

How to Research Your Social Media Audience

A Hootsuite Worksheet



Goals of this worksheet:



Find out which social networks your audience lives on.



Learn the best tools to gather demographic and behavioral data.



Target customers with content they want.



STEP 1

Gather demographic data about your audience

Use audience insights from Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook to gather initial data.

1. [Log in to Twitter Analytics](#). Click on “Audiences.” You’ll see your audience’s key demographics, interests, and languages.
2. [Go to your company’s LinkedIn Page](#) and click on the [Analytics tab](#). Here, you can see the seniority of your followers (e.g., managers, directors) and the industries that make up your audience including company size and job function.
3. [Go to Facebook’s Audience Insights tool](#).
4. In the “Choose an Audience to Start” window, select “People Connected to Your Page.”
5. Enter your Facebook Page URL in the box that says “People Connected to Your Page.”
6. You’ll now see demographic and buying behavior data about your social media audience.
7. Navigate back to the “Choose an Audience to Start” window. Select “Everybody on Facebook.” Add your competitor’s Facebook Page as an “Interest” category. This will show you the demographics and behaviors of your competitor’s social media audience.



STEP 2

Find out which social networks your audience prefers

Use Keyhole to analyze hashtags and track popular campaigns.

1. Use [Keyhole.co](#) to analyze which social networks to target. By entering a hashtag, you can gain demographic data about how different markets use social networks to talk about products.
2. Find a recent successful campaign by your competitor that made use of a hashtag. For example, Procter and Gamble's #Likeagirl campaign. Then use the free search bar on [Keyhole.co](#) to see which social networks the hashtag was used on.
3. Scroll down to the "Top Sites" section. Here, you'll see the most popular referring domains such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. This gives you an idea of where your audience lives online.
4. Near the bottom of the page, you'll see "Top Sources." Look through the full results to see where traffic is coming from.
5. Advanced tips: try searching a general keyword instead of a hashtag (e.g. coffee versus #coffee). Click on the "Advanced Search" option to refine keyword searches.



STEP 3

Analyze your competitor's content strategy

Your competitors have done a lot of work. They've found followers that are interested in products like yours, tested content, and connected with industry influencers. Borrow a page from their strategy.

1. Go to [Buzzsumo.com](https://www.buzzsumo.com) and click on the "Content Analysis" tab. *Note: you'll need to pay for a subscription to access this data.*
2. In the "Content Analysis" tab, enter a market keyword (e.g., "Paris vacation tips").
3. Buzzsumo will now analyze the top shared content across social networks. Look for patterns in the data. What content formats and social channels have worked for your competitors? Make a list of the top five types of content that perform well in your industry (such as videos, long-form articles, infographics).
4. Go to Buzzsumo's "Content Analysis" tab. You'll see a breakdown of the most popular social media networks in your market. Look for patterns. Is Instagram content popular? Is YouTube a proven channel in this market? Make a list of the top five social networks your competitors are seeing success with.
5. Go to the bottom for a breakdown of the most popular social networks in your market. Make a list of the top three networks.



STEP 4

Use surveys to validate your audience profile

The last step is verifying your audience research with your own data. Surveys are an easy way to ensure your ideal customer profile is accurate.

1. SurveyMonkey created a [specific template for researching your audience on social media](#). Use this template to help answer which social networks your audience prefers and their content preferences.
2. Most ad platforms including Facebook and Twitter let you upload your own email list to find similar customers. Upload your email list and then compare the data they give you about your audience with your own customer personas.
3. You can also [use UTM codes](#) to tag your social media content. That way, you can easily gather data about who actually clicks on your content. Go to your Google Analytics, click on "Audience Insights", and then look for campaigns tagged with your UTM codes. You will see data about your social media audience such as top languages, cities, countries, and mobile versus desktop users.

Your social media audience checklist

Use the tools below to answer the following key questions about your audience:

Age range:

Education level:

Top industries and job titles:

Top languages:

Top cities:

Top countries:

Five related online interests

(e.g., mountain bikers might follow Red Bull, GoPro, and Patagonia on social media):

Your audience's top three social media networks

(e.g., a young adult audience might include Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube).

Your audience's two secondary social media networks

(e.g., a young adult audience might include Facebook and Reddit).

List the two social networks your audience is least likely to be active on

(e.g., a young adult audience might include LinkedIn and Pinterest).

Top five social channels your competitors use:

(e.g., LinkedIn, Reddit, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube)

Top five types of content your audience is likely to consume

(e.g., video, GIFs, infographics, short articles, long-form articles).

Every social media template you need

From free strategy templates to live webinar training events, [Hootsuite's Social Media Essentials Series](#) gives you all the tools you need to nail the fundamentals of social media.

