

Social media has become an integral part of any good [marketing strategy](#). 🎯 However, we need to understand their advantages and disadvantages to use them better. What exactly are social networks for? And why should we use them? Find the **Definition of a Social Network** Here. ⚡

Definition of a Social Network

🔍 **Quick answer:** Social networks are websites that allow **internet users** to create personal or professional pages, to share and exchange information, photos, or videos with [a community](#) of friends and acquaintances. 😊 Moreover, it is not advisable for minors to register on social networks to protect their privacy.

The **definition of a social network**, it is a communication and exchange network that allows you not only to stay in touch with people you know, but also to make a **new social network**.



Social media sites or social networks are websites that allow you to interact with your network of friends, acquaintances, colleagues, strangers, etc. 😊

They offer a variety of options to [publish posts](#) and share photos, videos, surveys, etc. Communication on these platforms can be done on public or private pages, as well as groups or direct messages. ✉️

Membership and use of **these interfaces** are generally free of charge. 🆓 Simply sign in to the social networks of your choice and create an account. 🌟

In addition, social media can be used for personal or professional purposes, 🔍 depending on what you're looking to do with it.

Although the **most popular platforms** are mostly used by young people, they are gradually spreading to all generations, regardless of age or gender. 🌈 (Here are the 20 key figures and [statistics](#) to know about LinkedIn, for example).

Large social media outlets are primarily for the **big public**, like Facebook and Twitter or Instagram. However, there are other [professional social networks](#) such as LinkedIn and Viadeo that are **platforms** intended for business exchanges. 📁

Their success with professionals is due to the fact that they are **digital-marketing** and advertising media, with full-fledged solutions, such as [LinkedIn Ads](#). 👁️

Various commercial uses are common on these **professional networks**, such as promoting new products or [events](#), and providing **BtoB** services.

What Are the Main Types of Social Media? (Definition of a Social Network PDF)

The main types of social media are: 📄

- The social media for **sharing**: Used to share any type of content publicly or on your private network (**photo-sharing**, video-sharing, etc.).
- Social media [for networking](#): used to create and develop networks. For example, LinkedIn and Viadeo allow you to build **professional social networks**. It is therefore very useful for your **B2B** activities.
- Social media for **instant-messaging**: allows of discussions, immediate or not, between the members. The most known of them are probably Zoom and Discord. The forums are also supports for **discussion**.
- Social media publications: used to [publish original content](#), articles, reports, etc. There are basically a micro-blogging **media platform** like WordPress, Blogspot, etc.
- Collaborative social media: Social media such as Slack allows you to **collaborate from a distance** with your teams. They are notably used for project management.

List of Most Used Social Networks Around the World

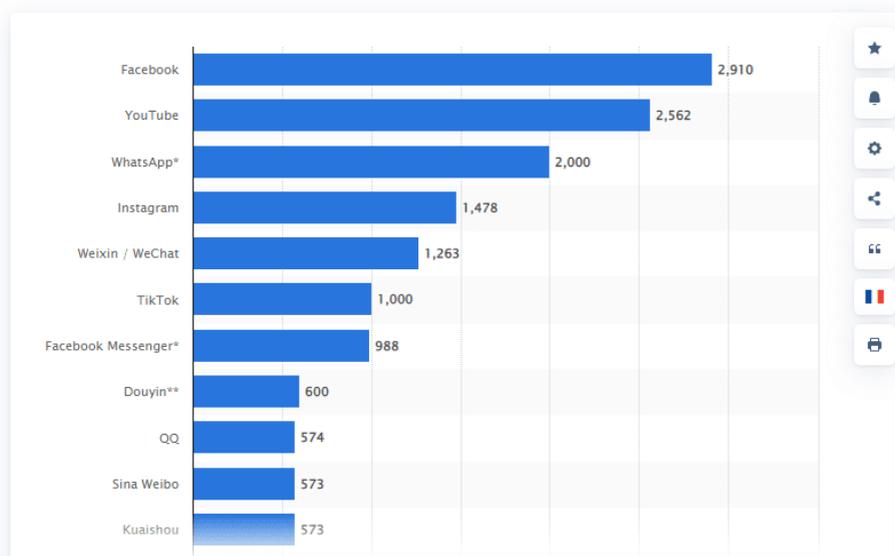
💡 Here are the top 5 social media channels around the world : **Facebook**, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and WeChat/TikTok. 📱

What is Social Media? Best Examples!

According to a [Statista study](#) report published this year, Facebook is the largest social network with 2.910 billion **active users**, followed by YouTube (2.5 billion), WhatsApp (2 billion), Instagram (1.4 billion), WeChat (1.2 billion) and TikTok (1 billion). 🌟

Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2022,
active users

(in millions)



Why is Social Networking So Important?

"Why?" 🤔 this is a question we often ask ourselves, especially when it comes to something we don't know... However, using social media is essential!

Nowadays, the **strategies for marketing** that do not incorporate social media cannot be considered optimal. 🚫

If you're wondering what social media can do for you, 👁️ here are 7 reasons why you should incorporate it into your [communication plan](#):

1. The media can increase your **awareness** and visibility.
2. Social media can improve your **SEO**. The more links you have to your website, the better it will rank in search engines (For more info, read this article on [SEO strategy](#)).
3. The social media can you help get more of traffic, i.e. attract more visitors to your **e-commerce site**, for example.
4. The media allows finding **potential customers** and partners.
5. Social media allows improving the relationship with your customers.
6. The media allow you to improve your **e-reputation**.
7. Social media allows to monitor the market permanently.

What are Social Networks Used For?

We have seen together **the definition of social networks**, the main social media networks and why to use them. 🤖

On the other hand, you may be wondering what social networks can be used for in your **company**? Or, you have already tried using social media networks and not seen a return on investment? 😞 Don't worry, it happens to everyone!

Getting a return on investment takes more than a theoretical understanding of social media definitions and benefits. 👁️ To communicate successfully, it's important to follow a few **good practices** to use the networks well. 📌

How to Use Social Media Well? Best Practices!

👉 Here are the 4 easy steps to follow:

1. Know your Target Audience Well

To understand the benefit of using social media, it is important to understand who is your [target audience](#). 🇨🇪

First, you need to create your "[marketing persona](#)". The idea here is to understand what your **niche target** does on social networks. What social networks do they use? How do they use them?

You need to know what your **target audience** wants, and be able to communicate well on the social media they use. 🇨🇪

2. Have a Good Content Strategy

Now let's get down to business. 🧐

To generate a [return on investment](#) on social media, i.e., get back the money invested in your **communication campaigns!** 💰

It is imperative to engage in a **content** creation strategy for **multimedia**. 📈

Don't have a well-defined social media strategy?

No worries! In that case, I highly recommend reading our guide for creating a successful [content strategy](#) (on LinkedIn). 😊

3. Choose the Appropriate Social Media

As you know, all social networks have their uses, but not all are right for you. 😞

In order to succeed to **communicate** on social networks, it is imperative to choose them well! 🗨️

But, How? It's simple, depending on your goals. 🏆

The key is not to be "too greedy" at the beginning, 📦 and to limit the scope of social networks to what you can manage efficiently according to your available resources = time, budget, teams. You need to define which social networks to choose for your [B2B prospecting](#). ✨

4. Plan the Content

As explained in the above **definition of a social network**, the mission of networks is to share content that [brings value](#) to your **audience**. 😊

Regularly sharing content that is relevant to your target audience is essential for an **effective communication** experience on social networks. ✅

The content you share on social networks should add value to your target audience. Again, it is important to define who are your ["buyer personas"](#). 🔍

Working with a **communication planner** is essential to effectively share content on social networks. This will allow you to know exactly what you need to post on social media each day, instead of suddenly running out of ideas. ⚡

Also, prepare your [multichannel prospecting campaigns](#) to reach your target via different **acquisition channels**. 🚀

Is Social Media Good or Bad? 10 Advantages & Disadvantages

Top 5 Benefits of Social Networking

🟢 Currently, [social media](#) has become a real **digital tool** to develop your online business. 🔥

There are essential instruments for **social media marketing** and sales strategy! 😊

👉 Here are the 5 **main advantages** of developing a social network for professionals.

1. Better target your audience:

- From a "[marketing mix](#)" point of view, this is a huge **competitive advantage**. 🎯 Establishing a tangible relationship with customers and prospects allows companies to establish a real dialogue with them and to better understand their needs and expectations.

2. Boost your e-reputation:

- Social networks allow you to "boost" your notoriety and your **online reputation**. ⚡ It allows positive social interactions such as "likes", "retweets", etc. It is an opportunity for companies to be known.

3. Easy to use and affordable:

- It's also a **way of communication** that is optimal and profitable. 💰 Indeed, target your audience with precision in order to reach them more easily.

4. Ability to create viral content:

- People like to share things in their social networks, photos and recipes, interesting **articles** and good deals. Unlike other forms of **web marketing** such as shopping sites and advertisements, social media content is shared in many places. 👁️ Sharing your posts can make you [go viral](#), which gives you more reach than traditional **marketing campaigns**, plus it's cheaper! 😊

5. The majority are free:

- One of the most interesting advantage of social networks is that they are almost all free. 💰 There are no fees to [sign up](#) for the **big platforms**, like LinkedIn or Facebook. As such, the only investment required is in the form of time. ⌚ However, most social media platforms offer paid advertising options. These can be great tools to **grow your audience** and reach more users.

Top 5 Disadvantages of Social Networks (Sociology Theory)

🔴 Like many things, social networks must be used responsibly if you don't want to expose yourself to risks that may arise from **their use**. 😞

👉 Here are **5 disadvantages** that you can possibly encounter when using social networks.

1. Cyber-stalking:

- The democratization of social networks has led to the rise of new abuses. 😞 Among these negative effects, we note not only **cyber-stalking**, because people can remain [anonymous](#) online, but also various types of fraud, data theft or encounters with malicious people.

2. Be careful of your e-reputation:

- Even if social media can **improve your e-reputation** by making you more visible for your customers, you must beware of what you post in order to preserve your **professional** reputation. (Otherwise, look at what happened to Kanye West & Adidas/Yeezy recently). 😞 The employers and [recruiters](#) use social networks, more and more, to find **candidates**, but they also use them for checking the online profiles before doing the interviews!

3. Communication is way too fast:

- With this new easy access to information, we need to look more seriously **data sources** and be mindful of what we find on the Internet. Information is accessible quickly, but anyone can easily spread any kind of publications, even if they are not experts in a particular field. 🤖 Thus, the **information** you sometimes find on social networks can be incorrect.

4. It can be addictive:

- Using social networks can be a good thing, but it can also affect your personal and professional life. 😞 This is a very common problem that can occur, especially among young people, so I advise you to use them with a well-defined period of time in a personal context; or to have a **clear strategy** in a pro context, so that you don't get drowned in this constant wave of information. 🌊

5. Having the wrong strategy:

- Choosing the right strategy is important when posting on your [business page](#). 🤖 For this reason, preliminary research is done on products, competition, **potential customers** and brand value. This will trigger a series of actions in the chosen social network, aiming to achieve these initial goals. Also, do not mix your personal profile with your **professional profile**, as this can be confusing for users.

To conclude, social networks tap into people's emotions, their need to communicate and **interact**. As you know, humans are social beings! 🐱🐱

Existing features, such as the famous "likes" on Facebook and the [hashtags](#) on LinkedIn and Twitter, are meant to encourage their user-base to react and **share information** and opinions. 🗣️

Some emotional and fulfillment needs are met virtually. 🧐 Each user's network is often associated with a web, each part corresponds to the characteristics that define them: their contacts, their **centers of interests**, their groups, their personal data...

As **the web** "weaves", the networks get bigger 🕸️ and platforms use your relationships to create more reliable connections ([the level of contacts](#) on LinkedIn, is an example of this). This is how **communities** grow and social networks thrive. 🌌

However, keep in mind that networks are also public places, so it requires some **data protection** and good practices! 😊

Conclusion: Social Network Definition

Therefore, social media is essential in the age of **digital** communication. 🤖

👉 Here's a recap of the best practices we saw in this article on **social networks definition**:

- Know your target audience well.
- Have a good **content strategy**.
- Choose the right media social platform.
- Plan your content ahead. 📅

However, it is important to take the time to develop a comprehensive strategy and use social media effectively to **reach the objectives** you set for yourself for the development of **your business**. 🏹

If you don't have a defined strategy, you risk wasting the resources you use in order to manage your communication. 🙄 This can have a negative impact on your **brand image** or even your ["personal branding"](#).

As you know, social networks have are powerful, 🙏 so you have to know how to use them wisely!

FAQ: Definition Social Network

What is Social Networking Sites / Platforms?

A **social network** is a networking website or mobile app that allows users to create networks of friends or subscribers, and facilitates **social interaction** between individuals, groups or organizations. Social networks belong to the social media family. 🌐

What is the Purpose of a Social Network for an Online Business?

The purpose of a social network for a **business** is to increase their brand awareness, increase traffic to their website, target and convert potential customers, build loyalty and communicate with existing customers via newsletters, [transactional emails](#), etc. ✍️

For purely professional purposes, it is advisable [to use LinkedIn](#). For example, if you are a **jobseeker**, you can [put your resume](#) and view job offers directly on this platform. This way, you can contact companies more easily and vice versa. 😊

What is the Difference Between Social Media and Social Networks?

There is a subtle difference between the two, and many people, even those in the know, tend to confuse the two terms. Social networks are just one part of **social media**. 😊 For example, LinkedIn or even **this blog**, are social media.

There you have it, now you know the **definition of a social network!** 🙄