

5 KEYS TO SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

FOR DOOR SECURITY AND SAFETY PROFESSIONALS



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Introduction

The world of social media can be intimidating. How can you post about your business when you're busy running your business? But the fact is that social media can actually help you run your business, and you don't have to spend many resources to get started. During a time of industry challenges, social media can be a tool to attract new employees, stay up to date on trends, network with professionals, discover new customers, and more.

5 Keys to Social Media Success covers mindsets and strategies for using social media realistically and effectively in the door security and safety industry. Key points include defining your goals, setting a schedule, building your brand, adapting to your audience, and staying connected. Through industry research and examples, we will explore the benefits of using social media and how to develop a plan that works for your business.





The Rise of Social Media

Today, an estimated 5 billion people use social media worldwide – over half the planet’s population. How did it become so popular? At its core, social media allows us to communicate ideas quickly and efficiently with many people across long distances. Whether it’s to stay updated on the news, connect with friends and family members, see entertaining images and videos, or form communities around niche topics, there is something for everyone.

Social media has evolved alongside technology. Research at Maryville University found that when cell phones evolved into “smartphones” with more capabilities and high-speed wireless internet, social media shifted from a desktop experience to a mobile experience.

As social media has developed, so has the strategy of using it for business. People can pay to place ads on social media platforms in hopes of selling their product, but many companies also take an organic approach: creating and posting content.

Because it’s easy and free to sign up with an account, many businesses today have turned to this method of marketing. In turn, many people now expect to find businesses on social media.

Though social media networks have risen and dissolved over the years, several platforms still enjoy wide popularity today: **LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat.** Each platform has different features that attract different audiences. Since LinkedIn is a platform designed for career-minded professionals to network with other professionals, it typically attracts older, work-focused audiences. YouTube is designed for video content and attracts a younger audience.

According to a 2024 Pew Research Center survey, YouTube is also one of the most used platforms among adults in the United States, with roughly eight-in-ten U.S. adults (83%) reporting to ever using the video-based platform. Facebook is also dominant, following at 68%. Knowing your target audience and what platforms they populate is vital to developing your social media plan.



Social Media for Door Distributors

As door security and safety professionals, who are your target audiences? Social media offers the opportunity to **network with colleagues, learn from competitors, find hires, attract new leads, and engage with your customers.**

Connecting with Colleagues

By interacting with colleagues on social media, you can stay updated on industry trends, exchange important knowledge, and form meaningful connections. LinkedIn is a great platform for this.

On LinkedIn, people are encouraged to post their thoughts about career-related topics. You can find well-known industry professionals like Lori Greene constantly posting engaging content like her code requirement blog iDigHardware and podcasts she appears on. Her content is up-to-date and a great learning resource. By clicking “Follow” on her profile, you won’t miss a post.

Ashley Saldivar, Software for Hardware’s Client Support Manager, follows Lori Greene. “I also follow groups on LinkedIn such as the

Door Hardware Nerds group,” Ashley says, “where experts (Benji Bolick, Mia Merrel, and Katie Flower, AOC CFDAI) provide great educational podcasts, videos, or training series for free online. These free resources have been valuable to me in my industry.”

Software for Hardware posts their own blog “Doorway to Success” to provide insight on topics for door distributors and small businesses. Topics include networking tips, balancing education with business, the benefits of brand identity, and more. Since LinkedIn posts like these are free to read, you can learn helpful new ideas without spending a dime.

LinkedIn is all about building connections between professionals, so you should feel free to follow business pages and ask to connect with colleagues by clicking the blue Connect button on their profile. If the colleague accepts your connection invitation, you will start receiving notifications of each other’s posts. You can also see when they like a post. This makes it easy to share and spread industry knowledge.

“These free resources have been valuable to me in my industry.”

- Ashley Saldivar, SFH Client Support Manager

Attracting New Hires

As door distribution businesses can rely less on word-of-mouth connections to find skilled staff, social media provides an alternative. **Many people today search for jobs directly on the internet, including on social media sites like LinkedIn.** They can easily search for their job requirements and see a list of jobs to apply to – which could include your job opening.

Since younger generations of people grew up with greater access to technology, they are typically more tech-savvy and more likely to use social media in this way. This makes the internet a great way to reach the new generation of workers who could become your new staff. As waves of older workers retire, it is vital that we connect with new generations to pass down knowledge, and social media is one way to do that.

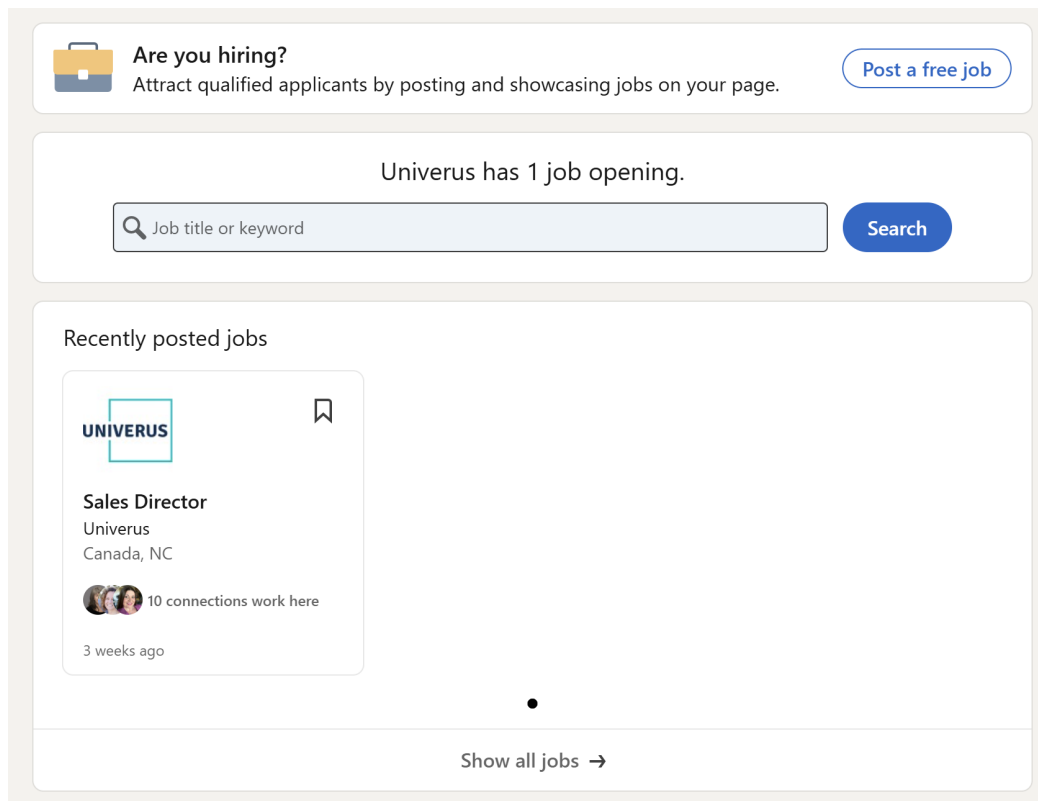
It's not just about reaching them through online job openings, either. By having a social media page, you can introduce candidates to what it's like to work at your business. Sharing posts like day-in-the-life office photos and employee

spotlights will convey your **company culture** to audiences. If they like what they see, they will be far more likely to submit their application.

Generating Customer Leads

A strong social media page is also a great tool to attract new leads. As potential customers are considering their various options for door distributors, they may look to your online presence. They might want to get an idea of what your business is all about before they commit to your services.

Forbes emphasizes this power of social media in their article "Why Every Business Needs A Powerful Social Media Presence In 2024", saying that "all our vendors innately recognized that the social media era has ushered in a 'show, don't just tell' world... today's consumers expect rich, multimedia experiences from businesses – ones that give insider looks into their services through visually engaging content."



The screenshot shows a LinkedIn job posting interface. At the top, there is a section titled "Are you hiring?" with a brief description and a "Post a free job" button. Below this, it states "Univerus has 1 job opening." and provides a search bar for "Job title or keyword" with a "Search" button. The main section is titled "Recently posted jobs" and features a job listing for "Sales Director" at "Univerus" in "Canada, NC". The listing includes the Univerus logo, a bookmark icon, a photo of three people, and the text "10 connections work here" and "3 weeks ago". At the bottom, there is a "Show all jobs" link with a right-pointing arrow.

“Today’s consumers expect rich, multimedia experiences from businesses — ones that give insider looks into their services through visually engaging content.”

- Ian Shepherd, Contributor at Forbes, Creator economy entrepreneur and host of the Business of Creators

The more you can show the value your business brings, the more people are likely to engage with it. For example, leads will appreciate photos of your finished projects. Sarah Harne, who has 12 years of marketing experience in the building industry, points out in an Illumine article that “as only some people know what goes on at a window or door distribution company or in the installation process... you can use social media to showcase your services and bring your company new business.”

The digital landscape allows for the unique feature of showing potential customers what your services are like before they decide to use them, so you’ll benefit from making a good impression.

Assessing Competitors

Along with leads, you can find competitors. If a competing business has a social media page and your business does not, you might be missing out on more leads. People weighing their options between companies may opt to pursue a competing business’ services if they see a professional social media page from them. By developing a page, you help put yourself on equal footing with your competitors.

You can also better distinguish yourself from competitors. What are you doing that your competitors aren’t? Make sure to convey the differences that make your business unique in your posts, and you’ll better define your services to leads.

On the other side, seeing if your competitors don’t use social media is also important knowledge. It’s another chance to stand out. You can position your business as tech-savvy and innovative over competitors who may not use social media technology.

Maintaining Client Relationships

Maintaining strong relationships with current customers is vital to ensure their satisfaction, and **social media offers a way to foster that connection.** By posting business updates, information, and milestones, they can stay informed on important changes and celebrate exciting successes with you. They can find other customers and make connections, forming an online community.

Like colleagues, clients are often found on LinkedIn. As professionals, they are likely to use this platform designed to share career

accomplishments and add connections at least occasionally. Since business is already on the mind, they are likely to engage with your business.

You can also encourage your customers to make the leap to LinkedIn. Consider sending an email to your current customers advertising your page, reminding them to follow it for important business updates and helpful content.

We know how door distributors can benefit from using social media, but the question remains: **how can you use it effectively?**





5 Keys to Social Media Success

Key #1: Define Your Goals

Your specific social media objectives are up to you. Do you want to make your page appealing to industry jobseekers so that they apply for open positions? Or foster a community for your customers to stay connected? If both, which audience is the priority?

Goals are your roadmap; without them, you're likely to get lost. Buildertrend, a supplier of construction project management software for home builders, remodelers and contractors, agrees. They say that that "all your content should have purpose and intent, acting as the beams and columns to support specific business goals." If you can create a post that connects back towards a written goal, you'll know that you're on-task and spending time wisely.

In an easily accessible location, make a goal list. For each bullet point, write down exactly what you want to accomplish, why it matters, and how you're going to accomplish it. Keep things specific and realistic. For example, a good starting goal might be: I want to attract more job candidates so that my business can grow, so I will create job postings and 2-3 posts per month highlighting my company culture. From here, you can plan the posts that will show off company culture.

Start small. You won't gain a hundred followers in a day, and you shouldn't aim to. Breaking big goals into small steps will help you focus your strategy and lay a strong foundation for your page to be built on.

This also goes for picking social media platforms. Don't try to post on every platform immediately because you might not dedicate enough time and effort to any of them. Look for where your target audiences are gathering most densely and start with that platform.

Often, a good platform to start with is LinkedIn. Since audiences are already there to post their business updates and see others' career paths, they will be more interested in following a business LinkedIn page like yours.

Buildertrend also describes the benefits of Instagram: "With the picture-based format, posts require less time and offer a place for you to highlight your craftsmanship and completed projects." If sharing your projects to attract new leads is a goal of yours, this platform might be a good idea.

Whichever platform you pick, make sure its features support your specific goals.

Key #2: Set a Schedule

Creating a content calendar will help you stay organized as you plan posts. Your calendar doesn't have to be fancy – just clear enough to convey what you'll be posting, on what day, and at what time. You can use a digital calendar or even a simple table in Microsoft Word. The advantage of digitally creating a plan is that you can easily share it with other members of the team so that everyone is aware of what post will go out on what day.

Buffer, a social media management platform, adds that planning a schedule “mitigates the risk of mistakes by allowing you to review content ahead of time”. Moreover, you can prepare your posts with plenty of time in advance and feel confident, not rushed, when you finally put them online.

When you post is a question to consider. Certain times of day may yield more engagement per

each platform, so you should experiment and record what times of day seem to give better results. Knowing your audience's general time zones helps, as you can post when they are likely awake and active online.

You should also decide how often you will post. This number will change depending on where you're posting, which audiences you're targeting, and how much free time your business has. Software for Hardware typically posts on LinkedIn once a week to consistently reach audiences without taking time away from other important tasks.

However frequently you post, consistency is key. It helps to get your followers accustomed to a specific frequency of posts so that your business stays fresh in their mind. They may even look forward to your posts, knowing that there should be a new one coming up soon.



Key #3: Build Your Brand

One very valuable part of social media is its ability to build brand recognition. When you post, you control how you present your business. What does the combination of your logo, colors, tagline, and copywriting say about you? Do you convey elegance and precision? Reliability and strength? Through these elements, you can quickly tell a story of who you are to visitors, and a good story will stick in their heads.

Decide the tone of your words. What are the values of your business, and how do you want to convey them? If you want to show your business' friendliness and approachability, let yourself speak more casually through the text. You can show your personality and a sense of humor while maintaining professionalism, which is a great way to connect with audiences.

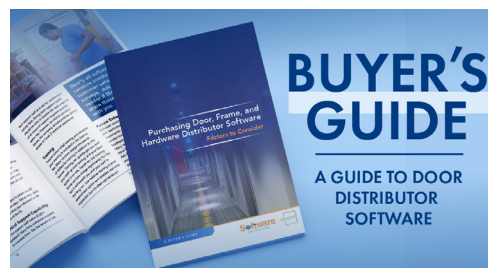
It also helps to follow social media etiquette and set direct guidelines for posting so that the entire business is on the same page. Buildertrend points out that your employees represent your brand, so creating clear, fair posting expectations for the company is a good idea.

Your post's imagery should also follow brand guidelines. Your posts don't need to be a work of art to be effective; more than anything, they should look readable and have a consistent style.

If you don't have experience with image editing, you can enlist the help of a graphic design or social media marketing professional to develop post templates for you. For example, you can have a template made to create a series of posts about staff members. When you need to create a post in the series, you'll already have a design in place – thus, you only need to swap in the employee's name, title, and photo.

You can also make use of free resources. Pexels and Unsplash offer free stock images to use commercially, so you can incorporate these into your posts for a more professional look.

For other posts, taking your own pictures is the best (and often easier) option. You can just take out your phone and snap a picture of a company event, project, or employee that you want to spotlight and post it with your text. Using your own photos offers an authentic look into your business that audiences will appreciate.



Software for Hardware's social media posts follow brand guidelines, using specific colors and fonts to ensure visual consistency.

Social Media Post Ideas

Photos of Company Event

Provide insight into company culture by sharing your company events and activities.

Staff Spotlights

Highlight the great work and personality of your employees by helping audiences get to know them better.

New and Retiring Employees

Welcome new employees to the team as well as give a warm send-off to retiring employees who have contributed to your business over the years.

Blog Posts

Write blog posts to display thought leadership and establish your credibility in the door, frame, and hardware industry.

Press Releases

Share the latest important news about your business to show activity.

Case Studies

Display how your business has brought value and satisfied customers.

Awards

Celebrate exciting achievements and establish your business' credibility.

Photos of Projects

Provide a first-hand experience of the great work you do.

Company History

Tell the story of your business and display your history in the industry.

Inspirations

Uplift people and share resources that have helped build your industry expertise.

Job Postings

Spread the word that you're hiring and attract more applicants.

Trade Show Announcements

Let audiences know you're available to meet at trade shows and showcase your booth design.

Key #4: Adapt to Audience

You can plan and post all you want, but what will really set you up for success is **adapting to your audiences**. Observe how your posts are received; which kinds of posts are getting more likes, reposts, comments than others? Who are the people liking, reposting, and commenting? Are they your target audiences?

Many social media platforms include an analytics section for you to easily see this data. LinkedIn includes visitor demographics, letting you see the job titles, company size, industry, location, and seniority of those who visit your business page. You can see if your intended audience (outlined in your goals) matches your actual audience. If it does not, you can try switching up what you post.

Social media is largely about experimentation and perseverance. **Don't be afraid to try new types of posts** if your current ones aren't receiving much attention. Even if you have a certain type of post that typically does well, it helps to vary your content so that audiences don't eventually get bored with that one type of post.

At the same time, you may just need to stay consistent and keep posting to start attracting your intended audience. The more followers you gain, the more people will like and share your posts, and the more eyes will be on them. It may take some time to get the momentum rolling, but know that in the meantime, you are **building up a rich library** of professional posts for target audiences to explore when they do eventually find your page.

Key #5: Stay Connected

As you post and grow your page, keep the “social” in social media. Building connections is a two-way street. As people comment on your posts, consider replying with a comment and having a short discussion about the topic. Not only will this increase engagement on your posts, but you might make a new connection. With so many professionals in one place, you can meet industry figures you might never have met in person.

Ashley Saldivar finds a lot of value in staying connected. “I use social media for business quite frequently,” she says. “Many different manufacturers and brands constantly post product updates, codes, and standard updates. It’s great to take a few minutes throughout the day to scroll through and see current updates, projects, or even open job positions in the industry.”

Social media spreads knowledge, and keeping industry knowledge alive is more important than ever. We’ve seen that as older generations retire from the door and hardware business, they take their experience with them. The new generation of employees will take longer to train if knowledge is kept to oneself. Social media offers a solution, letting professionals across the world connect, give insight, and share resources. The more colleagues that contribute to this exchange of knowledge, the more the door security and safety industry will grow and thrive.

“Social media has definitely helped me in my career,” Ashley continues. “As a PM and Detailer, I took advantage of following industry experts and cited their articles in my work quite frequently.” You never know what new resources and helpful ideas you’ll encounter until you look.





Conclusion

Though it can take time and effort to cultivate an active social media presence, it only takes small steps to get started and begin seeing big benefits. Implementing a social media plan solidifies your digital presence in an increasingly digital world, offering new ways to connect your business to the right audiences: colleagues, hires, leads, competitors, and customers.

You can effectively implement your social media plan by identifying goals at the start, setting an organized posting schedule, building a consistent brand through image and copy, adapting to your audience and analytics, and staying connected to ideas and resources. In doing so, door professionals can gain **new knowledge, find new business, and build a stronger sense of community** in the door security and safety industry.

**5 KEYS TO
SOCIAL MEDIA
SUCCESS**

- 1. Define Your Goals**
- 2. Set a Schedule**
- 3. Build Your Brand**
- 4. Adapt to Audience**
- 5. Stay Connected**





Founded in 1996 by DHI honoree John Petersen, door, frame and hardware distributors across the US, Canada and Caribbean use Software for Hardware® to power their businesses and better serve their customers. From take-off to accounting, over 1,000 door industry professionals use Software for Hardware® to get their job done faster and better. Software for Hardware is proud to be a Univerus company.



Univerus believes that harmonious value results from bringing together forward-thinking professionals and proven solutions. Representing a suite of software businesses strategically woven into the Univerus family, its centralized management approach has empowered top-notch teams to provide mission-critical solutions with the most robust and innovative products available in the marketplace.

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