



Tourism Business Portal

Digital Toolbox

Introduction	4
Communication channels	5
Social media	5
Facebook	5
Instagram	6
Pinterest	6
Twitter	7
Travel booking and review sites	7
Hotel booking sites	7
Flight booking sites	8
Review and price comparison sites	8
Budget travel sites	8
TripAdvisor listings	8
Social media content management	9
Facebook content management tools	9
Other content management tools	9

Table of contents

Social media listening and advertising tools	10
Facebook Insights	10
Twitter analytics	10
Other listening tools	10
Advertising tools	10
Annex	11
Posting checklist	13
Before writing	13
Readable	13
Understandable	13
Actionable & shareable	13
After writing	13
Glossary	14

Table of contents

The digital age offers you new ways to reach out to your audience and grab their attention. It allows you to share information about your business and its products and services, while also letting potential customers know why they should seek you out.

The Tourism Business Portal is looking to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the European tourism sector take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet.

This digital toolbox builds on our 'digital for tourism SMEs' webinars.

1. Introduction

The digital environment can help you increase the visibility and impact of your communication. Different demographics communicate in different ways and on different channels – so choosing the best methods for reaching your audience is key.

Since each channel has its own individual traits, we have provided an overview for each of the main channels to guide you towards creating better and more relevant content.

- **Social media**

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Twitter

- **Booking and review sites**

- Hotel booking sites
- Flight booking sites
- Review and price comparison sites
- Budget travel sites

It may take time to get people to respond to your content and to engage with you via these channels. Don't let that discourage you. Do invest time to talk to people and build relationships.

In the long term, this may help you to gain loyal customers.

Social media

Facebook

Facebook is one of the most popular social media channels.

While most of Facebook's audience is between 18 and 34 years old, you can use the tool to reach potential customers of all ages.

Consider using Facebook to tell people about your company and your services. List your services, display your menu or include some photos to let people see what you have to offer.

Facebook can also be useful for keeping your audience up to date on what's happening in your business. Post regularly about news and special offers.

You could give people tips to help them use your products or run a contest and give away something small to the winners.

These tips may be helpful when creating your Facebook page:

- enable specific features such as messaging, so people can contact you privately
- activate special content – such as your menu, or an online shop for selling your products
- start posting updates and offers as soon as you publish the page – your page should be active before you promote it
- promote your page by inviting your customers and contacts to connect with it

2. Communication channels

Do bear in mind that building an audience will take time.

When you write the posts for your Facebook page, keep the following in mind:

- keep your posts short – around 80 to 160 characters
- use images to illustrate your posts
- try asking a simple question to start a discussion
- give a clear call to action – tell your followers what you want them to do
- offer some interesting information to catch people's interest
- be positive

Instagram

Instagram is a highly visual channel based on photos and videos. This app is targeted at people using mobile devices (smartphones) to communicate online.

Instagram generally caters to a younger demographic, making it suitable for promoting tangible

products or services to people aged between 18 and 34.

With a business account, you can include your opening hours, business address and phone number.

You could use the platform to share images and short videos that showcase your events, products and services.

You could also post content to help or inspire your customers – telling the story about your business or one of your employees, for instance.

Think about these tips when posting on Instagram:

- use relevant hashtags to reach your target audience
- include mentions to encourage collaboration
- try showing your audience some parts of your business that are normally hidden from public view
- use teaser photos to build curiosity around your new offerings
- be creative – unusual images will help catch people's attention

Pinterest

Pinterest is a photo-sharing social network that people use to upload, share and 'pin' images.

The majority of Pinterest users are women and people in a higher tax bracket, meaning they are generally affluent and have disposable income.

Pinterest is very popular with artists, photographers, graphic designers and craftspeople. Some people simply use it to explore and organise their ideas – what they would like to purchase or learn about and where they would like to visit.

You can use Pinterest for Business to create a visual display of your company and its services, organised into different pinboards.

Bear the following in mind when posting on Pinterest:

- build content-rich pin boards focused on your expertise

2. Communication channels

- use keywords in your content to ensure it is easily found in searches
- mention your followers in your Pinterest comments or pin descriptions
- include your business name in your descriptions to ensure it gets shared
- add captions and a call to action (such as a link to your website) to each photo

Twitter

As a popular channel suited to direct engagement, you can use Twitter to connect with people who regularly use your services. The platform tends to be used by adults aged 18 to 29.

You can use Twitter to:

- tell people about events, news or special offers
- simply remind your audience that you are there
- share photos – for example of your refurbished hotel rooms or the dishes on your menu

Twitter is also a useful tool for customer service – in fact, customers are increasingly turning to the platform for support. As Twitter is conversational and used in real time, customers can easily ask questions, tell you what they like and dislike, or reach out when they need help.

Bear these tips in mind when posting on Twitter:

- keep your tweets short
- add images or videos to your tweets
- follow other people to ensure you get followed back
- favourite and retweet other users' posts
- connect with others using 'mentions' and replies
- use hashtags to help others discover your tweets

Travel booking and review sites

Travel booking and review sites are used by today's travellers to search for information or to book hotels, tours, transportation and activities – along with any discounts available.

HOTEL BOOKING SITES

People use sites like lastminute.com and Booking.com to search for hotels and to compare the following before making a reservation:

- price
- quality
- rating
- location
- amenities
- availability

But these sites are not just about hotels – they can also help travellers discover local services including city tours and restaurants.

For hotel owners, these sites can help to fill empty rooms during the low season. They can also be used to promote special offers and last-minute deals.

Whether you are a hotel owner or service provider, you may wish to research the affiliate programmes provided by various hotel booking sites to help you reach travellers coming to your city.

2. Communication channels

FLIGHT BOOKING SITES

While sites such as Expedia and Skyscanner primarily help travellers find the flights they need, they are increasingly looking to help travellers organise their entire visit. As well as flights, hotels and car hire, they are helping users manage their itineraries.

These sites also guide users to attractions and services – and in some cases propose activities – in the city they are visiting. As such, they can help you to reach travellers before and during their stay.

REVIEW AND PRICE COMPARISON SITES

Travellers use price comparison sites to search for the prices of flights, hotels and car hire across thousands of booking sites. These sites also give customers ideas about where they could go and what activities they could do in the given place.

All age groups use these sites to find the best prices and to learn what

others have to say about a particular hotel, restaurant, activity or any other travel-related service, including about the location itself.

People are turning to such sites for advice before looking for rooms or services. A rating by an affiliate programme and reviews from users can give your potential customers confidence in what your company offers.

BUDGET TRAVEL SITES

Budget travel sites such as Ice Lolly and Holiday Pirates are particularly popular with a younger demographic because of the constant discount rate they offer. That said, prices are highly affordable for people of any age with a limited budget.

These sites tend to focus on a range of aspects of a traveller's holiday – from hotels and flights to cars, tours and activities.

You may wish to research the sites that will allow you to highlight your best

offers and fill your bookings during the low season.

TRIPADVISOR LISTINGS

If you are an official representative of your property, service or business, you can set up and manage a free TripAdvisor listing. If your business is already listed, you can claim the page.

TripAdvisor provides tools that allow you to optimise your listing, manage your reviews and track performance.

Some actions that you can take with this tool include:

- uploading and editing photos and videos
- updating your property's key details and amenities
- responding to reviews

2. Communication channels

There are a number of different tools available for managing your social media channels and scheduling posts. These can help you reach your audience more efficiently.

Each tool has its own features and capabilities – with some quite easy to use and others more complex.

Facebook content management tools

Facebook provides content management tools for businesses wanting to use the platform to promote their services.

Ideally, your business will already have a Facebook page. You will also need to ensure you are an editor or administrator for that page.

Facebook allows you to 'schedule' your posts so they will be automatically published at the date and time you choose.

You should not schedule your post for an exact hour – always pick random minutes, such as 1:02 PM or 9:56 AM, so it appears spontaneous.

After scheduling a post, you should also check that it appears in the scheduled post list.

Other content management tools

Some social media platforms, including Twitter, do not natively include tools for scheduling posts. Nevertheless, there are products such as Hootsuite and Buffer that allow you to schedule posts across your various social media accounts.

3. Social media content management

Listening to what your audience has to say is as critical as reaching out to them. There are a number of tools available for gathering insights into your customers.

Facebook Insights

With Facebook Insights you can:

- understand how people are engaging with your page
- view metrics about your page's performance
- learn which posts have the most engagement
- see when your audience is on Facebook
- understand the demographics of your audience

Twitter Analytics

Twitter's tools allow you to monitor your own actions on Twitter, as well as the actions of all the people who:

- follow you
- engage with your tweets
- interact with you in any other way

The tools allow you to see how your posts are resonating with your audience and whether your audience is growing.

Specifically, you can see:

- statistics on tweets, mentions and followers
- influencers in your network
- Twitter activity – metrics on engagement with your tweets
- your followers' interests, demographics and growth over time

Other listening tools

There are other online listening tools available which can help you to monitor your customers, their needs, desires and behaviour across your various social media accounts.

Advertising tools

Online and social media advertising tools provide a new way to reach people. For a fee, they allow you to promote your business and services to relevant people in search results and on social media.

4. Social media listening and advertising tools

You can use social media for more than just promoting your content and events.

Start by clearly defining what you want each of your channels to do on each day – to engage with customers, raise awareness and visibility, or something else. Keep that goal in mind with every post you publish.

	M	T	W	Th	F
Facebook	Meme	News / Features on services / Job posts	Ideas / Did you know?	Polls / Quizzes	Next week's offers
Instagram	Your products and services		Behind the scenes		Next week's offers
Pinterest	Start following interesting boards		Feed our inspiration board		Next week's offers
Twitter	Meme	News / Features on services / Job posts	Ideas / Did you know?	Polls / Quizzes	Next week's offers

5. Annex

You could use these concrete examples of posting on social media as inspiration:

	M	T	W	Th	F
Facebook	<p>This week we are featuring our short tour of Nice's Old Town. Check out our photos here on our Instagram page: [link]</p>	<p>Even Stormtroopers need some inspiration from time to time. Check out the best sights in Nice here: [link]</p> <p>#[hashtag]</p>	<p>Nice has so many great places to explore over the summer. Be sure to check out our Pinboard of Nice's top10 places to visit: [link]</p>	<p>Here are the results of our Twitter poll on Nice's best places to visit: [link]</p> <p>Do you agree? What is your favorite?</p>	<p>Check out our latest special prices for a perfect tour of Nice's hidden gems this summer here: [link]</p>
Twitter	<p>Be sure to check out today's #[hashtag] here: [link]</p>	<p>May the 4th be with you #[hashtag]</p>	<p>Be sure to check out our Nice Pinboard: [link]</p>	<p>What is your favorite Nice attraction? Answer the poll</p>	<p>20% off your first tour to enjoy your stay in #Nice</p>

5. Annex

Keep the following tips in mind as you create relevant content.

1. Before writing:

Thinking ahead

- What do you want to say?
- What is the purpose of your post?
- What angle will you take?
- Which audience are you writing for?
- How does your story relate to your audience's needs?

2. Readable:

Can they read your content?

- keep sentences simple, taking out unnecessary words and repetition
- keep your content short

3. Understandable:

Can they understand what you are saying?

- choose the right content type – video, infographic, interactive, text, etc.
- avoid using expressions and acronyms that others will not understand

4. Actionable & shareable:

Will they want to take action?

- include a call to action
- have a place for comments/interaction
- give your audience a reason to share!
- make sure your content is shareable
- have links to related content

5. After writing:

Take one last look...

- go through your post again
- make sure there are no errors

6. Posting checklist

click through rate (CTR) - the number of times a visitor clicks through divided by the total number of impressions a piece of content receives

conversion - a positive action taken on a website by a visitor from social media demonstrating that the visitor is 'converting' into a customer

cost per click (CPC) - the cost for one interaction with your advert

cost per view (CPV) - the cost for one view of or interaction with your video advert

cost per mille (CPM) - the cost for 1,000 impressions, or views, of your advert

engagement rate - the percentage of people who saw your social media post and actively engaged with it (clicked, liked, shared, replied, commented, etc.)

impressions - the number of times an advert is displayed

pay per click (PPC) - an online advertising model where you pay for each visitor that clicks on your advert

reach - the maximum size of the potential audience a given social media post could reach

7. Glossary
