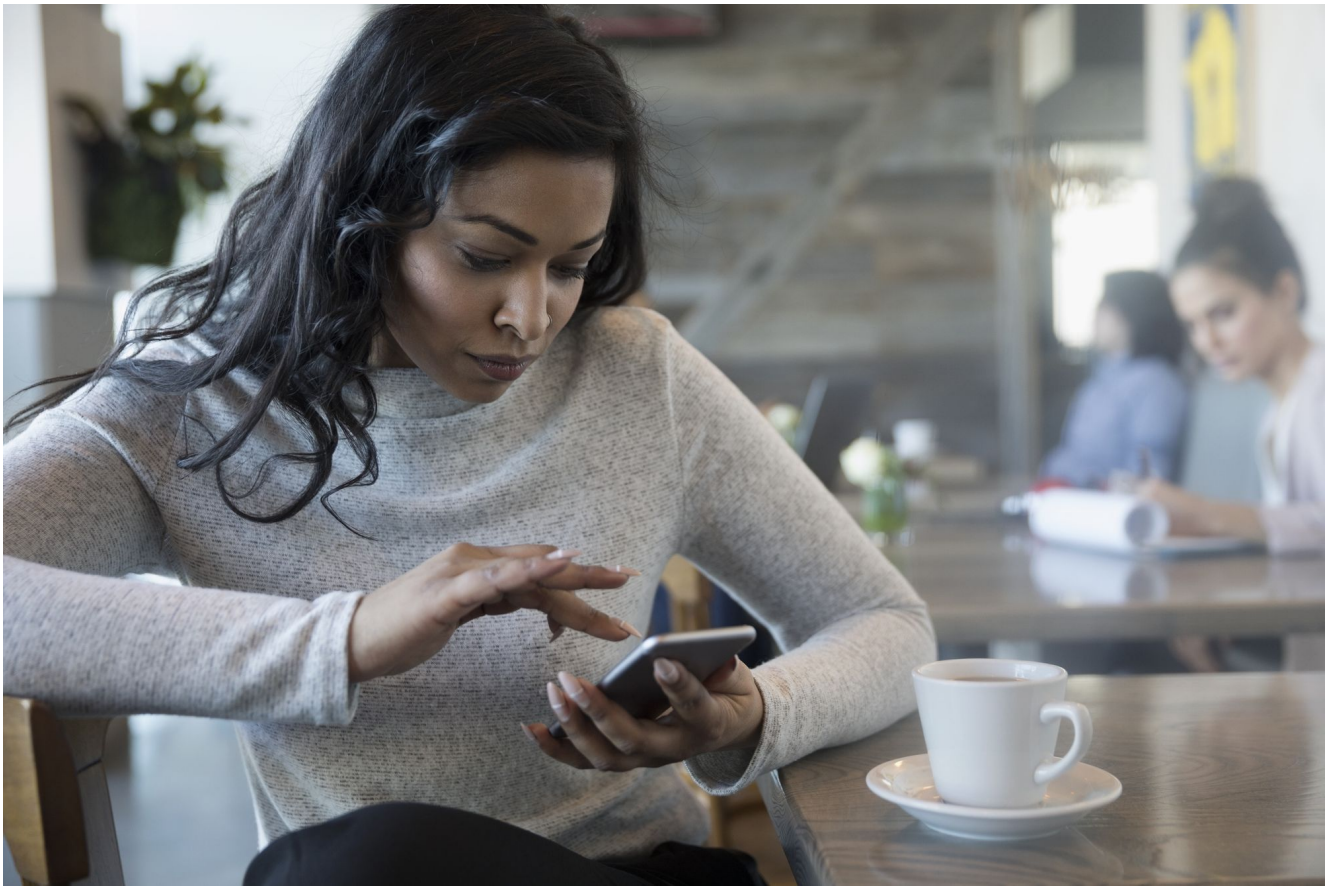
How Entrepreneurs Can Start Benefiting From Social Media Batching



Batching solves the problem of social media distractions without giving up social media

June 28, 2019 10 min read

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

Social media, no matter how you feel about it, has become embedded in our daily lives. That’s not always a bad thing. After all, having a presence on social media does have numerous benefits for entrepreneurs. Social media gets the word out about you and your business and helps establish you as a thought leader. It gives you a chance to connect with other influencers and lets you engage with your audience, providing real-time feedback on your products and services.

Social can assist you in monitoring leads, and it’s ideal for finding supportive entrepreneurial communities.

On the flip side, social media distractions can throw a monkey-wrench into your productivity. However, as you get started batching your social creations, you’ll become more effective and efficient with your efforts.

Related: 5 Smart Ways to Use Social Media to Grow Your Business in 2019

What is social media batching?

Social media batching is just a variation of the time management technique with the same name, batching. For those unfamiliar with this productivity hack, it’s where you simply arrange tasks in set groups. For example, instead of checking your email every time you receive a notification, you set aside specific times in your schedule to go through your inbox. Otherwise – hands off – turn off that “ding” and ignore the banners. Soon you won’t even see them except when you are on your scheduled timeframe.

The same concept applies to your social media output. Spend two hours Monday morning (or whatever time is the best for you), creating and curating social content for the week. This time may be spent brainstorming your content calendar with your team for the entire year. Or, your goals may require and include engaging with influencers or customers twice a day.

By grouping similar tasks together, you’ll avoid multitasking and frequent distractions – and you’ll likely find that batching makes you feel less stressed. Most importantly, the times that are set aside give you structure and boosts your productivity.

The benefits of social media batching.

Batching sounds good but even the most self-disciplined entrepreneur can benefit from following this practice more closely. The most apparent gain you'll have is in how much time it will save you. Let's say that you don't reach for your phone every time you receive a notification. First off, good for you. Secondly, you're probably not just on one social channel. You're likely still devoting a lot of time on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn. It's been found that, on average, people globally spend over two hours per day on social media – these facts will vary slightly depending on age and location.

Additionally, small business owners spend around six to 10 hours per week on social media. Moreover, they may also devote 20 hours or more on marketing their business – which includes platforms like the Web, social, and email. These stats may not sound like much, but, they definitely add up over time. If there is any way to speed up this process, then you need to latch onto it. Batching can help you accomplish your goals in the following ways.

Reducing start-up and slow-down time.

Whenever we jump into another task, our brains are essentially shifting gears. This brain-shift is because various activities use different parts of the brain. Instead of jumping from one activity to another – when you're batching – you're staying in the same zone in your brain as well.

Breaking up your social media campaign.

Thinking about what your social media calendar is going to look like can be overwhelming. First, you need to come up with ideas and then make those concepts into reality. After that,

you have to publish and monitor the content, making the process a lot to absorb. Breaking your objectives into blocks and zones by batching together the tasks that are alike will make this system more manageable.

For instance, you could schedule an afternoon with your team to generate ideas. You could then plan another day to develop those ideas and schedule them in advance. Then, every Friday afternoon, you could check the analytics to see how the content is performing. Your analytics will reveal to you where you need to spend more time.

Improving your focus.

Whenever you work on something for a while, you enter a "flow state." Another way to define this is that you "get in the zone," as you dive deeper into a task. In regards to social media, this means that if you blocked out an hour to brainstorm content, once you get started, you'll start cranking out ideas in a shorter amount of time.

On top of the benefits listed, batching also ensures that you won't forget to post an update – you are reminded because it's scheduled in your calendar. Early in my career, there were days when I was so swamped that my social accounts were completely neglected. Using the batching technique, I can practically "set and forget" my social posts – and I have a separate time of day scheduled to respond to comments.

Batching tends to make you feel more productive, positive and in control. This fact is also borne out according to research conducted at Duke University's Center for Advanced Hindsight. The study found that people feel anxious and feel like they're missing out on something important. However, instead of checking your smartphone every hour to see your notifications, they found three to be the magic number.

The researchers found that three batches of notifications are

perfect. They recommend that your first batching timeframe should be during your morning commute or right when you get to work. The second batch takes place at the end of lunch. And, the final batch, block or timeframe – you'll schedule – will be when you're heading home for the day.

Related: 40 Entrepreneurs Share Their Secrets to Staying Focused

Getting started with social media batching.

Hopefully, you're ready to get started with social media batching. While it's not a complicated process – you will need to experiment with what works best for you. Here's a couple of pointers to get the ball rolling.

Brainstorm and draft.

Whether you're flying solo or working with your team consider when are the best times to batch – and block out those times. Your team will probably be inclined to have a different time for a separate work-batching process. With the team, you'll want to develop as many ideas in one shot as you can. Think about what type of content your audience engages with the most. Ideally, the best ideas address a pain point and how you can help. Your audience likely enjoys the content that humanizes your brand – like behind the scenes footage.

If you're stuck, you can always scope your competitors and create similar, yet different content for a while. Obviously, you don't want to plagiarize or rip them off, but you can take a look at great channels. Use ideas that inspire and make you want to be a better person to generate your own unique perspectives.

After you've brainstormed, set aside the time to start

drafting the content, gather quality content from others to share – and pick a variety of information and thought. Not everyone will think or feel the way you think. I use Feedly sometimes and subscribe to a variety of blog posts that are relevant to my business. I check my feed every morning and schedule exciting or valuable content for the next week at this time.

Create a content calendar.

If you're producing or sharing any content, then a content calendar is a must. Knowing the direction you're headed prevents you from scrambling around every day trying to create or find material to publish. Before I added my social media activities to my calendar, I would waste precious time every day frantically searching for information to post.

Having a calendar, however, eliminates this frenzied search. Now I know what I'm going to publish and when – every day. Of course, there are exceptions like breaking news, but this action has been a real time-saver.

Determine the best way to batch.

Here's the thing with social media batching – there's no right or wrong action for its creation. You can take several different approaches, and you may like to mix it up here and there anyway. Here is an idea I spotted on Social Media & Coffee. The idea and design are straightforward and makes a lot of sense. I suggest you give a try as I have.

The first way to batch is by the social media platform. You dedicate a couple of hours on Monday morning to schedule your Facebook posts for the next week or month. Additionally, while you're focused on this specific platform, you could dive deeper into your analytics. Maybe you'll use this time to take care of some other housekeeping – like changing your cover photo or creating new events.

Another approach to your social media work would be to arrange it – or batch it – by topic. For example, if you just released a new product or service, then all of your social activity would be revolved around that topic. This focused approach is practical because you're getting that one idea that's on the top of your mind out of your head.

The third tactic would be by calendar days. In this case, you would sit down and schedule all of your social media updates day by day. The duration for your batching is up to you, but scheduling all of your social media work on Mondays helps you to be able to focus on other activities for the rest of the week.

Related: Top Calendar Apps to Increase Productivity

Schedule your content using an SMMS tool.

If you're dealing with multiple social channels that need your social media management – use a system like Hootsuite, Buffer, or Sprout Social. Instead of jumping across multiple platforms, you can batch schedule and monitor all of your accounts from one dashboard.

Block out specific times to work on social media.

Finally, reserve specific times in your calendar exclusively for social media, just as you would for any other important task. In my calendar, every Monday from nine a.m. to ten a.m. – I block an hour and schedule my posts for the week. I also block out 15-minutes every morning, midday, and late afternoon to check-in. Batching my check-ins regularly takes the pressure off of my mind and ensures that I address any questions or comments in a timely manner. If there is any breaking news in my industry – it allows me to discuss it with my audience.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/335894