

New Entrants to Farming

Social Media to

Increase Business



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The use of social media is not just for personal use, it also makes for a great business tool. It can increase the profile of your business, allow for cost effective marketing, increase your customer base and connect with customers to name a few. This can all be achieved for free.

Social media networks are continuously growing with increased interaction and new platforms being created. This offers benefits such as,

Free powerful tool	Works on real time	Networking
Gives users information, views, marketing, opinions and research at their finger tips		
Join interest groups	Promoting business worldwide	
Seeing what competitors do	Keeping up to date	News

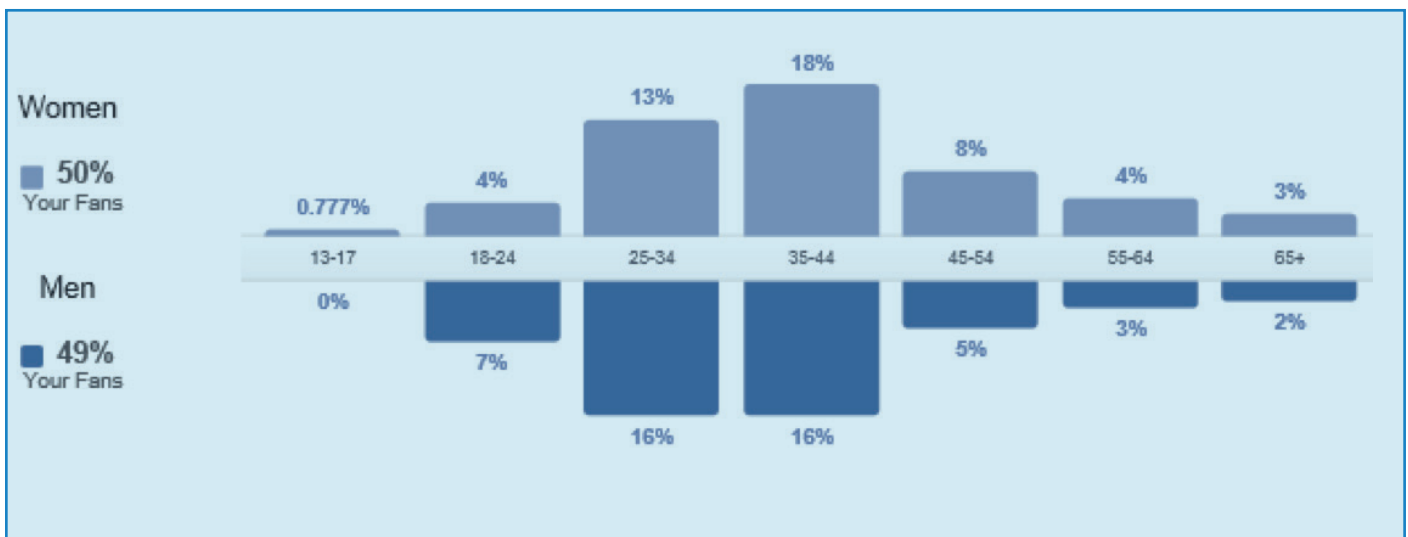
There are many platforms of social media available, but which one is right for your agricultural business?



Facebook is one of the most popular platforms allowing individuals and businesses to share photos, updates and news over the network. It is essential to make the content on your page authentic and relevant.

There is a business pages facility which can aid in separating your personal profile with your business. A business page has an insights function which provides information such as engagement of posts, views, when followers are online, demographic of people who have viewed (gender, age, country, etc.).

Other benefits of business pages include having no limit to the amount of people who can "like", there is an option to boost or sponsor posts which can vastly increase profile.




The European Agricultural Fund
 for Rural Development
 Europe investing in rural areas



Scottish Government
 Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Boosting posts can enhance the number of people who see a post very quickly. This can be done with a relatively small budget. You as the user choose how much to spend and how large a reach you would like. This reach is then tailored by pinpointing specific areas, age groups, friends of people who like your page etc.

 **Twitter** is different from Facebook, in that it has a quicker pace. Posts are limited to a maximum of 280 characters, meaning the information is very concise. Posts are created as short pieces of information which commonly signpost people to links for further details. Due to the limit in characters, posts should be very enticing and attractive to persuade people to click on further links. For agriculture posts can be short snippets of information e.g. “look out this is the future” – this can then lead to an article with further information.

Hashtags are commonly used in Twitter. Often if followers want to see if there has been a discussion on a main point, searching for a hash tag will show all feeds using the hashtag e.g.



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The second Lanarkshire FAS New Entrant meeting of the 2018/19 series will be held on Wednesday 14th November, 7.30pm at Radstone Hotel, Arkhall, ML9 2TZ

Thinking about starting a new enterprise or looking for a change? This meeting will focus on the exciting opportunities available within the deer and pig sectors. Speakers include Bob Prentice, farmer and butcher at Tagison Venison, Downfield Farm and Andy McGowan, Chief Executive of Scottish Pig Producers.

This is a free e... [See More](#)



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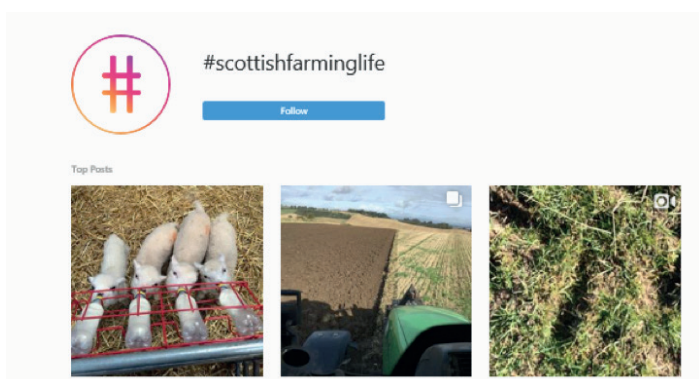
New Entrants to Farming - Alternative Enterprises – Deer and Pigs (Lanark) | FAS

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
Boost this post for £16 to reach up to 8,700 people.

1,023
People Reached

88
Engagements

[Boost Post](#)



Instagram is an image network, allowing the sharing of pictures which tell a story. There are numerous features to edit photos available on the network. As with twitter hashtags are frequently used on Instagram e.g. #scottishfarminglife



LinkedIn allows individuals to highlight their career experiences on a social network. This is largely used by professionals and forward thinking people. This is a great network to use when recruiting people.



YouTube is a social media platform for sharing video content, as well as playlists. To ensure the correct image is portrayed for your business, ensure videos look and sound professional.



Google+ is comparable to Facebook, in the features that it offers. Many businesses have a profile created automatically, but the management is up to you. Due to Google+, being owned by Google, pages which are frequently active are preferred in google search results.

There are many more social media networks available to market your business over including

- Pinterest,
- Snapchat,
- Whatsapp,
- Flickr, etc.



It is essential to set a side time for social media, to allow you to create a fan base. Without this, you will not have high engagement and views of your posts. This fan base can be established by having good content on your page, and following the below.

- regularly posting content
- showing photos of products e.g. livestock, crops, produce, etc.
- telling the story of your product e.g. explaining why you breed a certain type of animal, why your ground is suited to growing carrots, your family business story, etc.
- make posts engaging so people want to comment, like and share them to increase prevalence on others timelines.
- using photos rather than just text, making the post more attractive.

Social media operates in real time, meaning as new products and services are launched people can be updated regularly and see this development story. You can interact with your current and potential customer base and receive real time feedback on your product as well as accelerate marketing reaching the point of a sale. One example here would be for a farmer who would be selling store calves at the local market, they could take and post frequent pictures and videos of the animals due for sale, showing pictures/videos of parents, locomotion of the animals, pedigree certificates, health information, etc. The consumer would see these prior to the sale and make them more interested to ensure they visit that pen of cattle, increasing the chance of increased revenue.

Various agricultural supply companies use “brand ambassadors” allowing for product placement whilst taking photos for posting on social media, this may be mineral buckets, branded boiler suits, feed bags, etc. These are often offered to agricultural businesses who embrace social media and have strong followers, the reward is often purchasing the product for slightly less than the retail price.

Social media allows you as a producer to show the world how Scottish farming operates by sharing good stories, photos and videos, enhancing the public image of farming and food production.

Social media managers

Social media can sometimes feel overwhelming with all the different channels that you can have running, especially as you can sometimes have a different audience on different channels (for instance, Facebook has a much older audience than twitter and snapchat), you wouldn't be wrong to want to cover all your bases. If this is the case then a social media manager can be a useful tool to allow you to do the heavy lifting for you when managing all your different profiles. Sites like, [tweetdeck](#), [hootsuite](#) or [buffer](#) are just three of the many options that are available to amalgamate all your social media accounts under one digital roof.

Many of these platforms offer free versions for when you have a limited number of accounts to handle (normally three or less) and these sites give you the option to schedule your content for when you know it will do best online. The sites themselves will also probably do analysis of your profiles and tell you when you get the best levels of engagement so you can schedule content for when your audience is most likely to be watching.

Most importantly, a social media manager allows you to do the promotional work when you want to so you don't need to worry about tweeting whilst you've got your hands full!

