounded world.

FINDING A PLATFORM

The first thing to do as a freelancer who wants to grow her image online is to identify the social media platform(s) that will be useful to you. We have divided your options in two parts.

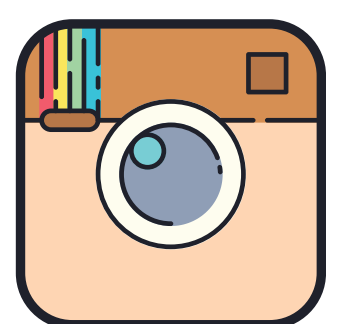
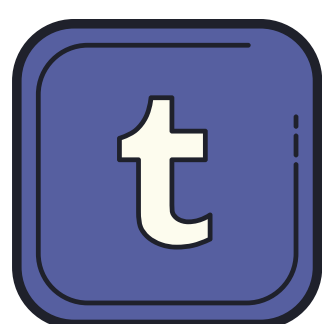
The first, if you need to begin or grow your freelancing career by **making a connection**. The second, if you want to begin or grow your freelancing career by **amassing a following** online.

If you have figured out that the next step of your career relies on making a connections with someone in a company, or getting in touch with a decision maker, you need to be put on the platforms that you can reach these people on. Mainly, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Generally, if you want to connect with a decision maker, you are looking for that next dream job that might put you ahead of the crowd. You need to present yourself in a professional way, in the same way an employee would do if they desired to get a job, while also leaning on your unique selling point that we went over in Week Two.

If you want to amass a following online, by becoming the go-to influencer in a certain topic or niche, you need to choose 1-2 social media platforms where you believe your potential customers, or followers will be. We have gone into detail on four social media platforms in this manual: LinkedIn and Twitter (if you want to reach decision makers to forward your freelancing career) and Facebook and Instagram if you want to amass a healthy following online.

Consider what platforms you want to focus on and talk to your Mentor this week about ways she might feel you could improve your current social media accounts, or start from scratch.





CONNECTING WITH DECISION MAKERS

YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

In order to get the most out of your LinkedIn profile, here's some pointers on how to make sure you're presenting your best self on the platform.



YOUR PHOTO

It might seem a bit obvious, but your LinkedIn profile photo is one of the most important factors in giving people the best impression of you. That means: no selfies, no group photos with everyone but you cropped out, and most importantly, professionally dressed. Your headline photo on LinkedIn should be something non-assuming and neutral so that it doesn't take away from your profile.

YOUR HEADLINE

Your LinkedIn headline is one of the most visible sections of your LinkedIn profile. Not only does it stretch across the top of your profile page, it also introduces you on newsfeed posts among others. Whether it's being viewed by your business contacts or a recruiter, your LinkedIn headline is key to making a positive impression and explaining exactly what you bring to the table. Your headline should look something like this:

Cerise [redacted] 2nd
Digital Strategy | Performance Marketing | Paid Media |
Content Optimization & SEO | Acquisition & eCommerce |
Mar-Tech

YOUR SUMMARY

The summary or About section of your LinkedIn profile is an important piece to show people what you care about and what your story is. Consider how you can show off your freelancing USP here. Is there a way to make this section a story, that can show your experience/uniqueness/ability to get the job done? If you want to do some research in the meantime see Hubspot's article [here](#).

YOUR EXPERIENCE

Your LinkedIn Experience should include everything that you would on a resume. You should include the full title of your work and link back to the present or past company that you work(ed) for. You should write 2-3 sentences of what the job entails including some facts and figures using action words like managed, led, grow, reduced, saved etc.

Your Education, License & Certificate and Volunteer Experience should continue in the same way

YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

SKILLS & ENDORSEMENTS

Including specific skills on your LinkedIn profile is a great way to showcase your abilities. They're a simple and effective way of building your professional brand and engaging your network. Once you've added a skill to your profile, they can be validated by 1st connections to reinforce their weighting. These are called skill endorsements, which are different than recommendations. When a connection endorses your skills, it contributes to the strength of your profile, and increases the likelihood that you'll be discovered for opportunities related to the skills you possess. Who do you know that could endorse your skills from your current or previous jobs?

RECOMMENDATIONS

If you have someone in a professional sphere who's recommendation will add to your profile on the network, you should politely request one. Recommendations should come from people in the professional sphere, whether that's a colleague or a manager past or present. If you're just out of university, consider lecturers and tutors or people who you connected with during your time at college. It's a very simple thing to request from someone, especially in a time of Covid when people are on their computers a lot more than usual.

THE NEXT THING TO DO IS... CONNECT!

Growing your circle on LinkedIn is the most important thing you can do towards building a network of people around you. As you might know by now, LinkedIn will only allow you to connect with some people and not everybody. As you grow your circle, your potential connections grows larger so that when you identify the person you need to connect to within a company to bag your next freelancer gig, you'll be able to connect with them immediately.

First, connect with anybody you might know from your day to day. Whether that's your uncle who runs his own business or your neighbour who works in Google. Then, move on to your peers- add everyone you remember from college- or scour your Facebook friends for people who you might have met from your gap year travelling Asia.

If you're in a company, you should connect with everyone and anybody that you have met and begin to grow your network outside of your department, to executives and board members to anybody that will have you!



POSTING ON LINKEDIN

Posting on LinkedIn is similar to Facebook, as it offers a wide range of content including text posts, video, images, polls and articles.

Sharing relevant blog posts and articles is a great opportunity to share things with your professional network. Any time that you share on LinkedIn, you should be adding your own comments and encouraging people who might see your post to engage with you by asking questions.

If you want to show your resourcefulness and/or commitment to your potential decision makers through LinkedIn, you should consider creating your own content, whether that's articles about your opinions or your industry at large, video tutorials or images demonstrating your freelancer abilities. Any post that you have that is your own content, you should brainstorm as to whether you have any associates you can tag in the post, and use relevant hashtags that new connections might be able to find you by like #irishwriter, #womaninbusiness etc.

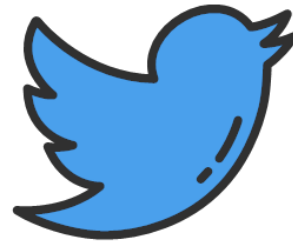
ENGAGEMENT

Commenting and liking other people's posts on LinkedIn is an excellent way to show people that you care about their journey and you're committed to helping them at any stage you can. Always connect and support the people that you actually know before attempting to connect with people who might be right outside your circle. Reacting to posts is definitely the safest way to go, but if your connections are getting hundreds of likes on their posts, commenting might be the best way to stand out. When you're commenting on other people's post, try to add value to the conversation and encourage a comment back instead of offering just praise.

ALWAYS CONSIDER THE "WHY"

Whether you're sharing an update, quoting an article, telling a story or posting a video or photo, always consider the "why". What are you trying to achieve by sharing this with your professional network? It could be that you want to position yourself on a certain issue or demonstrate that you are determined to complete the task at hand, maybe you want to show your leadership, resilience or generosity. Always consider whether making a post or a comment on a particular post will have the effect that you desire it to have and that this effect will be beneficial in advancing your career overall.





CONNECTING WITH DECISION MAKERS

YOUR TWITTER PROFILE

Twitter has grown in recent years to become a platform of intense conversation, discussion and debate. Unlike the image-based sharing on Instagram or the personable aspects of Facebook- Twitter lets you say anything you want and anyone can see it. This open nature is Twitter's most unique quality. While you can have conversations with your friends or connections on Facebook and LinkedIn, not everyone can join those conversations. Since posts on Twitter are generally public (unless you choose to set your account to private), the reach of the conversation is much greater. Because users can see what others are talking about, the ability to jump into a conversation that is relevant and interesting is not only acceptable, it's expected. That feature is still distinctive to Twitter. If you want to get in front of someone, you need to do something different from everyone else. And more importantly, if you want them to remember you, you need to make a meaningful impression.



YOUR PHOTO & NAME

Like LinkedIn, your profile photo on Twitter is an important factor in giving people the best impression of you: it should be clear and professional, if you have a perfect head-shot for LinkedIn there's no harm using it on Twitter, too! On this app, you have the ability to choose your own username. Although the teenager inside you already wants to have something creative and interesting, listen to the mature woman and go with some derivative of your full name so that you can be found easily on the app. It's also best not to include anything in your username that can change in the future: like the year, your age, or your current job title.

YOUR HEADLINE

Similarly to LinkedIn, the 160 characters at the top of your profile can let people have a lot of insight into who you are. To turn your Twitter into a professional version of you, it should include information similarly to LinkedIn, like what you do, how you stand out and what you're interested in.

BECOME THE NEW YOU

Considering that you probably had a Twitter before now and you need to either update it or make it your freelancer profile, there may be a bit of housekeeping that's needed. If last week you were tweeting memes, the little annoying things your boyfriend does or your irritation at people walking slow in the street and these things don't go well with your brand as a freelancer, it's time to hit delete. You want to be the cool, professional version of you, it's time to put the old Her away and become the new She.

Look at your Twitter objectively, look at your most recent "Tweets and Replies", "Likes", and "Media". What does this say about you? Does it show off your best qualities or would you be better off cleaning it up a bit to make it feel more professional?

POSTING ON TWITTER

To be active on Twitter, it's recommended that you post 5-10 tweets a day. Research shows that posting a lot of tweets won't lose you followers, so you can go far beyond the recommended 10.

To maximize your posts, Twitter recommends:

- 1 or 2 hashtags per tweet
- Use video and images as much as possible
- When you're posting images the recommended aspect ratio is 16:9.
- Take advantage of Twitter's insights and analytics to continuously test what works best for you
- Engage with your others for feedback through conversations and polls.
- Use interesting, funny, stylistic and interactive tweets.

WAYSTOPOST

The first thing to do when posting on Twitter is to ensure that people are viewing the person that you want to **be**. You made a professional Twitter account to show yourself off to the world so that's exactly what you need to do! Think about the qualities you would nurture in an interview to get your next gig, like diligence, ambition, honesty, integrity, or professionalism and how you can bring this into your day to day tweets. Leverage Twitter and display skills by commenting on tweets relevant to your industry. Look for major and local companies and follow their posts and chime in from time to time with your own ideas.

Unlike LinkedIn, Twitter is all about you and your day to day. You can keep it professional whilst also sharing tidbits and moments from your week. Utilizing opportunities like live-tweeting events relevant in your industry can help popularize you with your followers. Your interests will be important part of displaying yourself as a professional on Twitter. Don't retweet, like or engage with tweets that might be controversial, or inappropriate. You should be following the right people back and engaging with them, commenting on their tweets and sharing your opinions.

MAKING THAT CONNECTION

If you have identified a decision maker in your company or someone that you feel would be able to get you to that next step in your career. Whether it's on LinkedIn or Twitter- send a connection request, or press the follow button. It might be inappropriate (and awkward) for you to request a meeting with someone who you don't know, so the next best thing is to put your best self forward and engage with them. On either LinkedIn or Twitter this can include, liking their posts, engaging in discussion and conversation and always being there to support them at any moment. By helping them (in the little way that you can), you'll elevate yourself and when the time comes to have a discussion or request a meeting, at least then they'll know your name!



AMASSING A FOLLOWING

ON INSTAGRAM

If you are not as concerned with making connections on social media than you are building a following and letting the connections come to you, most freelancers first port of call is Instagram. Instagram is the visual social media platform that can give advantages to almost every freelancer. Instagram gives your customers the opportunity to become familiar with you on a day-to-day level, visually. It can help visualize your brand, your work, and your Unique Selling Point. It's important that you have interesting, real and clear content for Instagram. The accounts that perform the best have similar styles and recognizable branding across all their content from their logo to timeline to stories.

CHOOSE INSTAGRAM IF...

- You are interested in sharing your personal brand often. You can show off your day to day life and engage your possible customers in conversation and live videos.
- You have a lot of content (photos and videos) of yourself.
- You want to attract a following of people aged anywhere from 18-35 years old.

POSTING

It's recommended that you post 1.5 times a day on Instagram. To maximize your reach, every timeline post should include:

- A clear image with minimal text on the image, try to use as many photos of yourself that reflect your USP (i.e., if you want to demonstrate that you are happy and bubbly, your photos should reflect that).
- The inclusion of a location. Attract new customers by using the location where your customers are located, even if you're not physically there.
- Hashtags. You can use up to 30 hashtags per post. Although a lot of people will tell you that using all 30 is a bit of an overkill, if you want to reach new customers, it's often a great way to get your business noticed. To use hashtags, you should research what your competitors, industry and customers use.
- Tagging. Always ensure you tag the businesses, brands or collaborators that are involved in your business.

For posting on stories with Instagram, posting 3-4 story posts a day works well, especially if you can repost or tag other small businesses and influencers and engage with them through stories. You can also include gifs, polls, questionnaires and the Instagram live feature to promote your community.

ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with your followers on Instagram by liking, commenting and following accounts is one of the most important aspects if you want to grow your following on this app. Engaging with accounts that might be potential customers can drive a huge amount of traffic to your profile but it can be time-consuming. Bulk liking, commenting and following people is a strategy that is used by a lot influencers that want to grow with real followers quickly (as opposed to buying followers online). Authentic followers are going to bring you actual money and real interactions so it's important to have a real following. Many people will spend their mornings or afternoons researching hashtags, customer locations, or similar accounts and then flying down the list of accounts and liking, commenting and/or following every account on the list without paying much attention. Although it can feel a bit robotic, it does drive people to your account. Beware, if you do it too much, Instagram will block you for an hour or a day for unusual account activity.



AMASSING A FOLLOWING

ON FACEBOOK

Facebook, the online platform for connecting with friends, offers business solutions that no other social media provides. It is the only platform that allows you to integrate an online store, allows for customer reviews and the ability to post a variety of posts like text, video, photo carousels, testimonials and website links. Beside this, Facebook advertising solutions allow you to target your advertisements directly to your customer profile through location, age, gender, interests and behavior. Excluding young people under the age of 18, the platform hosts a large percentage of every population from college graduates to parents which is why it's a platform not to be ignored if you want to amass a following that is comprised of a variety of age groups. The decision to make Facebook a focus for your business, with daily/weekly posts, is something you should try and test, but the platform has benefits for some freelancers more than others.

FACEBOOK IS BEST IF...

- You are mostly leveraging family and friends to keep your freelancing business going.
- You want to attract older generations to amass your following
- You want to run ads to attract people in niche groups (targeted Facebook advertisements).
- You want to build a community of like-minded individuals (through Facebook Groups).

POSTING

For posting on Facebook, you'll find that some posts work exceptionally well, while other posts barely reach a tenth of your audience. Figuring out the Facebook algorithm is a task that you can dedicate your life to: it's constantly changing and impossible to keep up with. To have the algorithm favour your content, you should post once a day every day on Facebook if you believe that's the platform your customers use the most. You should also:

- Use square images (aspect ratio 1:1) on Facebook timeline feeds, with text taking up no more than 20% of the image. You can use Facebook's Text Overlay tool to test your images before posting.
- Post video content as much as possible as it performs better than images and text posts.
- Post positive, funny and inspirational content as much as possible as it works the best.

ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with customers on Facebook is primarily done through personal accounts on comment sections. If you want to build a community of customers, whether that's for online classes, clubs and discussion, the best thing you can do is create a Facebook group to encourage conversations among your followers. You should also always ensure that- if people comment on your page's posts- you respond to comments and questions which will boost the post to more people organically. Alongside this, always ensure you respond to messages to your page promptly to demonstrate that you're an active user of Facebook and ready to engage with people's questions.

AMASSING A FOLLOWING

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA



TIKTOK

TikTok is the platform for short-form mobile videos. The app is mainly intended for influencers, younger people and fun brands who are interested in keeping up with day-to-day trends. If you want to choose this platform to build your following, it's worth becoming familiar with the processes by which every day posters get millions of followers overnight.



YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video-hosting platform that's perfect for freelancers who are uploading a lot of tutorials or demonstrations of their services. Long form content is favoured by the YouTube algorithm with different faucets for each industry to discover depending on how often you want to get in front of the screen! You can easily integrate YouTube videos on most websites and use it as a platform to display your work.



WHATSAPP

Whatsapp is the messaging platform that is great if you want to encourage a community of people with ongoing discussion. You can do this by sending your customers a link to join a group chat and have a weekly schedule for different subjects to encourage conversation.



PINTEREST

Pinterest is a visual platform, excellent for reaching customers in international markets. If you want to have an international following -you can use Pinterest to drive traffic to your website by posting images that link back to blog links among other pages on your website.

Next Week

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