

Get Social

By Nicole Partise

As Social Media Manager at The International Dermal Institute and Dermalogica, I've seen first-hand the importance of utilizing social media in your business. Plain and simple: your competitors are there, and if you aren't, you'll get left behind! It can be intimidating, that we understand, but just like anything new, it can be learned and better yet, easily understood. So how do you begin? Let's start with the basics.

Social Media – What Does That Even Mean?

The term social media applies to new media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, etc. Users of social media sites create and engage in online communities to share information, thoughts, photos, videos, and other content. That may seem obvious to some, but what may not be so obvious is how exactly social media differs from traditional media (i.e. television commercials and mailers).

Traditional media once kept companies in charge of their brand's or business' reputation and messaging. New media, on the other hand, puts the messaging in charge of the consumer. Now, 90% of consumers trust peer recommendations and only 14% trust advertising, giving you the opportunity to hear feedback from your clients so you can keep doing what works and adjust what doesn't.

How do I Create my Social Media Pages?

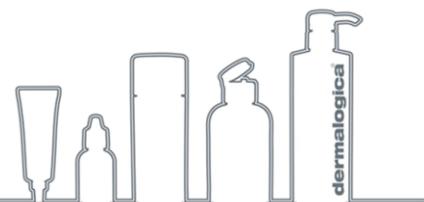
There are an endless amount of social media outlets, so I recommend you choose the top sites when starting out. Facebook, Yelp, Twitter, and Instagram are likely to give you the most visibility, so I suggest you start there.

Facebook

Visit [Facebook](#) and click "Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business." Choose "Local Business or Place," and then you'll be guided along as you set up your page. It's important to know that you need a personal page in order to manage a business page. For more on setting up, see [here](#). Once your page is finished, you can begin personalizing it by adding a profile and cover photo, your contact information, hours of operation, etc. You can also post skin and product tips, share available openings, show photos and videos of your space, it goes on. Check out other skin therapy businesses on Facebook to see how they manage their pages.

Yelp

Yelp is the top site for consumers to share reviews about businesses. You may not know this, but you don't have to start your own Yelp page – someone else can start it for you. If a page for your business already exists, you can claim that page. If no page exists for your business, visit [Yelp](#) and click "Sign up for Yelp" at the top of the page. You can then encourage your clients to write a review so that new prospects can see how wonderful you are! What if you get a "bad" review? Reach out to the client and amend the situation however you can to turn that client happy once more. To learn more about how you can use Yelp to enhance your business, [watch this clip](#).



Twitter

Go to [Twitter](#) and select “Sign up for Twitter.” Follow the steps for setting up your page, and begin personalizing it for your business. Unlike Facebook, Twitter does not have business pages vs. personal pages, so a simple sign up is all you need to get started. A few details about Twitter that may be of use:

- A username, or handle as some refer to it, means using the @ symbol in front of your name. If you want to directly speak to or support another page, use @ when speaking to them rather than using their username alone (i.e. @Dermalinstitute vs Dermalinstitute).
- A hashtag has the # symbol in front of a word (i.e. #acne). When you hashtag a word, regardless of the word or context of the tweet, it puts your tweet in a search of others that used that same word. This is nice because it can enhance visibility of your tweets.

After your page is set up you can begin following others (ahem, @Dermalinstitute), and you can begin tweeting about your business and all the wonderful treatments you have to offer! More on Twitter [here](#).

Instagram

Why tell, when you can show? Instagram is a photo sharing app accessible through mobile device. Download the Instagram app, then simply click “Register” and follow the steps. Choose your username (the same you would on Twitter, using the @ symbol), and then choose an appropriate profile picture. Begin sharing photos of your treatment space, your product line(s), that event you had at your treatment space, etc. You can link your photos to your Facebook and Twitter pages as well! Get more details [here](#).

Is That All I Need?

Not quite. Don't forget that a website is always recommended, and it helps to maintain a blog through your website as well. And don't forget [You Tube](#)! You Tube is now the world's 2nd largest search engine, so once you adjust to life in the social media world, start creating videos of your treatment space, your treatments, your product lineup, your events, etc., and show the world what you've got!

All stats and more can be found in this clip: [Social Media Video 2013](#).

