## Social media and generating revenue: Ideas and tips from Farm Radio International

### Ideas

* **Ensure you have a social media presence.** Set up a page or account on whichever social profile makes most sense for your audience. Ensure all the information about your station is up-to-date, and that this profile links to your website if you have one. Update your profile with new posts a couple of times a week. Simply by having a social media presence, you will be able to show advertisers how big the reach of your station is. Not all your listeners will connect with you on social media, but you can get an idea of how popular your station is by your social media follows, likes or shares.
* **Strengthen your relationship with your audience on social media.** Share regular community and news updates, at least once a day if possible. It’s good to have a variety of posts: national news, local news, a clip from your program, a picture from a community event with community news, or a picture of one of your presenters in studio or interviewing someone. All of this helps your audience get interesting news from social media and feel connected to your station/program.
* **Post sponsorship information on social media.** If someone is sponsoring a program, perhaps their advertising package could include one social media post each week mentioning what will be discussed in that program, along with the sponsor’s name. For example: “This week on \_\_\_, we will be discussing the recent sighting of Fall armyworm. Mrs. \_\_ will be joining us to share what she knows about this pest. Join us at (time), for this great show, sponsored by \_\_\_” Link to the sponsor’s social media page as well.
* If your farmer program has a large enough following, **create a Facebook page just for the farmer program**. [Nkhawa Njee- Yonse Bo](https://www.facebook.com/NkhawaNjeYoseBo/) was a youth mental health program in Malawi, on air at Radio 2 FM. It was supported by our partners Farm Radio Trust. The program created their own Facebook page, which was very popular with more than 22,000 likes (perhaps because the program was for youth). They shared links to mental health stories from other sources, plus information on the presenters and what they were discussing on the program.
* **Create a Whatsapp group for your listeners.** This can be a way for them to interact with each other and with you. Such a group can take a lot more time to manage, so be sure you are able to do this as part of your work. But you could even offer this to members of your radio fan club, so that your listeners can interact with each other and you -- asking questions, answering questions. If you record your program, you could share the link to the audio through Whatsapp.
* **Some radio stations post clips from their radio program on Soundcloud and share these on other social media channels.** [Radio Trade FM](https://www.facebook.com/tradefm/) does this, particularly with price information for certain crops. The clips are short, so they would be easy to share. They update their accounts frequently, so there’s always the latest information available. See their Soundcloud page here: <https://soundcloud.com/tradefm>

### Tips

* Update your page regularly so people know it’s still active!
* Let your listeners know you are on social media, and that they can connect with you there!
* Go where your audience is. Create pages / profiles / accounts on the social media channels that people are using. If your listeners are not on Twitter, don’t make a Twitter page. It can be a lot of work to update several accounts, so don’t be on every social media channel!
* Post things your followers are interested in. This can be insights from your own program, community news, a hint as to the topic of next week’s episode, but also the latest political and sports news, includings photos / links to other news sources.
* Visuals being key to success on social media, always select and post the best photos to attract more follows, likes and shares.
* Create a social media strategy. Learn more from the Community Radio Toolkit, who ask 5 questions for creating a social media strategy:
	+ What do you want to achieve through social media?
	+ What time can you commit to social media?
	+ Who are your social media audience?
	+ Which social media sites are most likely to help you achieve what you want?
	+ Who will be involved in the delivery of your action plan?

(Note: They are based in the UK, so some of their advice might not be relevant to you: http://www.communityradiotoolkit.net/social-media/developing-a-social-media-strategy/)

### Popular social media channels:

**Twitter**

Twitter now lets you post 280-character messages, plus photos or short videos. This is great for short messages with links. But this is often more popular with businesses and organizations than individuals.

**Facebook (+Messenger)**

Facebook is still the most popular social media site. It allows you to post pictures, videos, texts + links, plus conduct polls. People can also send you an individual message using Messenger. This is the same for a business page. Individuals can send you a private message using Messenger.

You may also want to create a private group on Facebook. You can create a group to connect listeners to each other / station staff, so that they can comment on the latest episode of the radio program, ask questions, or answer questions.

**Instagram**

Instagram is made for sharing pictures, but this can be a fun way to create a sense of community. But you cannot share links on Instagram, so you will have to include all of your information in the caption of the photo.

**Whatsapp**

You probably use Whatsapp individually to send text messages, etc. You can also set up a group to let your fan club interact with each other and presenters. But this might be difficult to manage, as you will need to ensure people are not insulting each other or posting inappropriate comments. You could also create a broadcast list, which allows you to send mass group messages to an entire list. This is a good way to share recordings from your program, promos for upcoming episodes, or an invitation for people to call in to your program.

**Soundcloud**

This site allows you to upload audio. Many radio stations use it to publish clips or full episodes of their programs.

**Canva**

This is a simple site for creating interesting images. You can use shapes, backgrounds, different fonts, uploaded images, etc, to create interesting graphics.

**Buffer / Hootsuite**

These tools are used to schedule posts on various social media channels. Simply link your accounts here, and you can prepare the text / image, and schedule when it will be posted. Tip: You can already schedule posts for Facebook using the Publishing Tools, but if you are posting similar things on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, this is a great way to easily post the same message in many places. See our social media scheduling guide for more information on how to schedule posts.

This isn’t a definitive list of social media channels for radio broadcasters. There are always new social media tools being developed and becoming popular. Among them include Snapchat, Telegram, Viber and WeChat. But investing time into all of them would take all the work time of a single person - or more! So decide how you will be using social media and which tools will be the best to help you reach your goals.