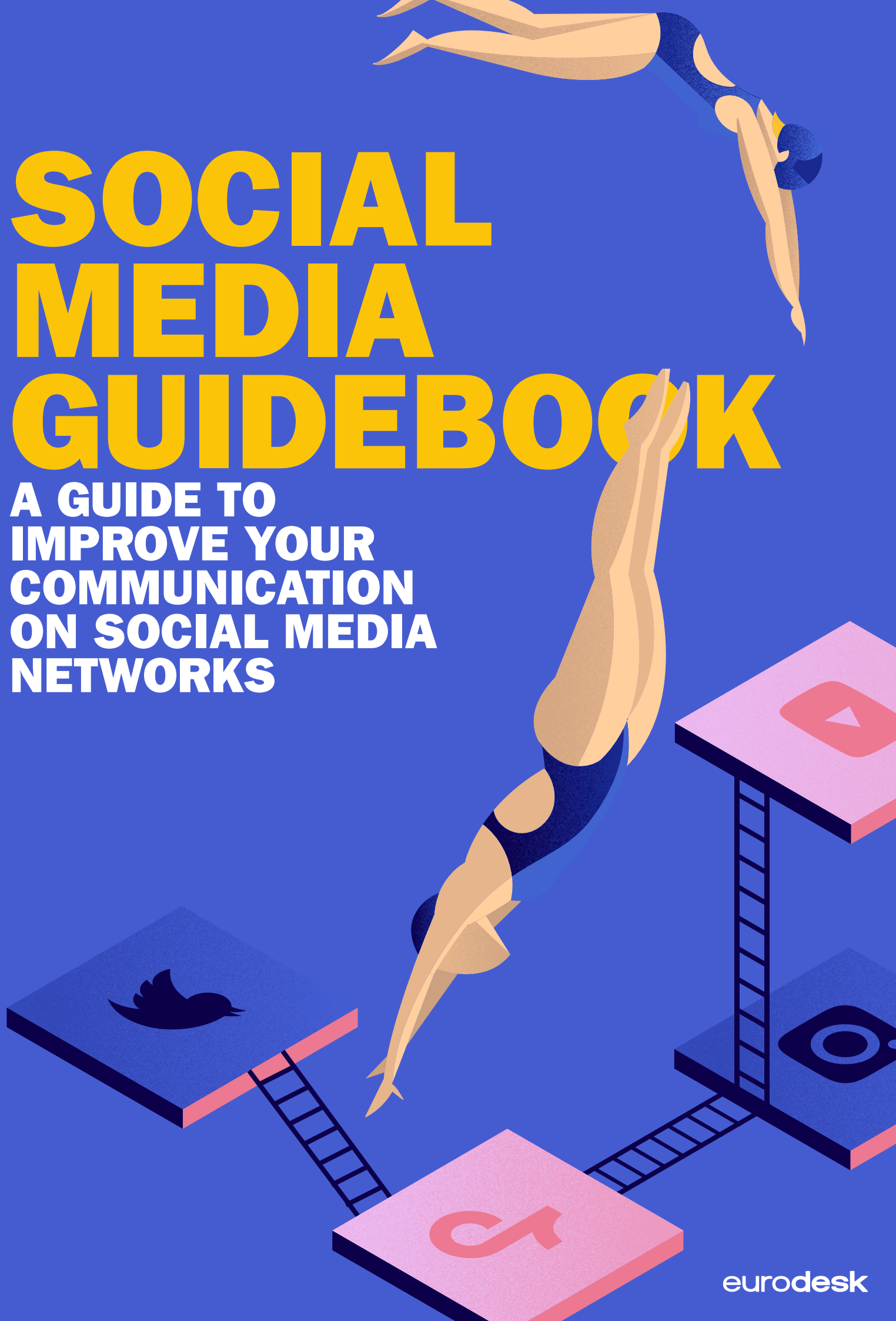


SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

A GUIDE TO
IMPROVE YOUR
COMMUNICATION
ON SOCIAL MEDIA
NETWORKS



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FOREWORD

Navigating social media and following the fast-changing habits of young people can be difficult and time-consuming. This guide will provide you with the basics of digital branding, the essentials of different social media channels, and what to do to improve your online presence and services. It will help you in selecting the best tools and approaches to save time and make your work more efficient.

This guidebook covers digital youth work, focused on informing and counselling young people. It provides useful tips on how digital tools can improve youth information services. Of course, it is not meant to be exhaustive; it will provide you with an entry point to support your strategy or create a new one. We encourage you to stay up to date with the latest trends by checking available research, following trends and attending Eurodesk training sessions if you are part of our network.

Based on the results of our Eurodesk [*Youth Information and Mobility Survey 2022*](#), access to mobility information is still unequal, especially between rural and urban youth, and according to socio-economic and educational backgrounds. This calls for developing targeted approaches, combining face to face and online outreach. In order to reach our target audience, we first need to understand their interests, needs and expectations and youth culture.

Marketing professionals have invested a lot of thought over the years in understanding how they can make their messages relevant to today's young audiences by understanding their lives, habits and attitudes. This is something youth work has always done; digital platforms being an additional way to reach, engage and empower our target group. But of course, it requires us to keep up the pace with technological developments and to "think digital".

In this guidebook, we will help you brand Eurodesk services for young people and seize the opportunities of digital technologies. It encourages all of us to think of our services through the eyes of young people. What language and key messages to use? What channels to select for which age group? How to use storytelling techniques? How to engage young people in our information service? These are some of the answers you will find.

I'm sure you will learn and find inspiration and motivation to try new things. It's all a learning process! You are of course highly encouraged to share your experiences with the rest of the Eurodesk network and perhaps they can be included in future editions of this guide.

Audrey Frith,
Eurodesk Director

ABOUT US

Created in 1990, Eurodesk is a European youth information network specialised in the promotion of international mobility (studying, volunteering and learning abroad) and participation (European youth events, consultations, etc) for young people and those working with them. Eurodesk is recognised as a support structure of the Erasmus+ programme and EU Youth Strategy.

Eurodesk-specific know-how relates to working with young people (informing, counselling and engaging youth), offering a wide range of European opportunities (Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, international programmes, etc.), and delivering strong digital outreach, while being present at grassroots level through a wide and diverse network of local multipliers and ambassadors.

Eurodesk operates at European level with a network of 39 Eurodesk Centres, connecting over 2,000 local information providers (e.g. youth information centres, municipalities, youth organisations, educational institutions) in 37 countries. Eurodesk Brussels Link (EBL) is in charge of coordinating the network.

More on eurodesk.eu

37
COUNTRIES

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Montenegro
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Liechtenstein
- North Macedonia
- Latvia
- Norway
- Poland
- Spain
- Romania
- Serbia
- Portugal
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Türkiye
- Ukraine

CONTENTS

Understanding the Social Media Landscape – page 6

- 1/ Young people in the digital age
- 2/ A dynamic social media landscape
- 3/ Social media trends
- 4/ Select and connect your social media platforms

Knowing your audience – Page 15

- 1/ Get familiar with generational personas
- 2/ Go deeper by defining your own personas
- 3/ Talk with your users
- 4/ Get insights from your followers
- 5/ Use social media listening

Using digital branding strategies – Page 20

- 1/ Define your values and unique selling points
- 2/ Create your own brand persona
- 3/ Make sure your brand resonates with youth cultures
- 4/ Create a cohesive visual identity for your brand
- 5/ Set goals, objectives and performance indicators

Creating engagement is key! – Page 29

- 1/ Create engaging posts
- 2/ Be reactive and build an ecosystem
- 3/ Build a community and engage young people in content creation
- 4/ Use eNewsletters

The art of storytelling – Page 38

- 1/ Elements of a good story
- 2/ Different formats of video campaigns
- 3/ Tips on video creation
- 4/ Podcasts

Social Media Essentials – Page 47

- 1/ Facebook
- 2/ Instagram
- 3/ YouTube
- 4/ TikTok

How to get the most out of your advertising budget – Page 59

- 1/ Facebook
- 2/ Instagram
- 3/ YouTube
- 4/ TikTok



CHAPTER 1

Understanding the Social Media Landscape

As youth information targets young people, it is highly relevant to put in place an efficient digital strategy, and social media apps are central to it. Social media users have grown faster than internet users over the past decade, and young people are the main drivers of this digital growth.

First, you need to understand the current use of social media platforms by your audience, in your own country/region. Understanding the social media landscape is about keeping up with the changes in the use and technology of social media. This will enable you to make an informed decision about where you should be present (basically where your users are present) and what you should be posting. Once you know where young people are, you should understand how they interact with the platforms.

Our recommendation is to select a limited number of apps based on your internal capacity. Being split across multiple apps without adequate human resources is not a smart move. Indeed, each platform has its own usage and culture (and algorithms), and multi-posting is to be strictly avoided (publishing the same information on multiple channels, in the exact same way). Remember that the popularity and usage of the apps can change rapidly, so this should be a regular exercise.

In this chapter, you will learn more about the current social media landscape and get an overview of the most popular apps. In the “Essentials” section you will learn more about each of the top four apps for young people (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube).



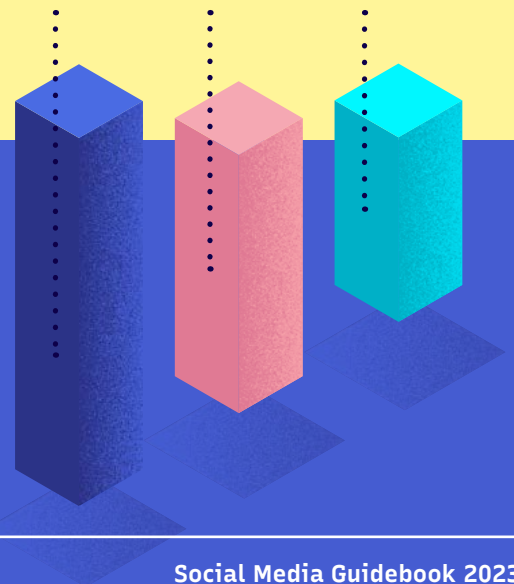
Subchapters

1/ Young people in the digital age

2/ A dynamic social media landscape

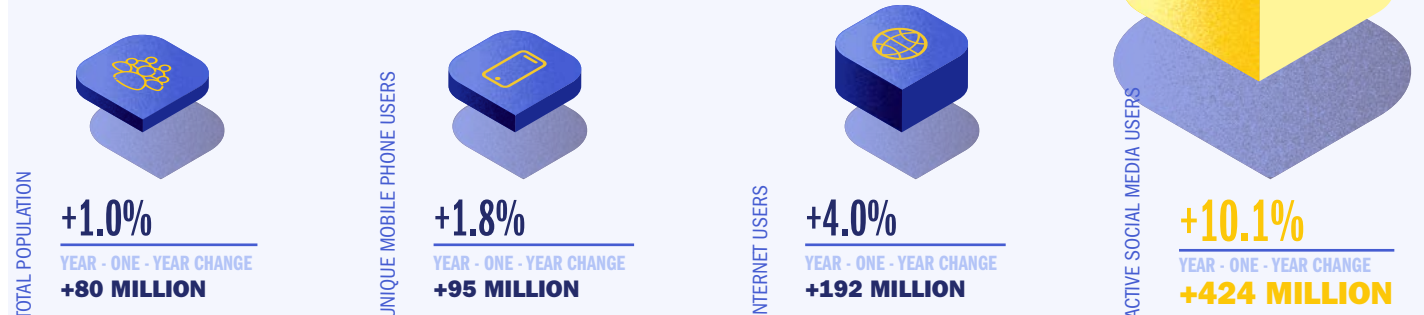
3/ Social media trends

4/ Select and connect your social media platforms



1/ Young people in the digital age

Digital Growth

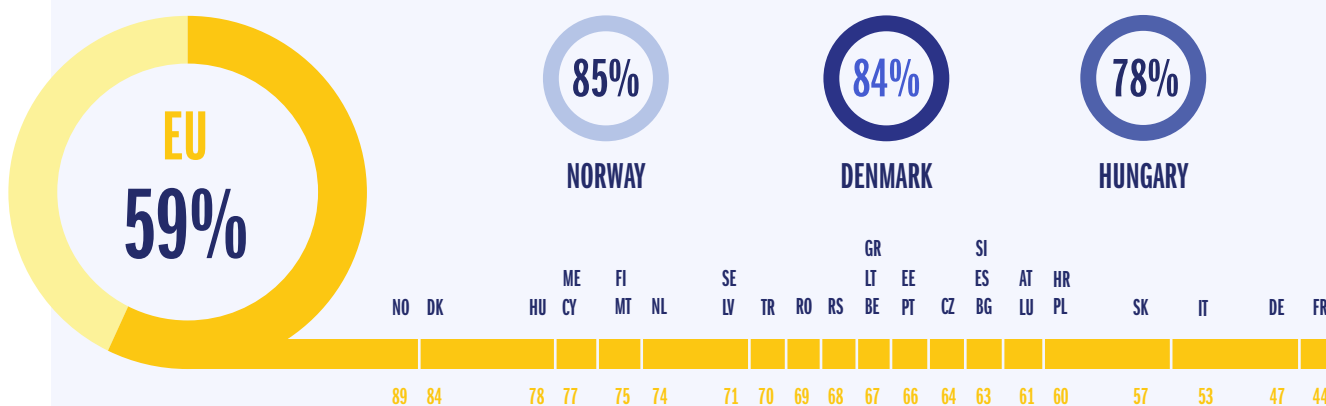


Source: Hootsuite, January 2022

According to Eurostat, 95% of young people (15-29 year-olds) in the EU made daily use of the internet in 2021¹ and the use of social media to communicate continues to be on the rise². More than half use at least 4 different social networks monthly to communicate with their family and friends, see what is happening in the world, occupy their spare time, and much more.

Participation in social network in the EU

(share of people aged 16-74, in the last 3 months prior to the survey, 2020)



Source: Eurostat

Young Europeans self-report spending an average of 3.58 hours a day on social media³. Younger generations are also concerned. The EU Kids Online 2020 Survey⁴, shows that the time children (9-16 year-olds) now spend online varies between about 2 hours per day (Switzerland) and 3.5 hours (Norway).

Even if not all young people are connected, we cannot ignore the fact that social media platforms will remain an important social place in young people's lives. Social media took an even more central role during the COVID-19 pandemic, as countries entered lockdown.

1 Being young in Europe today - digital world, [Eurostat](#), April 2022

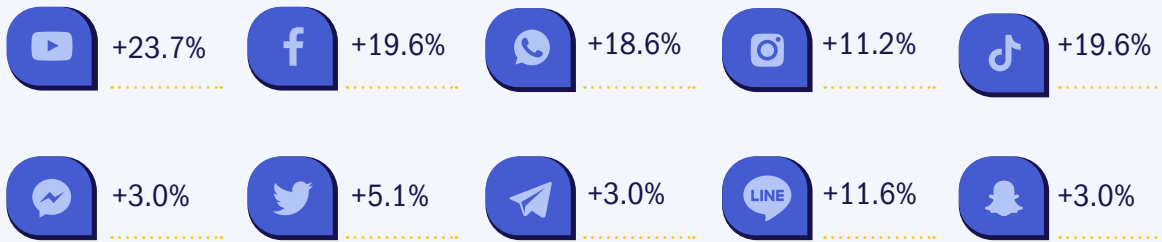
2 Number of social media users worldwide from 2018 to 2027, [Statista](#), June 2022

3 Young Europeans Use These Social Media Platforms the Most, [YPulse](#), Nov. 2022

4 [EU Kids Online 2020 Survey](#) maps the internet access, online practices, skills, online risks and opportunities for children aged 9-16 in European countries.

Time Spent with social media apps

Average time per month that users spend using each platform's Android app.



Source: Hootsuite, January 2022

Most youth information services won't have the resources to invest in all social media platforms. You will have to make choices, test solutions and evaluate them, in a continuous learning process. Having a clear understanding of the social media landscape is the first step in setting up your strategy. You will then have to make evidence-based decisions to start building your strategy.

2/ A dynamic social media landscape

Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Instagram are the four leading social media platforms globally. Nevertheless, the outstanding performance of TikTok as a social platform makes it hard to know whether they will continue to be in leading positions. What is more, the usage of different social media networks differs hugely across 13-30 year-olds.

Our advice is to invest in one or several of the top four first, depending on the specific usage in your country.

Most popular social networks worldwide by monthly active uses, in billion in 2022



Source: WordStream, 2022

Top social media apps: usage and style

When starting out on social media, it is important to note that each social media network has its unique purpose, language and style. This means that you might need to readjust your content to the different platforms you will be using.

To stay up to date we recommend checking out websites, such as [Slaying Social](#), which allow you to create a great communication strategy using current social media trends for each social media platform.

Facebook currently has 270M active users in Europe, with 80% using it daily (on average, people check in 8 times a day), mostly on their mobile devices. Facebook allows people to connect with friends, family members, and acquaintances, giving people the opportunity to post and share content such as photos and status updates. The most common activity is to “like” something. Almost 90% of young adults (18-29 year-olds) report using Facebook, yet usage rates amongst this age group decreased in recent years. Facebook has recently integrated the function to share stories; if your account is connected to Instagram, they can be shared at the same time on both platforms.

YouTube is the second most popular search engine in the world, right after Google. If you want to produce tutorials, educative content or interviews, YouTube is a must. The majority of the population reports regularly using YouTube, with a strong concentration for 13-30 year-olds. It is important to mention that YouTube is a video-only content platform. It has also recently introduced a short video-sharing option.

Instagram is a photo-sharing mobile application that allows users to take pictures, apply filters to them, and share them on the platform. Instagram includes a storytelling function that allows you to share instant video clips with friends, which has now been introduced

on other apps as well. More than half of users are young adults (18-34 year-olds), amounting to a total of 61,90% of the total users¹.

WhatsApp is a free, multiplatform messaging app that allows voice and video calls, and sends text messages, audio messages, and multiple multimedia files through an internet connection. Its Business version provides tools to automate, sort and respond to messages. Through the creation of groups function, you can create a group and allow a maximum of 512 people to join. The participants can have an inactive role, as the admin of the group can mute them. This is a valuable tool if you want to share relevant opportunities with your network. Also, in one of its recent updates, it now allows reactions to messages and the creation of communities in which only admins can share information.

TikTok is a short-form video hosting service in which users become content creators by using a catchy sound. The genres vary from tricks and jokes to lip-synching or dancing with a duration of either 15 seconds, 60 seconds or 3 minutes. It is one of the most used apps by 18-24 year-olds, which makes it a really important tool for the Eurodesk Network. A lot of organisations have started to advertise their products or services on TikTok to reach a wider audience. For instance, Eurodesk Brussels Link uses TikTok to share information on mobility opportunities.



A lot of these social media tools belong to the same owner (WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Messenger) which means that they collect a lot of data about their users. Although this raises ethical concerns, it makes organisations' lives easier when it comes to managing Ad grants.

Check the “Essentials” of each of these platforms in the dedicated section, you will learn what to post, when and how.

1 Distribution of Instagram users worldwide as of April 2022, by age group, [Statista](#), April 2022

Messaging Apps and Bots

Instant messaging apps can be interesting for youth information services. Messaging has become a huge part of our daily lives. Apps like WhatsApp and Messenger have around 1 billion monthly active users each and WeChat (the most popular in Asia) has around 900 million. Due to its rapid growth, Telegram is now also on the leading list as it enables the creation of groups for up to 200,000 people. What is interesting is that you can develop channels and your own bot and train it to answer questions for your target audience.

Messaging apps provide the perfect opportunity to engage with young people who already use their phones to access the internet daily. They are easier to handle than live chats and represent a great way to develop customer relations with young people. Instant messaging conversations are asynchronous, meaning that you and your user don't have to be available to talk at the same time. It can be as real-time as live chat or as flexible as email. It is however essential to inform young people about when they can expect to get an answer from you.

These conversations are also archived. If you or the person who contacted you ever want to reference the conversation, everything is saved. It feels more personal, organic, and less constrained by time.

Other more developed features are Chatbots, such as the Eurodesk Mobility Advisor (EMA) on Messenger, a bot which ran on Eurodesk's Facebook Messenger until 2022. Artificial intelligence and bots are quickly becoming essential pieces of a messaging app strategy. When carried out effectively, it means you can have more conversations and help more people at once, and only involve an actual human when needed.

Usage of YouTube, Instagram and Facebook by youth age groups

According to Eurodesk #YouthInfo Survey 2022, Instagram is the most popular social media platform (about 79% of very or rather likely users), followed by Facebook (about 70% of very or rather likely users), and YouTube (about 66% of very or rather likely users) among young people. However, we observed differences between 13-35 year-olds.

Instagram seems to be popular across most age groups, with teenagers and youth in their twenties most likely to use this network when searching for information, as well as young people with different educational backgrounds. Only university graduates are less likely to use Instagram as their information source.

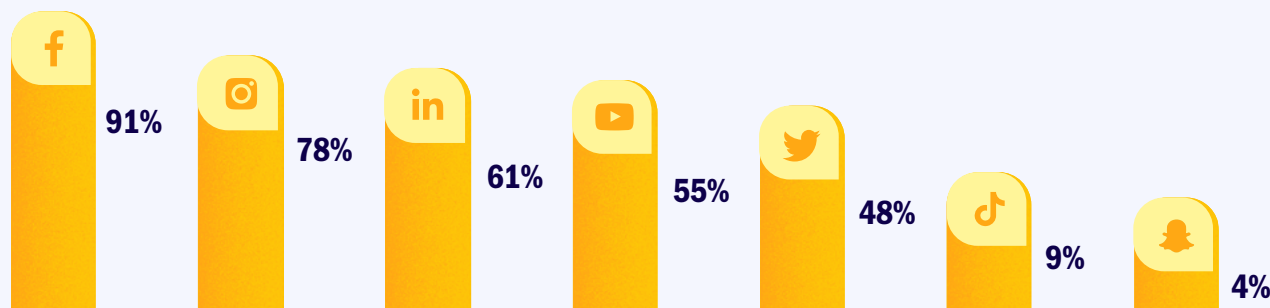
Facebook is seen as an information channel by older age groups and by those with higher completed education, and YouTube is more popular in younger age cohorts, as well as among young people with lower educational attainments. This may suggest that as Facebook became widely popular in the European context about a decade ago, the young people who created their user profiles then are still using them as information tools. On the other hand, YouTube is becoming increasingly popular, with younger age cohorts using YouTube more than Facebook.

These findings have consequences in providing mobility-related information to different groups of young people. It may be useful to tailor Facebook messages to the needs of young people over 20 and even over 30 years of age and to tailor YouTube videos to the needs of teenagers. Instagram seems to be universally popular among young people.

Eurodesk Youth Information Survey 2022

When we look at the channels used by communication specialists or marketers, we see that Facebook is the most popular channel, followed by Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. The use of TikTok or Snapchat remains limited. We can therefore see that specialists choose to create content for social media platforms that are widely used and on which their target audience is present.

Top social media platforms used by marketers worldwide in 2022



Source: [WordStream](#), 2022

3/ Social media trends

Social media is constantly changing which means that to have a good digital presence you need to be aware of any change or update within the field. Here you have some key advice on what to consider when you decide to be present on social media:

Social media marketing is on the rise – social media channels are encouraging you to pay to reach your audience. If you have not yet invested in social media marketing, you can see that your organic reach is decreasing from what it used to be. The average organic Facebook page post sees just 0.07% engagement¹. To counter this, you will have to develop a comprehensive communication strategy based on quality content and connect your online tools and platforms. This will support you in boosting your organic reach and will make the investment in social media marketing (e.g. Facebook Ads) much more worth it.

Mobile use is continuing to grow – from 2020 onwards, more than 50% of internet traffic comes from a mobile phone². Young people in particular do at least 60% of online searches from mobile devices and 74% of users access social media from a mobile device. In 2021, 95% of young people in the EU, 16-29 year-olds, used a mobile device such as a mobile phone, laptop and/or tablet to connect to the internet when away from home or work; compared to 80% for the overall population³. This means that we have to make sure that our content is responsive to mobile technology and that the formats we use correspond to user trends for mobile phones, e.g. adding subtitles to videos that are often watched without sound.

1 How the Facebook Algorithm Works in 2023 and How to Make it Work for You, [Hootsuite blog](#), Feb. 2022

2 Percentage of mobile device website traffic worldwide from 1st quarter 2015 to 2nd quarter 2022, [Statista](#), November 2022

3 Being young in Europe today - digital world, [Eurostat](#), April 2022

Videos are here to stay – the majority of content created across different social media platforms are short videos. Social media's success lies in the ability to condense information into easily digestible snippets of content that are long enough to maintain viewers' attention but short enough to make them want more. In 2019, the weekly time spent by users watching videos was an average of 6 hours and 48 minutes: an increase of 59% from 2016¹. Even YouTube has introduced the so-called "Shorts" to counter the way TikTok presents content. More information on this will be shared in the YouTube essentials section. Adam Mosseri, the head of Instagram, stated that creating video content will be the way to grow online.

Engagement is key – it's important to test ways to engage young people and encourage them to become active (e.g. Instagram stories with stickers for quizzes or that only involve tapping one option) and to use more and more options to create impactful and engaging ads and posts, such as canvases, stories and collections. Make use of all the features the different social media channels give you!

Personalised marketing offers a lot of opportunities – a lot of data is collected by social media providers, and you can use it to advertise your content to the right audience. Some tools for this are Facebook Analytics, Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager or Facebook Ads. These tools allow you to better target your public based on several criteria such as age group, interests or geographic location. Moreover, based on the engagement of these groups, you will be able to create custom-based audiences to remarket them for specific campaigns. If you would like to monitor the users on your website, you can use Facebook Retargeting Pixel, whose main duty is to track the behaviours of users who can then be retargeted on Facebook.

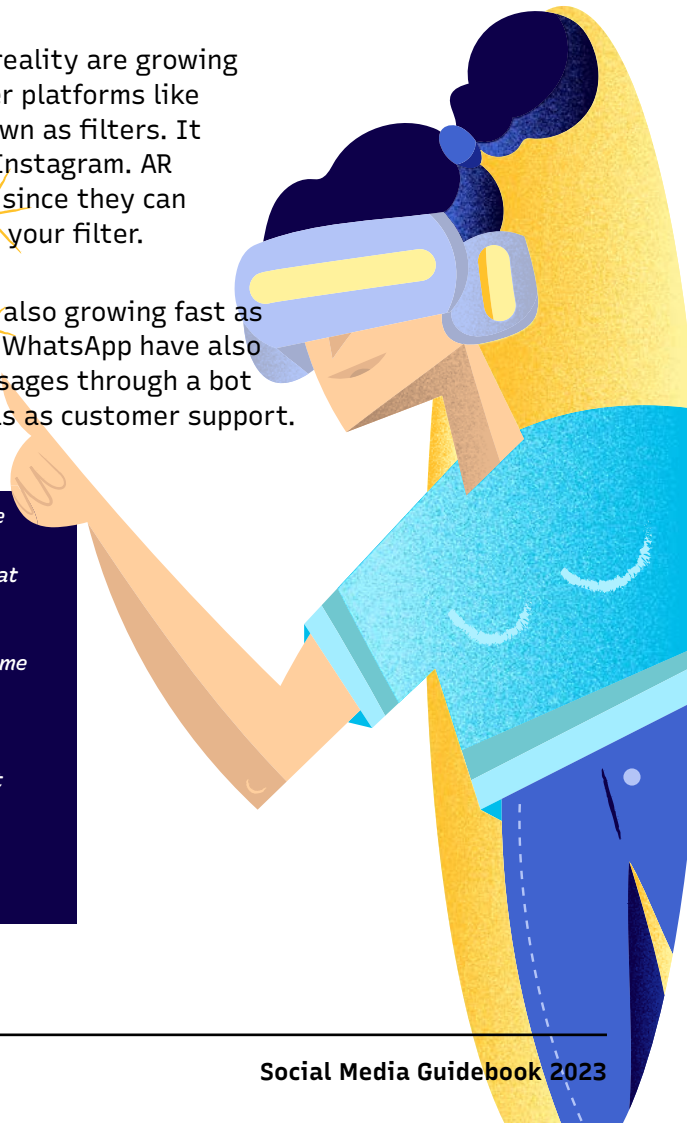
Rise of augmented reality – augmented and virtual reality are growing fast. In 2015, Snapchat started using AR which made other platforms like Instagram or TikTok create their own AR effects, also known as filters. It is also possible to have your own AR effect and use it on Instagram. AR filters could be a great opportunity for your organisation since they can be used by young people to share their experiences using your filter.

Artificially intelligent (AI) marketing tools – are also growing fast as we already mentioned for the BOTs. Apps like Telegram or WhatsApp have also managed to create channels in which you can answer messages through a bot and many organisations have started using these channels as customer support.

Artificial intelligence tools for marketing

An artificial intelligence marketing tool is a software or platform that uses AI technology to create automated decisions based on collected data. Such tools can be used when creating videos, using storytelling and personalised marketing. Some can help you with copywriting such as [Phrasee](#) on "brand language optimisation" [Copy.ai](#), [Quillbot](#) and [Grammarly](#) or [InstaText](#) on grammar and spelling checks, perform quality translations with [DeepL](#), send your newsletters at the right time for each user with [Seventh Sense](#), manage marketing data with [Optibot](#) and [AlbertAI](#), manage your ads with [Smartly.io](#), etc. Many more tools are available, some are free while others remain very expensive.

1 Why Video is Hottest Growth Hack Right Now, [Later Blog](#), July 2021



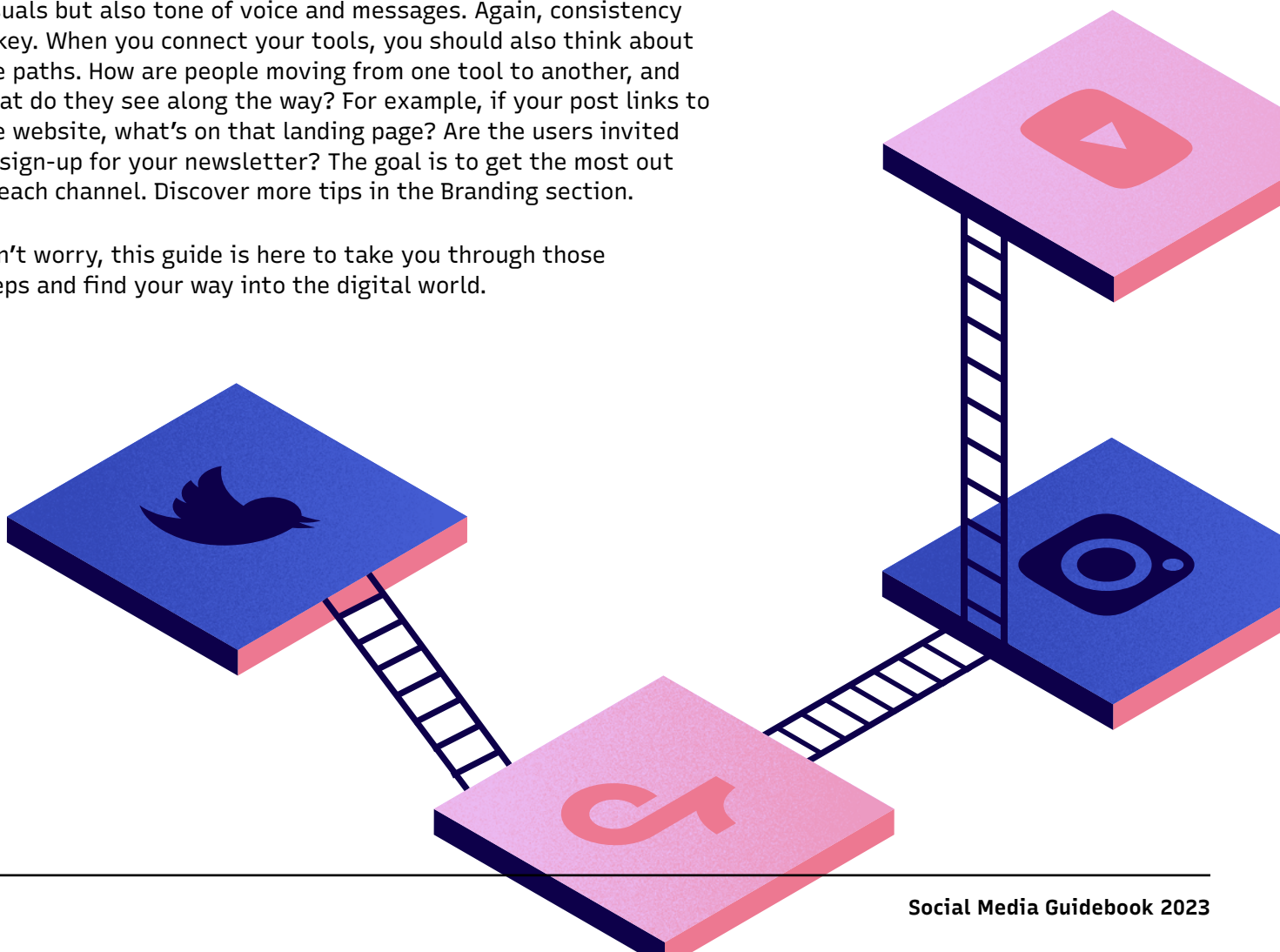
4/ Select and connect your social media platforms

Of course, you cannot possibly use all available channels, which means that you will have to make a selection and test what works best for your audience. Different tools can help you with managing your social media outputs as well as being up to date with the latest trends.

To see which ones are popular in your particular region/country, a good source of information is [Similar Web](#), which offers a list of the most used apps in your country/region depending on how popular it is (e.g. games, social, education...) and on the age groups using it. If we take "Belgium", "Android users" and "social" as a study group, for example, the top 5 used social media apps by young people are TikTok, Instagram, BeReal, Facebook and Twitter. The statistics are available for different periods, but it is highly recommendable to check them regularly as the market evolves rapidly!

Remember that you have to think of your global strategy and connect your different tools. This can be putting links to your social media accounts onto the website, newsletters, email signatures, publications, presentations, etc. Make sure that basic branding is in place, by ensuring that all those tools are not identical but belong to the same brand identity in terms of visuals but also tone of voice and messages. Again, consistency is key. When you connect your tools, you should also think about the paths. How are people moving from one tool to another, and what do they see along the way? For example, if your post links to the website, what's on that landing page? Are the users invited to sign-up for your newsletter? The goal is to get the most out of each channel. Discover more tips in the Branding section.

Don't worry, this guide is here to take you through those steps and find your way into the digital world.



3 basic tips to start:

1

FOLLOW TRENDS

It is essential to follow trends, to select and invest in the most relevant social media platforms, and adapt to their styles and usages, to reach a wide audience. Follow influencers and share with your peers.

TRENDS



2

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Check recent social media statistics to find your target audience. What groups are you targeting and what channels do they use? What are their interests and values?



3

KEEP TESTING

Test different strategies, monitor what works best, and what needs to be changed, improved or even dropped. You will get a better understanding of whom you are making content for.



CHAPTER 2

Knowing your audience

Knowing your audience is one of the basic rules of communication and it applies very well to social media. Without this knowledge and understanding, you cannot be sure how best to design your messages. It also makes it easier to know where to publish your marketing campaigns to have the most impact.

In the case of Eurodesk, our target audience is at the same time specific (young people) and broad, because young people are not a monolithic group with similar interests, feelings and needs. What Eurodesk is interested in is how young people look for information, what channels they use, what values are important to them, how they relate to the idea of going abroad, whether they know about our services and about mobility programmes, etc. The Eurodesk #YouthInfo Survey aims to collect this kind of data. This information can help you frame your messages, your tone and your voice on social media.

Understanding your audience goes deeper than just checking statistics on the most used platforms, it's about understanding if the words and the imagery you use connect with them. In this chapter, you will learn different ways to better know your audiences and how to engage with them to strengthen your brand and services.



Subchapters

1/ Get familiar with generational personas

2/ Go deeper by defining your own personas

3/ Talk to your users

4/ Get insights from your followers

5/ Use social media listening

1/ Get familiar with generational personas

Marketing agencies often refer to generational personas. If we take the target audience of a programme such as Erasmus+ (13–30 year-old), in 2023 the target audiences belong to three main groups:

- Millennials: Born 1981-1996
- Generation Z: Born 1997-2010
- Generation Alpha: Born 2010-2024

The three groups are the social media generations or digital natives. They grew up with Facebook, Snapchat, and, more recently, TikTok. They are used to integrating virtual and offline experiences. This does not mean that they necessarily possess the skills to safely use the tools, hence the importance of media and information literacy.

There are broad characteristics defined for each generation. According to McKinsey¹, Gen Z behaviours are anchored in one element: the search for truth. Gen-Zers value individual expression and avoid labels. They mobilise themselves for a variety of causes. They believe profoundly in the efficacy of dialogue to solve conflicts and improve the world. Finally, they make decisions and relate to institutions in a highly analytical and pragmatic way. In contrast, the previous generation, Millennials, sometimes called the “me generation” are more idealistic, confrontational, and less willing to accept diverse points of view. However, Millennials are more willing to accept the diversity between subcultures and come to terms with these differences than previous generations.

Understanding these generations has strategic implications for organisations like Eurodesk. It will help you design services that appeal to these generations, and a brand culture that resonates with them (digital branding is tackled in the next section).



2/ Go deeper by defining your own personas

A target audience is a group of people you want to reach with marketing campaigns to generate interest in your services. It should accurately represent your potential users: you need to understand their real needs, desires, concerns and motivations. To achieve this, we recommend using personas which will provide a wide range of young people your organisation is likely to interact with. This will bring a more human and individualised approach to your potential users.

¹ [‘True Gen’](#): Generation Z and its implications for companies, McKinsey and Company, 2018

Personas are “fictional characters” that are more specific than the target audience and represent the primary characteristics of a group or segment of your audience. It includes data gathered about your target audience such as:

- Personal characteristics (age, gender, background, etc.)
- Lifestyle and interests (needs, motivation, etc.)
- Where they spend their time online
- Where they look for information
- etc.

This exercise will really help you put yourself in your users’ shoes. Once you have created a set of personas, test them with real users to see if your findings are valid!

Some of the proposed Eurodesk activities on service design, using tools such as personas and user journey maps, can be found in Module 6 “Communication” of the Eurodesk Qualifying Training Programme for Eurodesk Mobility Advisors. Check them out, they can help you better understand youth expectations!



PERSONA EXAMPLE

Nicola / Young Person

Nicola shares a small flat with three other students in his hometown. He works in a local supermarket at the weekend. He would like to start working as soon as possible to become independent and start earning money.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 22 years old
- Male
- From a small village in Slovakia
- Single
- Student in communication
- Not decided on future career

INTERESTS

- Hanging out with his friends
- Playing soccer once a week
- Watching horror movies

WANTS AND NEEDS

- Get a paid internship that will open doors for him
- Spend more time with his friends
- Be financially autonomous

FRUSTRATIONS

- His student job takes up a lot of his free time
- He has no network to find a good internship
- He puts a lot of pressure on himself to determine his career plan
- He has no girlfriend

SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS / ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- Uses TikTok, Instagram and WhatsApp to communicate with his friends and to have some fun; follows YouTube influencers specialised in horror movies
- Looks for information by using search engines on his mobile phone
- Uses the internet for his studies using his old laptop

EU/YOUTH PROGRAMMES/VOLUNTEERING

- He is part of a local football team
- He has never volunteered
- He has never participated in EU funded programmes, and he does not believe that Erasmus+ is a possibility for him
- For him Europe is something quite far away, although he feels vaguely European

In the case of Nicola, a trigger could be to show him a video ad that shows him that with an Erasmus internship abroad, you develop a network, build skills and reinforce your career prospects.



3/ Talking to your users

To collect direct feedback from your users, just talk with them! It can be through social media or your newsletter, for example using surveys. You can also learn a lot by engaging with them through quizzes or open questions on social media, as well as by reading their posts and comments.

If you want a deeper understanding, running interviews and/or focus groups is the way to go. You will learn a lot about them and collect insights on their expectations, behaviours, etc. You will also discover what they think of your current social media platforms and they will share precious recommendations.

Make sure to collect feedback from various groups in order to get a broad perspective and not leave out some groups of (potential) users. We also recommend that you talk with representative associations (minority groups, young people with disabilities, etc.) to be as inclusive and accessible as possible.

Service Design

One of the key methods to understand the needs of young people and to find solutions is Service Design. It provides a process: listening to the problems (e.g. through field studies, focus groups), developing concepts (solutions) and testing them with prototypes. This approach mirrors the will to connect and engage with the users, in our case young people, in the development of the services.



4/ Get insights from your followers

Have a look at the insights of your social media platforms to analyse the age segment, gender and location of your followers. You will also be able to see the time at which they are more active so you can plan your content accordingly.

Platforms usually have their own analytics, but there are social media management tools¹ that might be able to gather information from all platforms in one place.



Facebook offers insights about the audience through Meta Business Suite. If you have connected your Instagram account to your Facebook page, you will be able to get the information for both in the same place.



Instagram has Instagram Insights, but there are also free tools like Social Rank that support gathering information about your followers. If your social media is connected to other tools like Hootsuite or Later then you will be able to get insights from them as well.



TikTok insights can be found inside the app itself. Also, if the business mode is activated in your account, you will get more information about your content, such as the average watched time of your clips.



YouTube has its own analytics. To access them you need to create a YouTube channel. It will allow you to check the number of views, subscribers and time spent on the videos.

¹ See list of tools p.19

Analysing your audience can help you segment it into sub-groups, either by age or interests. For example, if you see that a group of followers is showing interest in volunteering posts, you could target them for a paid ad related to the European Solidarity Corps; this is especially useful if your ad budget is limited.

5/ Use social media listening

Using social media listening can be interesting to understand what your audience thinks about you, by monitoring mentions of your brand and services as well as references to your competitors. Brands use such strategies to adapt/improve their marketing campaigns.

If we take the example of a youth information service that tests a new offer (e.g. a weekly “Euro-coffee”), social media listening is about collecting data to perform a sentiment analysis of what people are saying. Do people like this offer? Did they share it with their friends and what features did they put forward (it is fun, free, etc.). This will allow you to market such events even better in your next campaign.

Numerous tools can help you get started with social listening, such as [Audiense](#), [Hootsuite](#), and [Mentionlytics](#).



Social Media Management Tools

Buffer

Buffer makes it simple to schedule posts, queue posts, build your following and analyse performance. Manage all your accounts in one place with features supporting Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn and Pinterest. A free account allows 3 social profiles and 30 scheduled posts, additional paid features exist.

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is a paid social media management system with a 30-day free trial. It allows you to use several social media profiles, follow real-time analytics and RSS feed, schedule an unlimited amount of posts and operate at least 10 profiles in their cheapest plan.

Later

Later is a paid social media management platform and link-in bio tool for different social media platforms. It allows planning, analysing, and publishing content in advance. With the cheapest pack, it allows you to have one social set, meaning you have access to 6 different platforms.

Sprout Social

Sprout Social is a paid all-in-one social media management platform which, apart from allowing you to schedule posts, gives you analytics to better understand your audience.

Linktr.ee

Linktr.ee is a freemium social media reference landing page. It allows you to put a lot of different links for your audience in the same space. It is very easy to navigate and create an account. It can be put as the link in the bio and users can easily access it and press the link they're most interested in.

CHAPTER 3

Using Digital Branding Strategies

Social media are natural environments for brands. They are places where consistency is key; where showing personality is demanded, and where the goal is to build a long-term relationship with your audience by building trust and closeness with them. Considering these are some of the primary goals of branding, it makes perfect sense that companies and organisations with a well-built strategy will have a tremendous advantage over others.

Nowadays it is not enough to use the trendiest apps or be present everywhere. Having a brand strategy is essential as it helps with aligning goals, purposes, approaches and methods in ways that are both creative and efficient. An organisation without a brand is like a person with no personality. It is difficult to connect with them, to understand what they want or to care about them.

Digital branding is about implementing your brand strategy in the digital space. It involves establishing your presence on a variety of client touch points (website, social media, platforms...) and making the most of them to communicate the goals of your brand, its personality and values. Digital branding is today an essential key to build a meaningful connection with your audience.

Among all digital touch points, social media platforms are especially good tools to convey the voice of your brand, as they give you many opportunities to express it; from your status updates to your posts and the way in which you respond to comments. Your social media activity can be used to shape your identity by progressively defining your position on diverse topics.

Discover in this chapter how to use digital branding strategies to stand out from the digital noise.

Subchapters

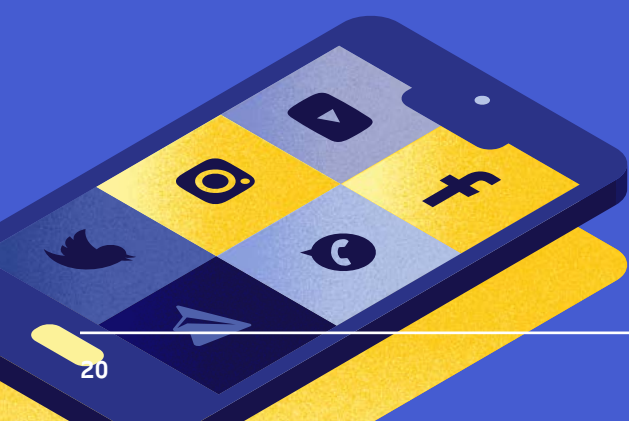
1/ Define your values and unique selling points

2/ Create your own brand persona

3/ Make sure your brand resonates with youth culture

4/ Create a cohesive visual identity for your brand

5/ Set goals, objectives and performance indicators



A few definitions

BRANDING

The process where an organisation/company defines its unique personality to create value, human connection and a positive perception of its services/products in its users/customers' minds.

MARKETING

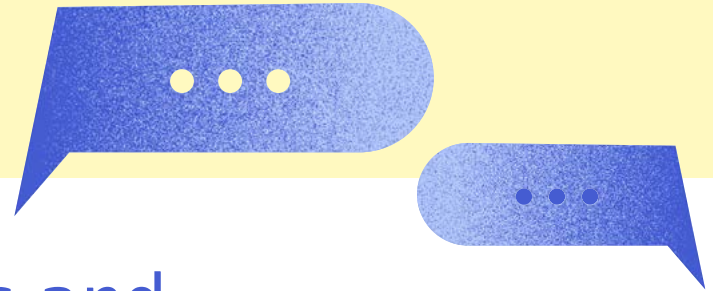
A set of techniques aiming at influencing people to adopt behaviours or beliefs and putting the audience's desires and needs at the centre.

DIGITAL BRANDING

The implementation of a brand strategy in a digital environment.

DIGITAL MARKETING

The application of marketing techniques in a digital environment.



1/ Define your values and unique selling points

So, what to do? If you haven't done it yet, go to the drawing table and develop a strategy. Figure out what your goals are, who your audience is and what their needs are. Consider what values support your activity and guide your choices every day. Be specific and truthful. Many successful brands are built on lies, but the price to maintain them is exorbitant. Being genuine will always be the most simple, cost-efficient and moral way to build trust with anyone.

Here are some guiding questions to help you define your brand identity:



Purpose

Why do you do what you do? What inspires you when you deliver your services? What does having a meaningful brand mean to you?



Mission

What's your brand's mission statement? What's your end goal? What metrics would define your success in the long-term? How do you define brand success?



Vision

What's your vision for your organisation? How do you envision your services unfolding behind the scenes and online?



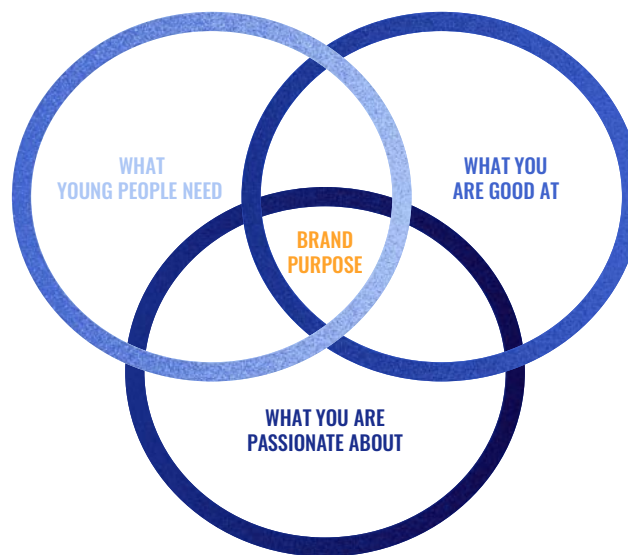
Values

What specific values does your brand encompass? What about creating a tagline that emphasises these values?

Once you've identified your brand's values, write them out in a value statement. Your value statement will be the foundation of your brand's personality.



Another important element to consider is your audience's preferences, behaviours, and expectations when building this identity. What do young people care about and how does it relate to your values? Put forward personality traits that match both your values and their interests. The previous section provides hints on better understanding your target audience.



What's unique about Eurodesk?

At Eurodesk, we have defined our values as follows:



These values are not meant to simply be beautiful words. They lead our day-to-day work and are the moral contract we have with our partners and our young audience. This is why it is important to convey them on any media channel. Millennials, just like the following generations, wish to make the world a better place, while negatively reacting to business motivations (*2022 Deloitte Millennial Survey*). It's therefore important to position ourselves as an independent, impartial, reliable and free source of information as well as a contributor to positive social change, and a not-for-profit or public institution.

2/ Create your own brand persona

One of the main goals of a brand strategy is to build a positive relationship with your audiences and the key element of any long-lasting relationship is trust. To establish trust you need two main ingredients. The first is a persona: which means displaying human characteristics and traits of personality in your communication in order to connect with your audiences on an emotional and social level. The second ingredient is consistency. When meeting someone, the persistence of their personality traits over time is what informs us about whether we can trust them or not. For Eurodesk, this dimension has particular importance, as the core of our work is human connection.

Having a persona will help you define your unique voice by defining your style and tone:

tone

The emotion behind the content.

style

The way you communicate your message. This relates to how you communicate your tone through methods such as brand-specific language and sentence structure.

You should always refer to your persona when developing content to reflect your brand accurately and consistently. We strongly recommend writing a brand style guide that will contain everything your teams need from colour palette, to brand voice and tone, to logos and imagery.

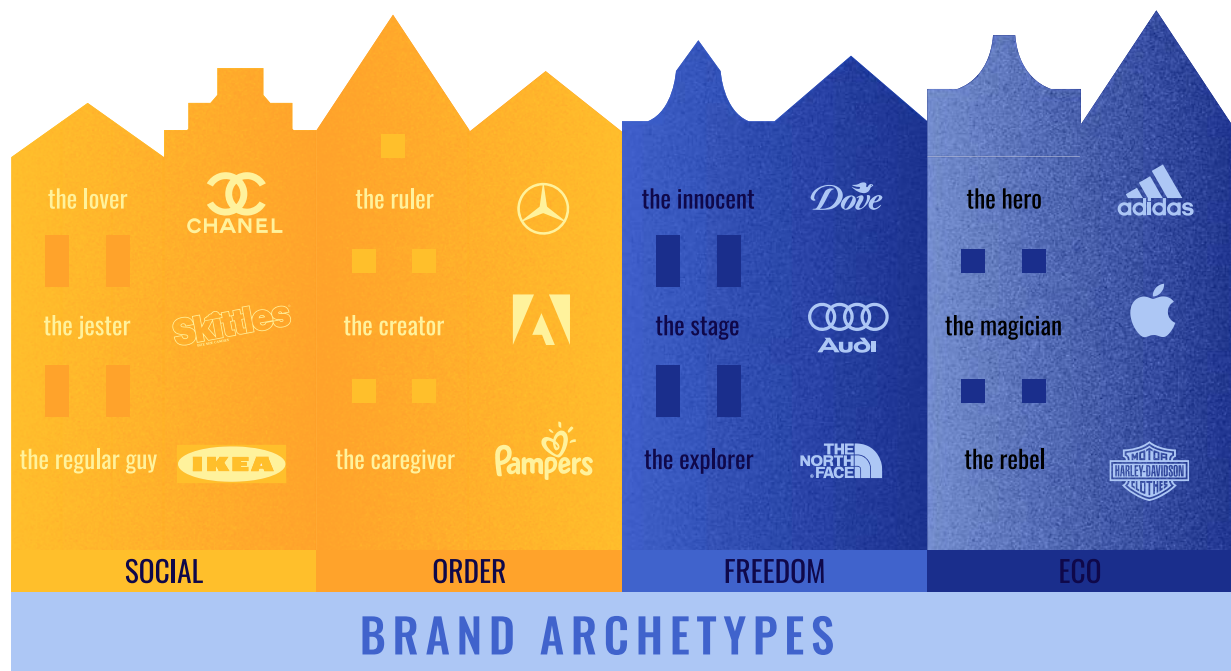
To help you define this tone, you can ask yourself questions as if your brand was a human being:

- How would a Eurodesk Mobility Advisor (EMA) approach a young person?
- What tone would an EMA use?
- What does an EMA care about?
- What drives an EMA to work at Eurodesk?

Be clear on who you are and make sure you communicate this identity to your teams and target audiences.



Eurodesk Brandbook *The goal of Eurodesk is to guide young people in their development through international connections and mobility. The relationship shall be respectful, friendly, caring and empowering. When it comes to persona, Eurodesk is a youth information worker close to young people, like an "older sibling". The tone is rather informal but knowledgeable, trustworthy and open. This should be reflected on all content produced for social media. The Eurodesk persona is further described in the Eurodesk Brand book.*



3/ Make sure your brand resonates with youth culture

It's important to develop your understanding of the "youth culture" in your country. This is what we refer to as the "youth focus" competence in our Eurodesk Mobility Advisor Competence Framework. Having a sound knowledge about it will help you with brand storytelling. Youngsters feel strong connections to brands they associate with having caring affiliations and partnerships. According to them, brands should have empathy within the community and social pressures, have ethical values and be concerned with social issues such as sustainable development, mental health or the ongoing conflicts in the world¹.

It's important to define what you want to communicate and find your style, as this shall underpin all the content you will produce online to build up your brand identity.



The key to creating quality branded content is to share something valuable with your audience. What problems need addressing, and how does your audience want to engage with the answers? By consistently predicting and answering your audience's questions in an engaging way, they'll want to seek your brand out for reliable information in the future.

Eurodesk case

Young people value having access to true and real information. Eurodesk is a non-for-profit youth information network, it therefore has no commercial goals and acts for the public good. For instance, the fact that we check our sources is important because it provides a quality label to the information. How is it conveyed in our messages? Moreover, young people engage

more when they see peers or influencers speaking about the topics they care about. In the case of Eurodesk, it can be young people who went abroad and benefited from the experience. The more personal, the more engagement content will receive.

¹ Youth marketing – 5 key themes & trends, [Door 22](#), June 2019

4/ Create a cohesive visual identity for your brand

A cohesive, well-designed brand offers benefits like less money spent on advertising, stronger brand recognition and positive brand perception. We have already mentioned the importance of a consistent tone, the same applies to your design. Your logo, colours, fonts, videos must be consistent across all platforms. You should post images and graphics of the same theme and colour scheme to create a feed that stands out and entices users to follow you. A young person clicking on a link on TikTok and arriving on your website should feel in the same environment.

Digitally savvy generations have grown up with quality media and video games, your communication will be judged through their eyes. If your brand has boring visuals, the chances of attracting Millennials and Gen Zers are very low. Be consistent while avoiding repetitive and stock images as those generations value authenticity. Graphics shouldn't be overcrowded with too many different colours, fonts and long texts. Make sure to include captions for your pictures. They shouldn't be too long as most people don't read extended texts on social media, but they should allow you to communicate a bit of who you are (your values, how you mean to help your audience, or simply your personality through the tone of your voice). Be straight to the point and choose your words. One single well-chosen word can say a lot about you. Check out our tool selection below and our section on how to create engaging videos!

Eurodesk case

In the case of the Eurodesk network, various templates and visuals are developed by graphists at European level using Adobe and Canva. National coordinators can translate and adapt them

to their national/local realities using Canva. We therefore offer professional visuals with customised options to maintain the consistency of the brand.

5/ Set goals, objectives and performance indicators

You should ask yourself what success would look like for you, meaning what you want to achieve. We suggest you set long-term and short-term goals. Afterwards, you can create objectives to achieve your goals. The narrower you do this, the easier it will be to measure the effectiveness of your strategy and have it under control. Baby steps lead to big things! Depending on your goals and priorities, the strategy can be different in terms of approach and tools used.

Eurodesk case

In the case of Eurodesk the goals could be:

- Building a sense of community
- Helping young people to be active citizens
- Informing young people about mobility opportunities
- Informing youth workers and stakeholders about youth policies / programmes
- Informing youth workers about best practices



Your strategy will be the base from which you develop the topics and the content types to feed your social media apps. However, don't think you need to have everything figured out before creating your accounts. You can learn by doing. Social media platforms are perfect places to test ideas and learn about our audiences. Creating content and writing copies will allow you to discover your voice and refine your identity as an organisation. Finally, be patient and caring. Building a long-lasting brand that matters to people can take years. On social media, what you need to look out for is not the number of followers, but the quality of the interactions you have with them. The rest will follow.

For measuring your goals, we suggest that you set up key performance indicators (KPIs) but also SMART goals to easily measure your impact (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely).

Here are some examples:

- 1.** You want to increase engagement: compare your social media campaign period (do you have more likes, followers, reshares, comments?) You can also test popular content: publish the same information twice (e.g. changing the approach of the text and visuals) and see what people prefer!
- 2.** You want to increase the traffic on your website: did you see an increase in visits coming from your social media channels (you can monitor this thanks to Google Analytics and Google Search Console).

Performing a digital brand audit will allow you to understand how your brand is performing and how it has grown over time. A comprehensive audit means you will look at every aspect of your digital presence, including website traffic, social media interactions, search engine ranking, eNewsletters opening rates, etc. It allows you to identify weak points in your marketing approach and develop a strategy to address them. The next step is to develop goals to improve your brand strategy.



Source: Content Marketing Institute

Brand Case study - Nike

Young people represent the main consumers of the brand (over 60% of its total audience); Nike is present wherever young people are - Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, among others. Nike's marketing materials embody energy, passion, and determination - from its slogan "Just Do It", to its mission statement "To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world". The images and videos across Nike's website and social pages are colourful and fast-paced, with Olympic athletes in action. And if you watch a Nike ad on TV, you'll be shown the same personality. At its core, Nike embodies heroism, transcendence, and the overcoming of one's limitations. It's about realising one's full potential, taking down barriers, being brave, determined, and resilient, hence the "Just Do It". Nike consistently shares its values and messages of equality in sports, which

resonates particularly well with young generations.



Beyond supporting diversity (e.g. Nike Pro Hijab campaign) Nike's aspirational messages focus on the individual athletes and not on the products, which also connects well with young people. A last example is the sneaker customisation feature, allowing consumers to design and order a unique shoe made to their specifications online, which has been a hit with Gen Zers.



Basic graphic design

Here is an extensive list of free tools to use to perfect your graphic and video design. All tools are free and some have additional paid features.



Adobe Spark – <https://www.adobe.com/wam/sprk.html> - Desktop and Mobile app

A photo, video and web editing tool that helps you to easily create beautiful images, videos, and web pages that make you stand out.



Adobe Color CC – <https://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel> - Desktop

Create your colour palettes with matching colours (refer to Eurodesk Brand Book for colour palette), based on different colour rules. You can also upload a picture to do automatic colour sampling.



Behance - www.behance.net - Desktop and Mobile app

A big collection of artworks. Get inspired by design projects from all over the world.



Background remover - www.remove.bg - Desktop

This tool allows you to remove the background of any picture. You can also add a different plain background.



Canva – www.canva.com - Desktop and Mobile app

One-stop-shop for easily creating layout designs for various purposes. Setting up an account is required.



Flaticon - www.flaticon.com - Desktop

Flaticon is the largest search engine of free icons in the world. Don't forget to provide attribution when you use the icons!



Font Pair – www.fontpair.co - Desktop

Having trouble finding matching fonts to use in your layouts? Font Pair will suggest Google Fonts that go well together.



Google Fonts – <https://fonts.google.com> - Desktop

Download free fonts to use for your print and web projects. Browse through Serif, Sans Serif, Display, Handwriting and Monospace fonts (refer to Eurodesk Brand Book for font references).



Infogram – www.infogram.com - Desktop

Infogram is an intuitive visualisation tool that empowers people and teams to create infographics. There is a maximum number of infographics that can be created with a free account.



Polarr – www.photoeditor.polarr.co - Desktop and Mobile app

Polarr is a feature-rich free online photo editor. You can use filters for automated photo improvement or edit the settings separately if you are an advanced user.



Resizing – www.resizing.app - Desktop

This tool allows you to resize, optimise, convert or crop any picture by uploading it to the website.



Unsplash – www.unsplash.com - Desktop and Mobile app

Get access to free, beautiful, high-resolution photos for your layout design. All photos published on Unsplash are licensed under Creative Commons Zero which means you can copy, modify, distribute and use the photos for free. Even if it's not mandatory, it is always nice to reference the author and source when using them.



Pexels – <https://www.pexels.com> - Desktop

All photos and videos on Pexels are free to use. You can modify the photos and videos from Pexels. Attribution is not required, however, giving credit to the photographer or Pexels is always appreciated.

CHAPTER 4

Creating engagement is the key

In the world of social media marketing, the word “engagement” gets thrown around a lot, but few know how to master it. Engagement is not easy to produce, you have to know your target groups, what interests them, and what the new trends are. Planning, managing and evaluating are therefore important steps in making social media magic.

First, it is important to keep in mind that user participation follows more or less a 90–9–1 rule:

- **90%** of users are lurkers, meaning quiet participants/ audience, they read or observe but rarely participate.
- **9%** of users contribute from time to time, but other priorities dominate their time, they are only partially engaged.
- **1%** of users participate a lot and account for most contributions.

Although participation will always be somewhat unequal, there are ways to better equalise it, including by making it easier to contribute (e.g. easy rating systems) and by using rewards to broaden your participant base (e.g. offering promotional material for those answering your survey).

In this chapter you will find a couple of pieces of advice on how to engage your target group.



Subchapters

1/ Create engaging posts

2/ Be reactive and build an ecosystem

3/ Build a community and engage young people in content creation

4/ Use eNewsletters

1/ Create engaging posts

The 80/20 rule of promotion - several social media guides emphasise the 80/20 rule of promotion. That is, your feed should be made up of 80% entertaining and engaging content and 20% of promotional content about your organisation and what it offers. This keeps your feed from feeling like a sales pitch. Below are several ways how this can be done.



Time your posts to perfection! - the more engagement a post receives, the more likely Facebook or Instagram's algorithm is going to reward it with reach. By posting when your followers are more active, the more reach and likes you'll receive. Make sure you are aware of the current behavioural patterns of your users, since they are likely to fluctuate.

Ask a question - people like to think things through, they like to hear from other thinkers, and they also want other people to know what they are thinking. Try using one of these "What do you think about...?" strategies:



- **Study their personality.** Post a question that invites people to share their opinion or weigh in on something. But then be ready to answer/comment too.
- **Play the "test your knowledge" game.** If done in a youthful way, it usually works very well to engage your audience.
- **Post a poll.** It's easy to create and, on top of engaging your followers, you might learn something meaningful about them too. This could be a new routine (the poll of the week/month).
- **This or that.** Allow your followers to choose between different options. For example, you can ask them if they prefer staying at home or doing a mobility exchange abroad, or about their favourite social media channel. This kind of information will be valuable as it will allow you to get the information you need directly from your audience.
- **Just ask.** Simply post a question. Asking followers relevant, provocative and timely questions creates some of the most engaging and thought-provoking social media activities of all.



Make it emotional - social media has become an expression machine, through videos, hashtags, emojis, GIFs and memes. Social media enables people to express themselves in whichever way they like. By using a hashtag, you connect communities around topics, or by encouraging your followers to share a video or photo, you show them that you listen and pay attention. If some of your posts connect to young people's emotions, their interest in your content will grow.

Incentivising content - a useful way of attracting the attention of your users is by using the art of incentives. Competitions are one example, but another successful practice is gamification. People like to play games, compete, keep score and most of all, win. Your engagement strategy doesn't need to be interactive or gamified all the time, but planning a couple of highlights during the year, big or small, can be a good way to keep your followers active.

Laugh a little - don't be afraid to show off your humour. Social media is a place for humorous images and satire. Make memes, and GIFs or share humorous content that is relevant to your sector, e.g. the account "Student Problems" on Facebook. TikTok is the ideal platform for showing off your humour and sharing daily situations with which young people might identify.

Take advantage of trending topics - trending topics represent a way for brands to capitalise on the moment. While the topic is trending, you can gain high numbers in engagement statistics, e.g. FIFA World Cup, European Youth Event, EU Elections, Pride, a famous artist visiting the country or a local happening relevant to your community. Stay updated!

Conduct an interview - live chats, Q&A sessions and interviews are becoming more popular. Whether through Facebook, Instagram Live, YouTube, Twitch or podcast, interviewing a relevant professional in your sector, a stakeholder or an influencer is a good mix of providing information, education and entertainment. Social interviews are best when they are informal and come off as authentic to your audience. You can then repurpose your social videos into blog posts, quotes, more serious videos or even podcasts.



Power of emotions in going “viral”

On social media, the most successful messages tend to be the ones that get the most attention and have high emotional content. There are a number of studies suggesting that emotional content can help messages go viral, and more particularly 2 of the 6 basic emotions, namely happiness and surprise. Passing on a positive emotional experience makes others feel good, which in turn makes the sharer look good¹. Including an element of surprise can help magnify the content’s positive valence. Research on viral emotions continues to prove that going viral is not a matter of luck, as was previously thought, but rather a matter of creating a powerful emotional experience. Marketers who understand how to strike the right emotional chords with their messaging can greatly increase their chances of viral success².



happiness



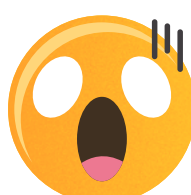
sadness



surprise



disgust



fear



anger

1 The Emotional Combinations That Make Stories Go Viral, Kerry Jones, Kelsey Libert, and Kristin Tynski, Harvard Business Review, 2016

2 Ibid

2/ Be reactive and build an ecosystem

Respond to your followers - it sometimes takes time to comment on your posts; a good deed would be to invest the time to reply to them as well. A timely response is a game changer as replies have become something that everyone expects. If nothing else, replying shows that you listen to your followers and those who interact with you. This will increase your users' loyalty (see marketing funnel diagram).

Create a daily, weekly or monthly series - start a series where you have the opportunity to interact with your followers regularly. It can relate to tackling topics and issues related to mobility such as stories from peers, a live chat sharing tips on different areas connected to mobility or a series sharing what opportunities there are in different fields (e.g. volunteering). By regularly scheduling these posts or sessions, followers can develop the habit of following your content and engaging with your channel.

Reshare others' content - don't be afraid to let your followers do the talking. Remember, not all content on your social feed has to be your own. Social media wisdom says that it shouldn't be. Promote other relevant organisations, partners, brands, articles and photos from the youth and mobility sector, and it shows that you are also active and staying up to date with what is relevant.

Bring your colleagues along - instead of solely relying on your brand page to share your latest content, why not ask your team members or colleagues to do some of the liftings? With more shares, reposts, retweets and likes, the posts gain more visibility and social media algorithms are more prone to support the post. Being a network, national coordinators can easily create a list of social media channels from other countries to mutually support each other. Tag your colleagues on posts, interact with their content to increase your visibility within the network and make your account grow!

Recycle and repurpose your content - think about all the planning, effort and time it takes to create your content. It makes sense to try to squeeze as much as you can out of every post to make sure that it is successful. Normally, content doesn't reach everyone, so it is recommended to consider additional ways of promoting it, beyond its original format, e.g. use quotes from your content to repurpose it into a nice image (e.g. using Canva), use snippets of a podcast for sneak-peaks or trailers. Finding ways to repurpose your content will save time constantly chasing new ideas.

Collaborate with other organisations/brands - collaborate with other organisations to create a win-win situation. Each partner gets wider exposure as you reach new potential followers. Social media is the ideal platform for co-marketing because it is very easy to synchronise your efforts.

Use personalised marketing - use data provided by users to offer them a unique experience with your brand. The main ways you can segment your audience are by geographic location, age, gender, etc. One example is to ask users to select their interests (e.g. volunteering, learning, working abroad) when they subscribe to your newsletter and then just send them the information they signed up for.



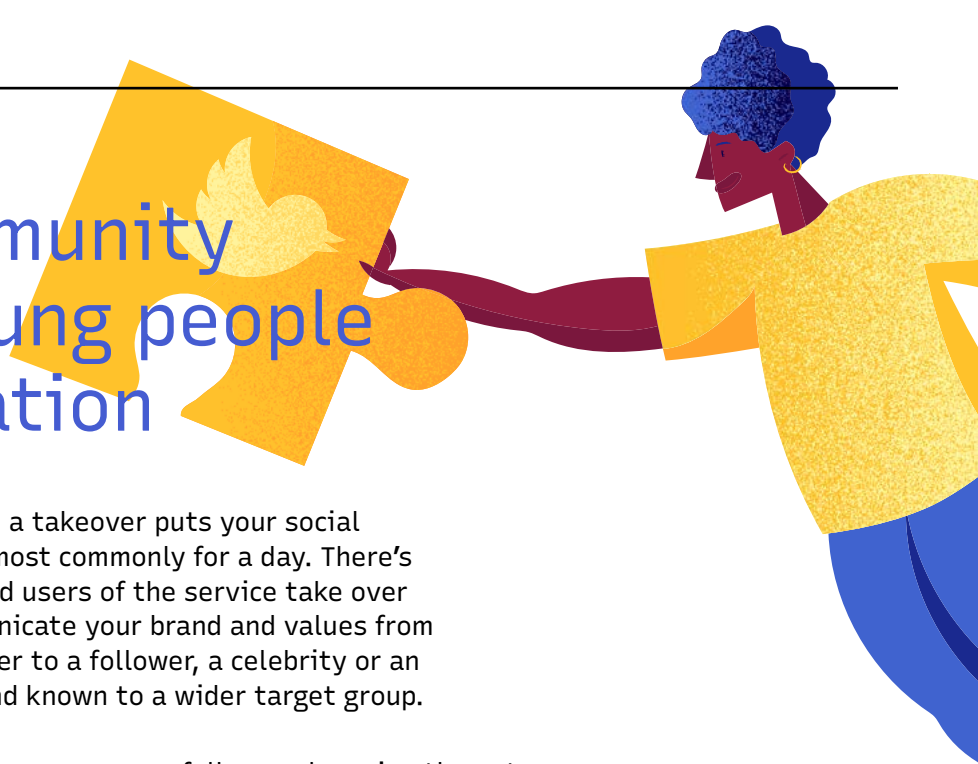
3/ Build a community and engage young people in content creation

Conduct a social media takeover – a takeover puts your social media account in someone else's hands, most commonly for a day. There's something fresh in watching followers and users of the service take over social media, it is a possibility to communicate your brand and values from another perspective, and handing this over to a follower, a celebrity or an influencer is a great way to get your brand known to a wider target group.

Give your followers the spotlight – engage your followers by going the extra mile. Sharing or interacting with their content is a great step in showing that you are paying attention. Sharing their work, their experiences or highlighting their commitment to support you is a great way to shine the light on your followers, volunteers or colleagues and what their engagement means to you.

Share a milestone – celebrate with your followers whenever you reach a milestone. Perhaps a new hire, new publications, small victories as big ones. Sharing these moments with your followers shows that you are growing and doing well.

Working with influencers – influencer marketing has become an alternative way of working with influential people to communicate your brand. Influencers are people who manage to build a community around themselves on a specific topic, it can be related to anything that comes to mind: make-up, fashion, gaming, nutrition and healthy lifestyle or even travelling. What influencers do well is to review or share their opinion on a specific issue. What might be interesting to explore for Eurodesk is how to collaborate with influencers who have been on mobility and are willing to share their experience with their followers. They know how to reach out and engage their communities around different topics. Influencers can work through YouTube, Blogs, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and podcasts, depending on what their creative way of connecting with young people is.



Youth Participation in Youth Information

Within the youth field, it is increasingly valued to give a voice to young people. The most common way to do that is through a takeover. On the one hand, young people who contribute to your social media channels are motivated to share their experiences; on the other, those watching are inspired to do the same. In this situation, you allow a young person to create their own content via stories or posts during a specific timeframe. For instance, you could invite a young person to share their journey during DiscoverEU or share a week of their participation in a European Solidarity Corps project. This does not necessarily require sharing your account login, you can collect their proposals and post them yourself. You'll have to establish key instructions (how to record, consent forms to sign, etc.), deadlines, and roles. Discover more examples in the Eurodesk and ERYICA guide on Youth Participation in Youth Information (2022)¹.



Examples from the Eurodesk Network



Eurodesk Netherlands

Ever since the launch of our Instagram profile (@goeurope_nl) in July 2017, we have used it as a tool for peer-to-peer communication, by "following" a Dutch young person abroad for one week. As the main goals for us are to inspire and inform our Instagram followers, we decided not to let the young person log in to our account and share whatever they want, but manage it ourselves and make sure the (mobility) information shared is correct. They send us 7-10 photos with a short description before the week starts. Of course, it's up to them to decide what kind of photos they would like to show from their adventure abroad - they know best what other young people want to see!

Eurodesk Germany

We organise takeovers for our Instagram account (@rausvonzuhause): Young people who are currently abroad get access to our Instagram account and report live from their experiences in the stories. There, they can also answer questions directly if there are any from the community. The whole thing usually lasts 5-7 days. The takeover is announced in a feed post where the young person introduces themselves. You can see which takeovers we've already had in the story highlights. We have had stories from Mongolia, New Zealand, Croatia, Finland, China, Italy, Spain, Iran, Switzerland, USA, Luxemburg, South Africa, Argentina, France, Bolivia, Ireland and Ghana. In this way, youngsters get the spotlight to share their experiences and hopefully it can motivate others too.

4/ Use eNewsletters

It is important not to forget more traditional channels such as eNewsletters. These are still very popular among young people. A carefully crafted, well-designed newsletter can be invaluable in promoting Eurodesk branding and services. It helps you build your community by sending regular reminders that you are there, builds your credibility and provides a tool to share the most recent and relevant news and opportunities. eNewsletters can appear to be time-consuming, but they don't have to be, and should not be. They should not contain too much information, mainly links that young people can scan through and click for more information (therefore generating more traffic on your website and on the European Youth Portal). Be concise and put only the most important information upfront. Try not to include pictures or images that take too long to load. Several powerful tools will help you build and manage email newsletters with ease. At Eurodesk Brussels Link we are using Stripo and Sendy, as they offer a huge template selection and loads of features that make it easy to run a great-looking campaign that displays well on nearly all email accounts. Sendy helps us manage databases of contacts and segment our audiences (e.g. young people and stakeholders interested in youth issues). Both tools allow us to create impactful newsletters

For newsletters, it is really important to comply with GDPR rules (check [EU official website](#)). You need to collect freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous consent (Art. 32). To achieve compliance, you have to adopt new practices:

1. New consumer opt-in permission rules
2. Proof of consent storing systems (this information is visible in most email marketing service providers)
3. A method through which subscribers can ask for their personal information to be removed

Neither soft opt-in nor soft opt-out approaches are allowed, so we recommend using double opt-in to align with GDPR compliance requirements (when individuals need to confirm their email address before being added to your email list).



Newsletter from Eurodesk Italy

Examples from the Eurodesk Network

Eurodesk Italy has a monthly newsletter in which they share opportunities that are available in the Opportunity Finder and also some local opportunities for Italian youth. They structure it like the Opportunity Finder by sharing a few opportunities of each kind, among which one can find those in European institutions. The main source of information is Eurodesk Brussels Link and the EBL Bulletin.

<https://www.eurodesk.it/newsletter>

Eurodesk Poland has one newsletter - 'Eurokursor'

- which is issued every two weeks. The Eurokursor is an overview of the most interesting activities for youngsters, students, volunteers, youth workers and teachers. They share relevant opportunities for volunteering, training, contests, grants for individuals or organisations and general information in the field of youth policy. The main source of its content are EBL news and EBL Bulletin.

<http://www.eurodesk.pl/newsletter>



CHAPTER 5

The art of (video) storytelling

Social storytelling can be described as taking information that is not that exciting and making it feel important, impassioned and relevant. Stories are reliant on emotions, by provoking empathy. Storytelling can provide a platform for social change that we can envision by hearing about new ways and perspectives.

Digital storytelling is an art that allows us to share stories in a much wider context, it can be used as a means of community building or sharing inspiration. For instance, sharing stories of peers who have been abroad is powerful in triggering interest and getting new young people to services like Eurodesk.

Videos are particularly popular, especially for our target audiences. In 2020, the vast majority of Generation Z and Millennials preferred watching very short (one minute or less) mobile videos several times a day, at 61%. On the other hand, just over a fifth of the respondents claimed they watch videos lasting 30 minutes or more on their phones. We will therefore explore how to apply storytelling concepts to short video formats and share some tips on how to craft videos for social media platforms.

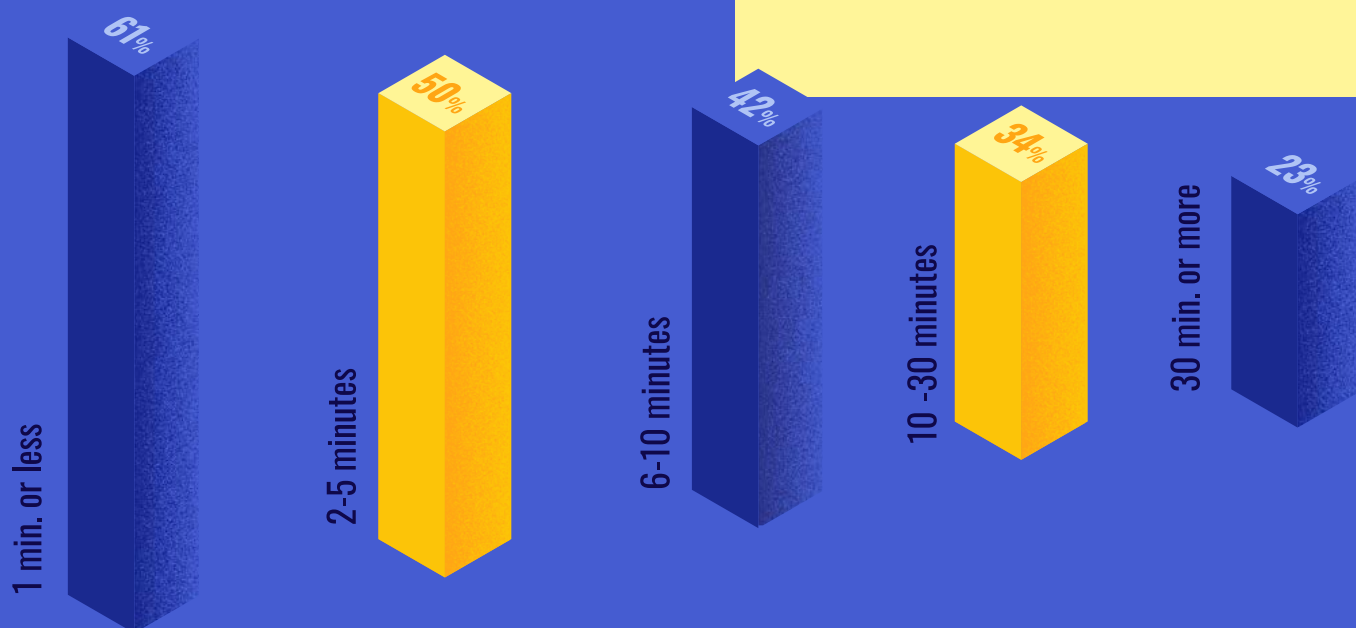
Subchapters

1/ Elements of a good story

2/ Different formats of video campaigns

3/ Tips on video creation

4/ Podcasts



1/ Elements of a good story

Stories have a narrative structure that our brain follows very easily. They feel an emotion, and emotions are what connect you to your followers. A compelling story connects with your audience's memory and brings your messages to life.

The traditional elements of stories are:

- **Relatable characters** – part of the reason you want to share a personal story is that it makes you relatable. Every good story has relatable characters with personalities and interests. Find your character and make them the focal point of your story (you can also refer to your personas).
- **People like drama and emotion** – stories are most compelling when they include an obstacle, a conflict or a resolution and are related to human feelings. So, whether you are sharing about a mobility experience or what goes on in your office, associate it with an obstacle to draw users in.
- **Stories with a beginning, middle and end** – one of the most basic building blocks of a good story is pacing – first this happens, then this and then that. Use this sort of narrative arc to ensure your story is easy to follow.

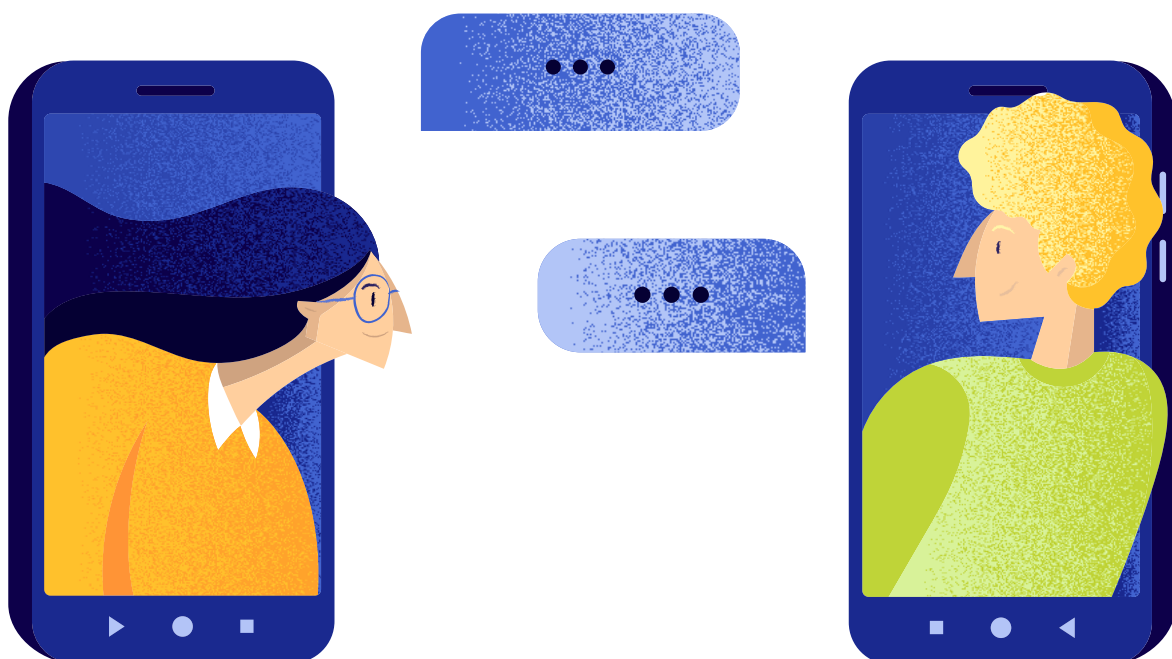
Marketing use videos because that's the favoured format of young people, but also because telling stories through video increases engagement, triggers social sharing and gives people a reason to talk about you online and offline. Of course, you will have to test which narratives resonate better with your specific audience.

Storytelling videos follow specific plot formats.

They usually start off by highlighting a common pain point or challenge and end with providing a practical solution to that pain. Instead of focusing on the product features and the brand itself, they focus on a story and ignite an emotional connection with the viewer. It's a smart way of presenting your services as a solution instead of doing direct self-promotion.

In the context of social media, and considering young people's attention span, you will have to create short snappy videos. Today's social media algorithms favour video content, so the challenge is about telling the right story, in the right way, on the right platform. The storyline should be delivered through a concise video, starting with a strong message following these principles:

- **Make an emotional connection** – use emotional triggers to convey the emotions your audience is most likely to want to feel. Identify the problems and challenges your audience faces and work those into your storytelling.
- **Show the human side of your brand and be relatable** – people connect with people, not necessarily with brands. So, to connect with your audience, put forward your brand's values through authentic stories they could identify with.
- **Talk about your target audience, not you** – use characters that your target audience could identify with.
- **Stay on topic and to the point** – make sure to focus on the most valuable piece of information to the story and the viewer. When preparing videos, only include the most relevant information and cut the rest out.
- **Apply sound effects to anchor important details in your video** – think about distinctive noises associated with the feeling you want to channel.
- **End your story with a bang** – think about your core message and what you want someone to say about your story. Start with your strong message.



2/ Different formats of video campaigns

Video storytelling in social media takes many forms. Videos can be used to inspire, release, explain or feature a service, announce an opportunity, entertain, etc.

There are different video stories you could create:

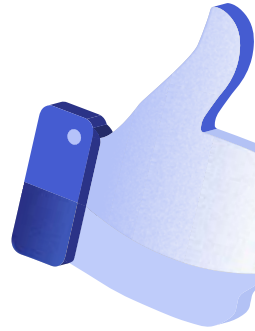
- **Personal stories from your users** – for example videos from young people doing a volunteering experience abroad. This is a great way to produce engaging and interesting content and create an emotional connection.
- **“Life Hack” videos** – marketing is all about giving out value to your services. Applying that to Eurodesk’s mission, it could be to create a short video showcasing how to take some of the steps towards a good mobility experience. It can be about where to search for opportunities, how to pack your bag, things to search about the host country, etc.
- **Fictional videos** – solve a problem from your audience through an engaging video storyline. Showcasing how to solve a common problem or just teaching people how to do something new is always an attention grabber.
- **Documentary-style videos** – on a topic that could interest your audience. It should also be centred around a story that will interest your viewers.
- **Tutorial-style videos** – videos focused on how to do something. It could be how to apply to specific programmes, how to find a job abroad, etc.
- **Interview guests** – an interview or video podcast is a great way to draw out stories. Make sure you have good questions and an engaging guest.
- **Behind the scenes** – take your followers behind the scenes and show them how you operate. Preferably select an aspect of your organisation that can trigger interest. Also look for natural storytellers in your team who can get in front of the camera and tell stories.
- **Animated stories** – animations can be powerful to create something unique and compelling.
- **Sneak peek videos** – are you preparing for a big release or event during the Time to Move campaign? Make a trailer, build momentum and spark interest before the official launch.

- **Bite-sized videos** – 6-second clips are potentially the most viral form of video on the web.
- **Work narratives into updates** – use your updates to tell a story, through Facebook with videos or blog posts, through Instagram with a story to every image or through TikTok with a short video. Think of how to make static updates more entertaining with a background story to connect them.

3/ Tips on video creation

Big brands invest in engaging storytelling video ads for their new product campaigns because it's an effective way to communicate information to the viewers. They don't send over a list of written product features and benefits but weave them intricately into the video.

- **Set your purpose:** Before you start, be clear on the purpose and goals of your video campaign. Do you want to solve a problem? Educate your audience? Inspire them to take a specific action?
- **Think about your target audience:** what are they expecting? What are their needs? What emotions will they react to?
- **Less is more:** we recommend that you focus on 1 call for action. Be sure to centre the story around it.
- **Select the emotional triggers** your audience will respond to (happiness, surprise, discovery, etc.). Think of elements which can evoke them in the video such as music or imagery.
- **Define your characters**, making sure that your audience relate to them, and the background/setting of your narrative.
- **Select your narrative type:** you will then have to decide on which type of narrative you want to use - whether you are using a linear or non-linear narrative, a viewpoint narrative, etc. This will help you build a plot.




Once you have those set, you can begin writing your script. This will contain the main elements of your video. After that, you can start preparing for the video.

- **Create a storyboard**, to understand better what you will be recording.
- **Collect the essential equipment** to shoot your video - quality microphones, cameras, and lighting setups. Your video should have good video and audio quality. Lighting is very important.
- **Film the video**, shoot multiple times if needed. If you use stock images or videos, make sure that the quality is good and that they integrate seamlessly with the rest of the video.
- **Make sure your video is well edited**. Use subtitles and motion graphics because people don't always listen or have the possibility to listen.
- **Choose a catchy title** to attract users' attention, for instance on YouTube.

Remember that every piece of content you produce contributes to your brand story.

Therefore, avoid changing themes or designs frequently. You will find on page 46 a list of video editing tools that will make work easier.

To make videos you might need some materials free of copyright. For free video materials you can access sites such as [Pixabay](#), [Videvo](#), [Pexels](#) or [Videezy](#). You can also obtain copyright free music at [Pixabay](#), [Bensound](#), [TakeTones](#), [TuneTank](#) or at the YouTube Creator Studio.



Here are a couple of great examples of storytelling:

[Find your passion, find your purpose](#)
Tells a story by asking questions to the audience. This video is the definition of simple, narrative-based content that gets to the pain points and creates an emotional connection immediately. The video is a great example of attracting the attention of viewers with relatable questions by referring to personal experiences to prove your point while also using as many details as possible to make the story more engaging.

[European Parliament: Being #YOUNGINTHEEU](#)
A campaign that shares stories of young people in the format of a reel. They share with the European Parliament what it means to be European through short videos. It might be a way in which citizens share information about rights and opportunities they have as citizens of the EU.

4/ Podcast

Podcasts are a great way to share your story. They allow you to create content for at least two different social media platforms while addressing different needs your community might have. On the one hand, you will offer the possibility for your users to listen to anything while on the go, and on the other hand, you will be addressing the desire of other users to unwind and watch something worthwhile, when they want.

At this point, you might be wondering how to do a podcast. Here are the basic steps for creating one:

- 1. Choose a topic:** make sure your audience is interested in the topic you cover. We suggest it is a relevant topic that could be revisited.
- 2. Show and episode format:** you need to decide on how long your episodes will be, the days you will be recording and when you will be posting. Is it going to be a monthly or weekly podcast? Be clear on the planning and be regular.
- 3. Cover art:** you need to have attractive visuals as it gives you a professional and attractive image.
- 4. Intro and outro music:** since podcasts are mainly made for listening, we suggest you come up with a personal melody that you'll play at the beginning and end of your podcast. This will allow your listeners to rapidly identify your show.
- 5. Good equipment:** a podcast needs to be good quality. For that, we suggest having a proper camera and microphone, although nowadays there are some phones which can help you do a high-quality podcast.
- 6. Edit:** an essential part of recording a podcast is editing. You need to make sure that the sound matches the images and also try using the best angle for shooting.
- 7. Upload:** there are several platforms for uploading a podcast: Spotify, Soundcloud, Audible...
- 8. Promote your podcast:** once all is up, you need to promote your podcast. We suggest sending emails to your followers as well as asking your colleagues, multipliers or partners to promote it. Sharing it on your social media is also an excellent option. Think about the promotion from the start!

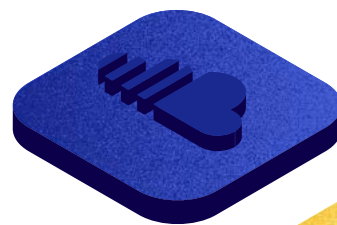
Eurodesk BeEurope Podcast show

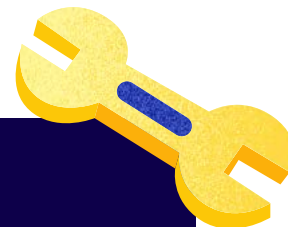
During the BeEurope show, young people from all over Europe were interviewed about what it meant for them to be a young European in 2022. It captured young people's personal experiences and opinions on various topics such as mobility, activism, mental health and sustainable development. [*Discover the show on Spotify!*](#)



Valuable apps to consider

- 1. Spotify** - Spotify is a music streaming platform that will allow you to listen to music, but also to create podcasts so that your public listens to it on the go.
- 2. SoundCloud** - SoundCloud is an online audio distribution platform and music-sharing website that enables its users to upload, promote, and share audio, as well as a digital signal processor enabling listeners to stream audio. Podcasts can be uploaded here.
- 3. Twitch** - Twitch is an interactive live streaming service for content spanning gaming, entertainment, sports, music, and more. It is a good tool for live interviews.





Video and sound editing tools

Sp

Adobe Spark – <https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/welcome-to-adobe-spark> - Desktop and Mobile app

A photo, video and web editing tool that helps you to easily create beautiful images, videos, and web pages that make you stand out. Free trial period for 2 months.



Lightworks - www.lwks.com - Desktop

Designed to put professional quality tools within everyone's reach. An extensive software with many features for video and sound. The website contains a tutorial to get you started. Free version available. Pro features need to be purchased.

Quik

Quik – <https://gopro.com/en/us/shop/quik-app-video-photo-editor> - Mobile app

Awesome edits made easy. Create beautiful videos with just a few taps. Editing has never been this fast – or this fun. An easy video editing app made by GoPro to easily create short videos on the go. Free version available.

VN

VN - www.vlognow.me - Desktop and Mobile app

VN allows us to edit videos in a very fast way, even from your phone. It is a free and very intuitive app that allows you to create a fast lapse of images or even speed up a video. Free version available.

C

Canva - www.canva.com - Desktop and Mobile app

As well as designing templates and posts, Canva allows you to access different formats and materials that you can use if you are subscribed to Canva Pro. As an NGO, we're eligible to use the service for free. We only need to submit an official statement. Free version available.



CapCut - <https://www.capcut.com> - Desktop and Mobile app

CapCut web is an online, free video editor with tons of features. It's easy to use, no need for video editing experience. It also provides a variety of templates, and has officially partnered with TikTok so it allows users to use the templates created by other TikTok users. Free with registration.



Audacity - <https://www.audacityteam.org> - Desktop

Audacity is a free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software, available for Windows, macOS, Linux, and other Unix-like operating systems.

CHAPTER 6

Social Media Essentials

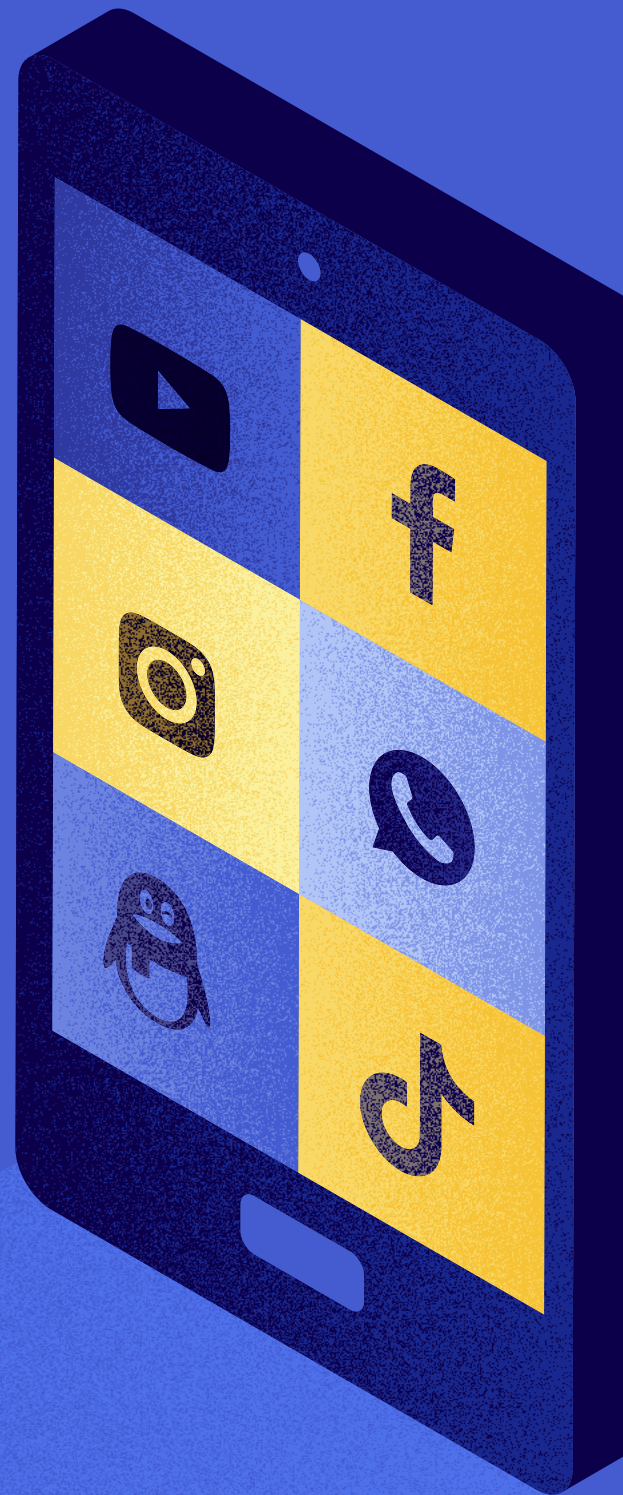
Subchapters

1/ Facebook

2/ Instagram

3/ Youtube

4/ TikTok



1/ Facebook

Facebook is a platform that craves engagement. Today, it is the most used social media platform with more than 2 billion monthly active users.

As you saw earlier, to reach your audience, social media advertising is inevitable. Although the usage of Facebook is declining amongst young people, it remains the largest social media platform in terms of user numbers. Facebook also offers strong measurement accuracy to target your audience and monitor your performance.

Facebook is asking brands to rethink how they earn likes, comments and shares on their posts. Under the motto of giving more importance to people than business, it has become hard for business pages to have a wide reach without investing in ads.

Of course, it's not impossible to reach your target audience organically. Spend your efforts developing quality content, with a focus on the formats that we know Facebook favours – video, animation, and other more interactive and immersive formats. Be clear about what message your audience should receive, and what action you want them to take next. We recommend that you boost the best posts with ads (see chapter on how to get the most out of your advertising budget).

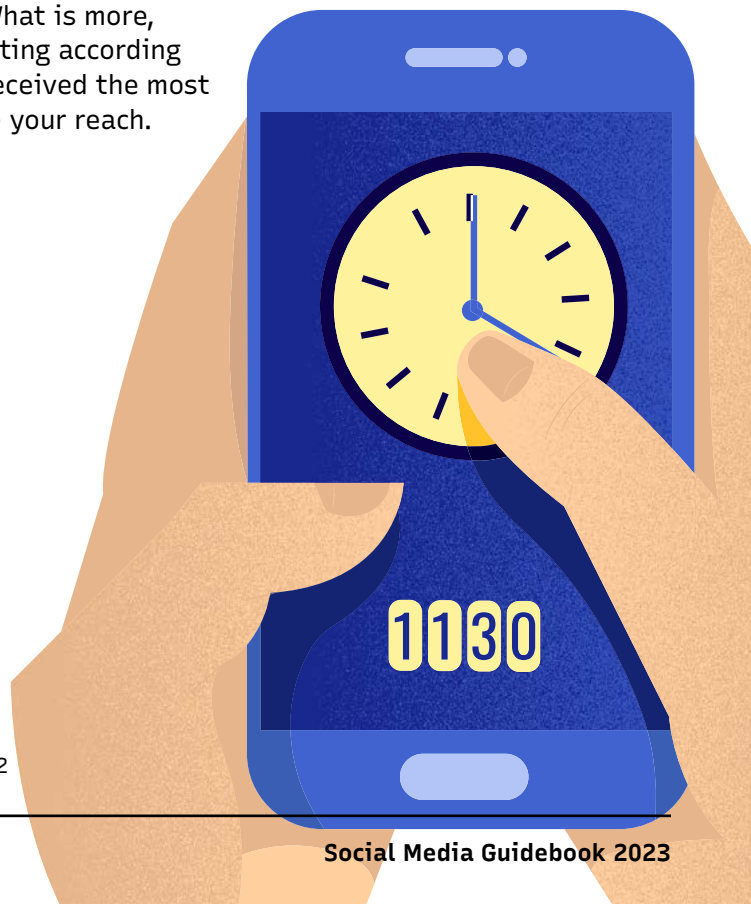
Here are some recommendations for Facebook management:

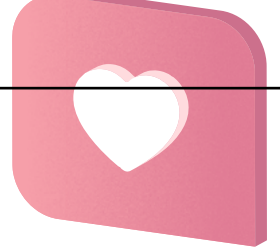
Time your posts

We know that Facebook engagement peaks in the middle of the week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday) from 9 AM to 1 PM and that we should post once and no more than twice a day¹.

Weekends tend to have weaker engagements. But do test your specific target group on when they are the most responsive. Once a clear pattern has been set, there are several tools to support you in maximising your engagement. You can check this out in the analytics. What is more, Facebook even recommends personalised times for posting according to analytics. For instance, boost the posts that have received the most engagement organically. This will allow you to improve your reach.

1 The best times to post on social media in 2022, [SproutSocial](#), July 2022





Focus on follower-centric content

Many brands make the mistake of putting themselves in a box when it comes to their content. There's so much that can be said on a day-to-day basis about your brand or service. As soon as your content starts to feel repetitive, your audience will tune out.

Here's some food for thought: your Facebook content isn't all about you. It's about your followers. They might like you, but that doesn't mean they only want to hear about you all day long. Once you start to embed that idea into your strategy, increasing Facebook engagement becomes much more realistic. If you're struggling to find ideas for fresh content, you can start by reflecting on these questions:

- Are there any events, besides yours, that are worth sharing with your community?
- Have you found any interesting facts or statistics related to your target group lately?
- How can you connect your services/opportunities to their interests (e.g. mental health, climate change)?
- Have you made your followers laugh lately?

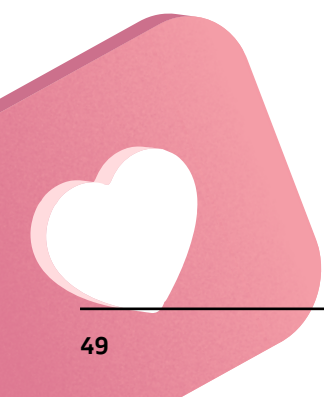
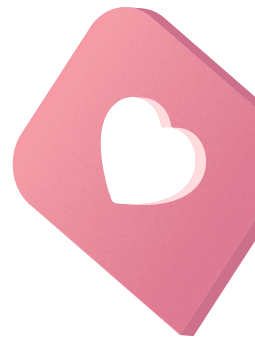
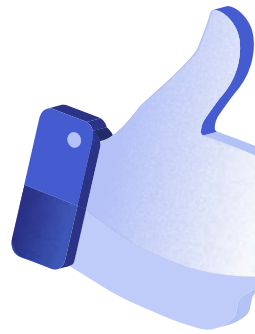
Strive to stick to the golden rule of content creation that says only 20% of what you post should be self-promotional. Of course, in the case of Eurodesk, the content is usually focused on opportunities, with a variety of different offers. Make sure to promote them using calls to action and clear messages ("what's in it for you"). Besides, filling your feed with a variety of content will always keep your followers looking forward to what's next. By keeping them engaged you will create a community!

Shorten your written posts

When in doubt, shorten your posts as much as possible. Ask a quick question, and have a quote or some statistics from an article that require a click for more content. GIFs and memes are a great way to attract attention if you are not using a video, however, it depends on the image you want to give and your target group. Make sure to pay attention to not make any clickbait as Facebook is actively fighting against that.

Step up your photo and video usage, be visual

The type of images you post makes a significant difference to the success of the post. Strive to show personality in your images and posts, don't be afraid to use GIFs or memes that funnily capture your emotion. You can also use GIFs or emojis for commenting on posts that you have been tagged in. Like that you'll be showing that you care about what your followers are doing!



Calls to action

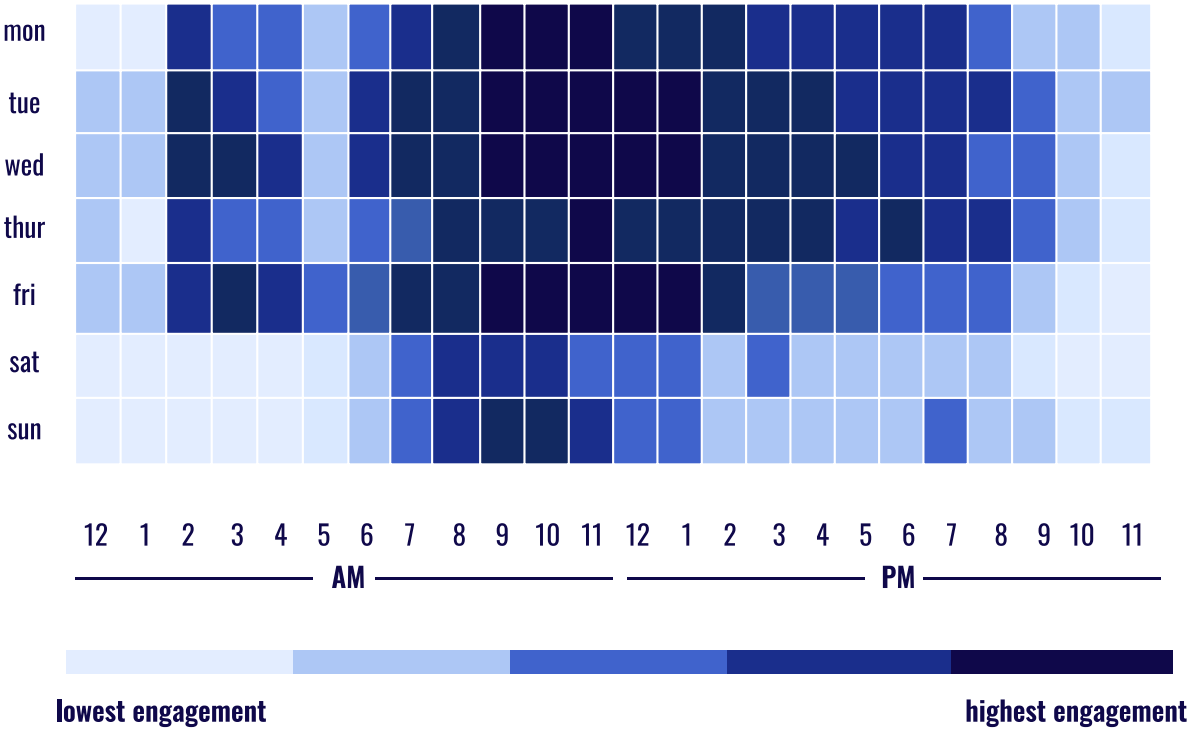
Combine your posts with a call to action. Facebook is a good place to ask your followers for ideas or share their viewpoints on different matters. Add a question to your posts and encourage comments, debates and discussion. e.g. Airplanes vs Trains, which one would you prefer to travel with and why? Since Facebook has added the function of stories, you can easily create more interactive content on Instagram and reshare it on Facebook. The aesthetics might change, but the content stays the same. Also, the simpler the interactive content is the better (one click!) Users don't have time; they want instant content that is easy to interact with.

Upload video content directly to Facebook

Facebook is encouraging businesses to publish videos and have discussions with their followers. They favour videos that are directly uploaded on Facebook (a simple YouTube link on Facebook will not count for the algorithm). Short social media videos, live recordings or live chats have proven to be very successful. Most of the short videos used on TikTok or Instagram Reels can be uploaded to Facebook as well.

Facebook Messenger BOTs

Implement a BOT system to support you in answering recurring questions. Eurodesk's BOT – EMA, is a good example and can be an inspiration for you. Some tools to create a BOT are [Flow.xo](#).



2/ Instagram

Instagram has become the platform for creating a community of interests and categorising that in hashtags. It is important to find relevant accounts for the field you're in and create a community.

In the case of Eurodesk, accounts related to travelling, volunteering and learning are extremely relevant. It is key to actively participate in the community by posting with hashtags that explain your brand. Interaction lies at the heart of the app: the more you interact with a certain account the more it will appear in your feed. The platform breeds a more informal tone and through Instagram stories, your followers get more of a "behind the scenes" view of your operation.

Videos on Instagram are very popular and open the door to a lot of new opportunities. Initially, videos on Instagram were short, as they were made with Boomerang, but throughout time Instagram has started having different video options: Story (60 seconds), Post (60 seconds), Reels (90 seconds), altogether under Instagram Video. Thus, your content depends on your audience. Normally, the most successful in terms of views are the stories, but Reels are a really good option to create content and try to make it viral by adding trendy songs.

Here are a few suggestions:

Go behind the scenes

One of the best ways to get started with videos on Instagram is to give your followers a behind-the-scenes look at your organisation. You can show how your daily operations look, how you prepare for events or hear from someone you've started a collaboration with or just guided. Give an inside look to have your followers feel a bit more connected to your work and to the things you offer. Be as open as possible! It is through this that your audience might connect and identify with your brand!

Make videos specific to Instagram.

Instagram used to have different video formats but now all videos are uploaded as Reels. For those, Instagram gives you 90 seconds, so make sure you are getting your message across right away. That means you should try to create elevator pitches for your Instagram video strategy. It is relevant to create content that can be quickly consumed so it's harder for viewers to scroll away.

Don't always rely on sound

Instagram videos don't auto-play sound. They start as muted, and users can choose to turn the sound on. Create videos that make sense even if there is no sound. Some people like to scroll through Instagram on public transport, at work or in other places where the sound isn't an option. So, make sure your message comes across even when the sound is muted. An efficient solution is to add some subtitles, it will also make your content more inclusive.

3/ Youtube

YouTube is the second-largest search engine after Google, and it is particularly appreciated by young audiences.¹ It is the go-to platform for internet users whenever they need to find online videos or tutorials to watch. Some influencers make a living out of YouTube. Nowadays, more than 50 million content creators are actively uploading content on the platform regularly. What is more, there are over 300 hours of videos uploaded to YouTube every minute. Those numbers show that the platform keeps growing! Some social media strategists believe it is merely for entertainment, while others use it for business or educational purposes. Ideally, the content on YouTube should be different from other social media platforms, as YouTube is a platform for elaborated videos.

Moreover, nowadays, like most apps, YouTube has included stories within the platform. YouTube Shorts are vertical videos that are 60 seconds or less. If your Short uses music from the YouTube catalogue, your Short will be limited to 15 seconds only. This function imitates TikToks and allows you to reuse your content on TikTok. Short videos are taking over!

Starting a YouTube channel is not a complicated process, you just need to find a way to have outstanding content. Here we will share some basic steps on how to create a channel.

Cover a wide variety of topics

YouTube is a platform on which a wide variety of content can be uploaded. This can go from a Vlog to tutorial videos, unboxing experiences, product reviews or even animation videos. In the case of Eurodesk Brussels Link, we use YouTube for interviews, podcasts, tutorials and promotional videos.

Videos need to be of good quality

Videos that are of good quality are basic for indexation within the platform. Nevertheless, nowadays there is no need to spend thousands of euros on editing tools. The internet allows us to find such tools in a more accessible and affordable way than ever before. Some alternatives to the well-known Adobe Premiere Pro, are [DaVinci Resolve](#), [Final Cut Pro](#), [Pinnacle Studio](#) or [Filmora](#).

Design eye-catching thumbnails

This is the first thing that a user will see when they browse and try to decide which video might be most helpful to them. Ideally, they need to be eye-catching, and we suggest using tools like Canva for the design.

Create a personalised banner

The banner will allow you to show the users some basics of your work. The banner must have unique elements that would allow the user to remember your brand. We suggest using Canva for this.

1 Youth Mobility and the role of Youth Information Survey 2022, Eurodesk, 2022

Make sure you have an explainer video

Once a visitor arrives at a channel, they'll be redirected to the "Home" section. There should be a video that will play automatically to welcome them and give them some basic information about your brand and what you do.

Engagement is key

Having a lot of subscribers doesn't mean that your account will get enough visibility. You need to encourage the people watching your videos to like, comment and share them. This should be done subtly so that the viewers don't run away upon arrival.

Be consistent when you publish

To build a community, you need to be consistent with your videos. Some say that building a YouTube channel is mostly about patience and consistency. It shows that your account is dedicated and eager to give them the content they are asking for.

Add relevant hashtags

Hashtags allow you to properly index your content considering the topics covered in the video. This is called Meta description. For instance, Eurodesk Brussels Link uses hashtags such as mobility, Erasmus or international experience. It is valuable to make your YouTube channel revolve around one keyword, so it is easily associated with one topic. In EBL's case, this might be mobility.

Learn about your audience

Through YouTube analytics, you will understand when the most active hours are for your audience and maybe decide to post during those times. This is important for optimising your channel for short and long-term success. For YouTube it is important to be consistent. We suggest that you publish from 1 to 3 times a week and a maximum of once a day.

When to post

For YouTube it is important to be consistent. We suggest that you publish from 1 to 3 times a week and a maximum of once a day.

	6-9AM	9-12PM	12-3PM	3-6PM	6-9PM	9PM-12AM
monday						
tuesday						
wednesday						
thursday						
friday						
saturday						
sunday						

When to post

The best times to post on YouTube are between 6-9 AM, 3-6 PM, and 12-3 PM on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays¹.

¹ The best times to post on social media 2022, [Hubspot](#), May 2022

4/ TikTok

TikTok's influence and use have been rapidly growing since the pandemic. Starting as musical.ly back in 2014, TikTok is now one of the most popular tools for communicating with young people. It is the seventh most-used social media platform in the world, with 689 million global active users that spend an average of 52 minutes per day on the app. TikTok allows you to have a rather informal approach to sharing your information and services with a younger audience.

TikTok is a platform for short-form mobile videos. Users can make videos that range between 5 seconds and 3 minutes, and use a wide music library, as well as effects, to quickly edit together bite-sized videos. TikTok proposes content to its users based on its algorithm, which learns based on the content the user interacts with. Some describe it as a personalised TV station that manages to capture users' attention for a long time as it covers their main interests. It is a very good opportunity for brands to have an impact.

Considering TikTok is rather new, there might be some issues when starting to use the platform. For that reason, we are going to explain how to properly use the app and some basic steps.

Here are some tips to get started.

Follow the trends

Trends are central in TikTok functioning. Your videos should echo whatever is trending at the time and make the most of viral sounds, memes, challenges, choreographies or trending hashtags. This will have the biggest effect on your visibility. Indeed, the most popular trends can inspire thousands of spin-off videos, and the algorithm will push the most popular videos to more users.

Create snappy videos

Your videos should ideally be quite short and to the point. You have a few seconds to capture your audience's attention. Swift transitions between quick video clips will cut down time and make your content look fresh. Watching time and completion rate (when users watch until the end) are important metrics on TikTok and essential to going viral.

Use the right hashtags

To be more visible to your users, use the most popular hashtags on TikTok. Knowing that TikTok pushes content based on interest, being very accurate in the selection of hashtags is super important.

Find your niche and be consistent

Your videos are more likely to go viral if your account is considered as a quality account. This means that you should prioritise consistent and regular uploading over time, to be acknowledged as trustworthy by the TikTok algorithm. Your content should be original and reflect your brand identity. What is unique about your videos?

Be reactive

TikTok cannot just be about posting a video once in a while; once the video is released, make sure to be responsive. React when followers comment your post or create engagement by reposting your content. This rapid reaction will maximise your reach.

Connect the dots

To discover the most relevant trends for you, you can start by engaging with existing content by searching for hashtags related to your activities or following the accounts of your partners. In the case of Eurodesk, it could be learning abroad or Erasmus+, then liking or commenting on the trending videos you see. Like this, TikTok will push even more content that is connected to your brand topics your way, contributing to creating a trend on those topics.

Collaboration

Since TikTok is all about engagement, it is important to understand how to properly engage with your audience. Following accounts related to your field (maybe some other organisations are also active on TikTok) might be a good idea to support each other by giving likes, commenting on each other’s videos, etc. Collaborating with them might strengthen your relationship and increase the bilateral relations between the two accounts. Another idea would be to share the videos with your friends and colleagues, asking them to like or comment, as this also gives more visibility to your content.

Check your analytics

To check how your account is doing, TikTok allows you to check the statistics and understand more about your audience. As stated for other apps, it is relevant to understand those metrics in order to provide appropriate content to your followers and learn who they are.

When to post

Upload as much content as possible to TikTok. You can post on TikTok several times during the week between 2 AM to 11 PM depending on the day. Here you have some general recommendations to follow for posting content.

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
	2 AM			5 AM		
6 AM	4 AM	7 AM				7 AM
	9 AM	8 AM	9 AM		11 AM	8 AM
10 AM			12 AM			
				1 PM		
			7 AM	3 PM	7 PM	4 PM
10 PM		10 PM			8 PM	

How to make a TikTok video?

1. Once you have downloaded the app and created an account, go to the creator mode so that you can start filming.

You will be able to choose different effects. Visual effects or beauty effects are among the most popular ones. One of the most used ones is the Green Screen which allows you to put any picture or video you want as a background. This can be changed as it allows you to have two different elements on the screen at the same time. TikTok also allows you to duet with other videos, meaning you can interact directly with other followers.

2. Now you have to find a sound for your video.

As a personal account, you will be able to use sounds belonging to existing songs, but when you have a business account, you can only use licenced sounds for commercial use or original sounds uploaded by other users. We strongly suggest that you use trendy sounds so your video gets featured on the 'for you page' of the users interested in mobility.

3. For the video part, you might want to follow a trend or participate in a challenge and thus do your version of it.

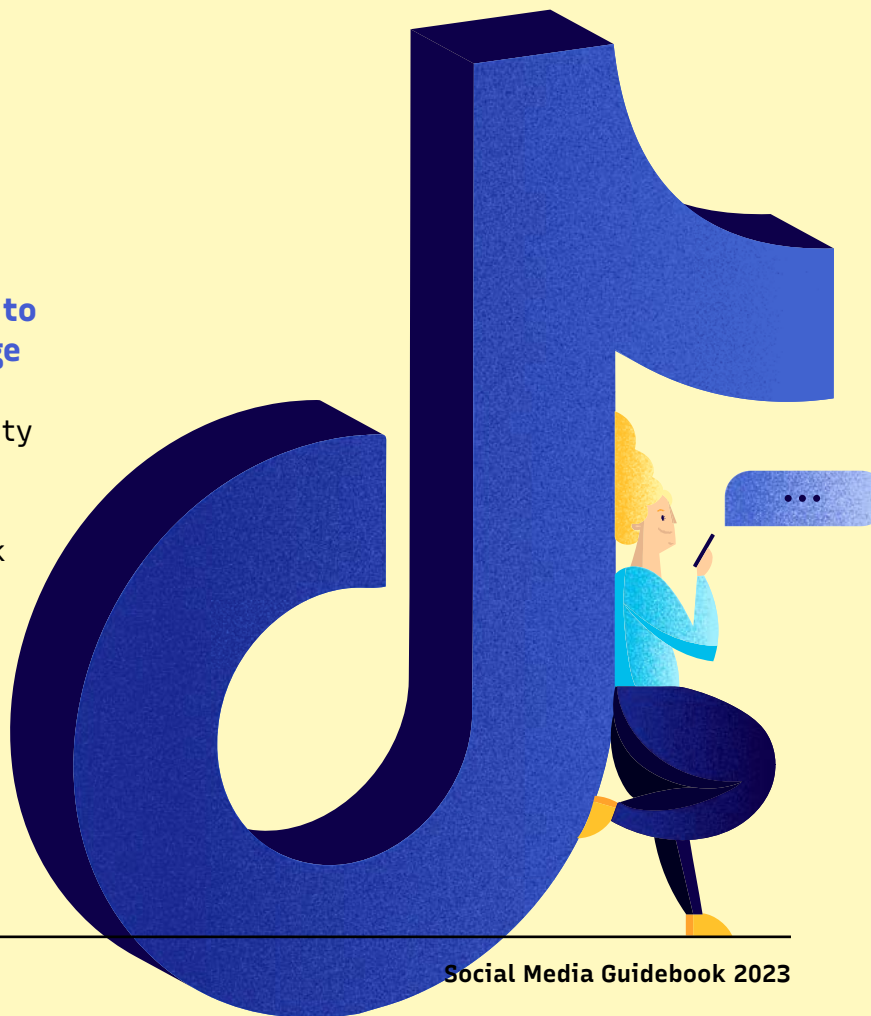
Following trends will allow you to get visibility and create more engagement. The more views a video has, the trendier it is and the higher the chances of it being noticed. TikTok also allows you to put clips into the video editor and edit them as much as you want.

4. To find trends we suggest using pages like *later.com* or *Slaying Social*.

TikTok also has its own page for [*Trend Discovery*](#) that you can adjust based on your country of residence or the country you want to attract more.

5. Once the video is set up, you can continue editing it.

You can add text, filters, and voiceovers, and create a caption with hashtags. Once that is done, you can save your video as a draft and leave it ready to publish some other day, or publish it directly!



CHAPTER 7

How to get the most out of your advertisement budget

Over the years, social media went from being platforms for people to socialise and share pictures of their cats, to battlefields where the biggest brands fight for audiences' attention. If you had a Facebook page or a YouTube channel in the 2000s, you could see your followers growing consistently release after release, post after post, without doing anything too crazy. These golden times have ended. Having good SEO practices and paying for ads is not enough either.

Your social media strategy will likely grow to include social media advertising, taking recent trends into account, making it almost impossible to reach new users with organic reach. It can be scary to move from an organic social media strategy to putting real money on the table, so it's important to understand all the available options.

The major social media platforms offer options for advertisement, but not all offers will be suitable for what you want to achieve. The first rule is to start with the channels where you are doing well organically.

When choosing where to put your advertisement, it is important to have a look back at your target group and answer the questions: Who do you want to reach with your advertisement? Where are they most active? Try to be as specific as possible: do not only consider which social media to use but also what specific feature they use most on it (e.g. stories, chat functions, games).

In this chapter you will find a breakdown of some of the ads different social media platforms offer.



Subchapters

1/ Facebook ads

2/ Instagram ads

3/ YouTube ads

4/ TikTok ads

1/ Facebook Ads

Facebook ads are designed to help you achieve one of three broad types of campaign objectives: awareness, consideration, and conversion. You have several ad formats to choose from.

Photo ads

In addition to a photo, Facebook photo ads include 90 characters of text plus a 25-character headline. They can also include a call-to-action button like Shop Now or Send Message.

A quick tip: Facebook photo ads work well for showcasing new products or services. Show people using them!

Video ads

Facebook video ad options range from short mobile video ads up to 241-minute promoted videos designed to be watched on a desktop. With so many options, it's critical to have solid goals and understand who your target market is and where your video will reach them. You can also create video ads that play within other videos or even share 360-degree videos.

A quick tip: short videos have higher completion rates. Stick to 15 seconds or less if you're placing videos in the mobile feed. However, if you have a captivating message, don't be afraid to go a bit longer!

Stories ads

In this format, photos display for 6 seconds, while the videos last a maximum of 15 seconds. Facebook stories ads can't be selected on their own, thus they need to be selected within the ads created for the News Feed or Instagram stories campaigns.

A quick tip: since stories last 24 hours, you might want to consider using limited-time offers.

Carousel ads

A carousel ad lets you include up to 10 images or videos, each with its own link, all in one ad. Carousel ads work well to showcase different features of a product or an opportunity, or to explain a step-by-step process (e.g. different mobility opportunities, articles on how to prepare for your journey abroad, a checklist of what to complete before your journey).

A quick tip: use the different elements in your carousel ad together to present a compelling, effective story or message.

Slideshow ads

A slideshow is an ad that creates a video from static images. It offers the compelling motion of video but requires no video-specific resources to create. It's ideal if you don't feel comfortable editing videos but still want to use videos. You can also try to play music!

A quick tip: if you don't have high quality pictures, you can rely on stock photos.

Messenger ads

Messenger ads are simply Facebook ads placed on the home screen of the Messenger app. You can use them to encourage people to connect with your organisation on Messenger, but they can also link to your site.

A quick tip: using a custom audience of people who have previously messaged your service, you can use Messenger ads to restart conversations that have trailed off.

2/ Instagram ads

Since Facebook owns Instagram, it's not surprising that Instagram ads support the same three broad categories of campaign objectives as Facebook ads: awareness, consideration, and conversion. The specific Instagram ad types also mirror three of the Facebook ad types: photo, video, and carousel. You can create each type of ad for either the main Instagram feed or for Instagram stories. Instagram is most popular with Millennials so they should be considered when doing ads.

Photo and video ads

Your Instagram photo or video will look like a regular Instagram post - except that it will say 'Sponsored' in the top right corner. Depending on your campaign objective, you may also be able to add a call-to-action button.

A quick tip: make sure your photo and video ads are consistent in style with the organic posts you share on Instagram so that viewers recognise the ad is from your brand. Videos autoplay with sound off, so optimise your videos to work without sound.

Carousel ads

In carousel ads, viewers swipe to scroll through different images that should be similar to your feed images.

A quick tip: do not use a different theme for the carousel.

Instagram stories ads

Instagram stories ads can use photos or videos up to 120 seconds long. These ads display in full-screen format between people's stories.

A quick tip: the video only exists for 24 hours so this is a perfect concept for reminding about upcoming deadlines or events. Add interactive elements to stories ads for the best performance.

Ads in Explore

Explore is the place to be for reaching new users who are looking for new accounts to follow.

A quick tip: the ad won't appear in the Explore grid directly, but when a user clicks through on any photo, they'll start seeing your posts on the scrolling news feed.

3/ YouTube ads

YouTube can help you work on collecting leads, driving website traffic, increasing product and brand consideration, building brand awareness and extending your reach. There are a few different video ad formats available on YouTube. Since Google owns YouTube, you'll need a Google AdWords account to create YouTube ads.

Photo ads

In addition to a photo, Facebook photo ads include 90 characters of text plus a 25-character headline. They can also include a call-to-action button like Shop Now or Send Message.

A quick tip: Facebook photo ads work well for showcasing new products or services. Show people using them!

Skippable in-stream ads

These ads play automatically before, during or after other videos on YouTube. They can also appear in other places in Google's display network. Users will be able to skip the ad after 5 seconds and your video shall be a maximum of 30 seconds or less.

A quick tip: 76% of viewers skip ads by default. However, a skipped ad still increases the chances someone will visit or subscribe to your channel by 10 times. Make sure to get your most important messaging and branding in those unskippable first five seconds.

Non-skippable ads

These are short ads that will appear either at the start, mid-point or end of the video. The ads are a maximum of 15 seconds, and they can't be skipped.

A quick tip: make sure your audio message is compelling and attractive in case the user decides not to watch.

Video discovery ads

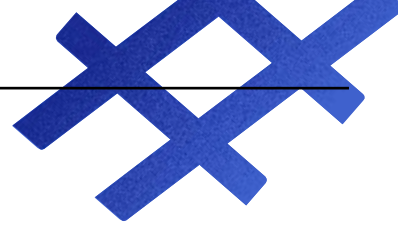
Video discovery ads appear next to related YouTube videos, in the results of a YouTube search, or on the mobile homepage. The ads appear as a thumbnail image, with a little bit of text inviting users to click and watch.

A quick tip: consider that your thumbnail may be viewed at different sizes, and make sure that the static image is clear (and appealing!) whether large or small.

Bumper ads

These ads are also unskippable with a maximum of 6 seconds. They can appear at the beginning, during or end of the videos.

A quick tip: don't put too much in 6 seconds. Leave enough time for your call to action.



Outstream ads

These ads are only for mobiles and are available on websites and apps that run on Google video partners. Normally, they can be found as web banners, or within apps or in-feed content.

A quick tip: these ads can start playing without sound, so it is important to have strong visuals.

Masthead ads

This format makes a splash and is a great option for showing a new product or service. It plays on desktop and mobile devices.

A quick tip: these ads are available on a reservation basis, so you'll need to contact a Google sales representative to learn more.

4/ TikTok ads

TikTok ads can help you to get more traffic, reach and conversions. TikTok ads are only available in certain regions at this point, so depending on where you are based, you might only be able to get organic content. But keep your eyes open to see if you might be eligible at some point.

In-Feed ads

In-Feed ads are mainly images and videos. They will be shown on the "For You" feed and on full screen. After 9 seconds, a card appears with your brand profile name and display name, some text and a call-to-action button.

Spark ads

Spark ads allow you to boost your organic content from your account or other users' accounts. It allows you to get a 142% higher engagement rate than the standard In-Feed ads.

A quick tip: the ads run quite often, so TikTok suggests refreshing your work to avoid ad fatigue. You can check the TikTok advertising guide to get to know more about this.

Special for brands:

TopView ads

Video ads that appear on full screen when opening the app.

Branded Hashtag Challenge

A 3 to a 6-day ad campaign to encourage engagement, in which the user-generated content appears on the hashtag page.

Branded effects

Create stickers, filters and special effects to make TikTokers interact with your brand.





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