

Scouting  America™

Social Media Playbook



Personalized Experience

Social technologies are changing the way we collaborate and communicate with each other. Many traditional forms of marketing and advertising have been replaced by online word-of-mouth and the consumer's ability to share their experiences with everyone they know.

Here at the Boy Scouts of America, we're no different. We have a product that delivers personalized experiences that American families absolutely must have and can't get anywhere else. According to Forrester Research, a premier technology research company, 75 percent of people in the US use social tools (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc). That means for many Americans, those personalized experiences are going to start with online engagement. Our most important marketers are those of you who interact with Scouts and potential Scouts every day: Unit Leaders and Volunteers. We want to equip you, and everyone within the organization, with the knowledge to use social media effectively.

The BSA Social Media Playbook will be your guide as you seek to use social media to communicate, recruit, retain, and inspire those in your community.





Understanding Your Audience

Unit Level Leaders

drive Scouting by interacting regularly with Scouts, parents and community members. Does your unit have a Facebook page? What online social efforts can help you recruit new members and increase unit activity? You're probably already friends with someone online who has Scout-age children ready to participate but doesn't know where to start. Sharing online can be the first step.

Council Professionals and Staff

are responsible for the big picture initiatives within a larger community. How do you communicate BSA initiatives with units in your area? Do you have a social presence, and is it populated with relevant content? How can social media play a role in things like fundraising or general awareness? You have a large audience, and social can help you reach people effectively.

Key Takeaways

Unit Level Volunteers

- How to leverage social media to **open up Scouting** to kids and parents in your area.
- How to **Post** and **respond** on at least one social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- How to post **quality** content regularly.

Council Professionals

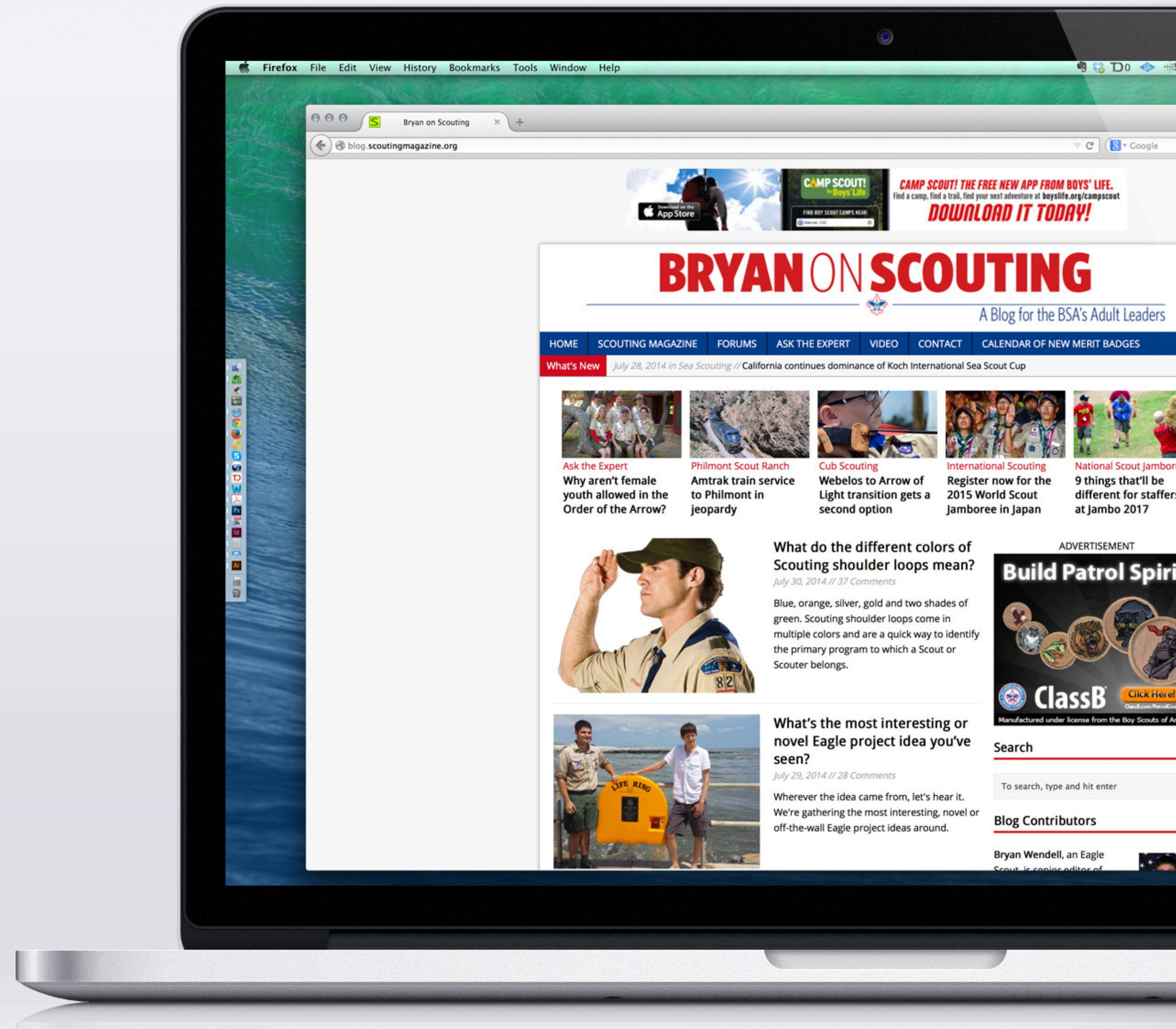
- How to create a relevant social platform for communicating with Units in your council.
- How to engage Unit leaders and volunteers through social media.
- Understanding the BSA social media guidelines.

Unit Level Volunteers

- Read the BSA's **List Of Key Considerations For Social Media**. You can't manage your social channels properly without it.
- **Post regularly**. Don't go more than one week without an update.
- Subscribe to other **BSA social media** channels and share their content.

Blogging

Blogging is a way for you to keep readers informed about the latest in your area. Did you hold a successful fundraiser? Did you improve the neighborhood with a recent Eagle Scout project? It doesn't have to be more than a paragraph, but it should be timely and relevant (don't wait three months to share the photos from last weekend's camping trip). This is your chance to tell readers why being a part of Scouting is so valuable.



Creating an Effective Blog Post

Post interesting content. This is **Scouting** we're talking about, so that's not too hard. Camping trip reports, schedule updates, major events, and award announcements are all good examples of content worth posting.

Use images. Studies show people are **75% more likely to read** a blog post that contains a picture or video than one without.

Show your appreciation when people participate. **Acknowledge them** in the comments or somewhere else on your blog.

Ask for participation. If you want people to interact with you online, you have to ask them what they think. Ending a post with a question, like "What are your thoughts about..." can make a big difference.



For an example of Scouting blogging done well, check out the [Bryan on Scouting](#) blog, the [Scouting Around](#) blog, and [The Summit blog](#).



Important Things To Know About Blogging

- Your blog is **the hub** of your social media presence.
- Your blog is a journal. It's the place online to **keep things fresh** and up-to-date, like **Chief's Corner**.
- Your blog doesn't have to be housed on a council or unit website. It could be on a platform such as WordPress or Blogger, or you could focus your attention instead on sharing information via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or another social media platform. **Use what's easiest** for you and what's easiest for your audience.

Action Items to Help Ensure Your Blog is Relevant

Update your blog at **least once every week.**

Your entries should **entertain, inform, and/or help visitors** complete a task.

Get right to the point. A blog post is not a book; it's **a little blip** of the Scouting experience.

Use information and content from **BSA websites** in your blog.

Facebook

Facebook is the world's largest social website with 1.23 billion active users per month. It's user friendly and makes engaging others in your community a relatively easy task. Plus, with that many users, it's likely most people within your Scouting community are already involved.



33%

Increase

Using emoticons
increases comments
by 33%

100%

More Comments

Question posts get
100% more comments

23%

More Interaction

Shorter posts get 23%
more interaction



Getting Started with Scouting on Facebook

- You need to create a Facebook “Page.” This part of Facebook is your own personal Facebook profile.
- Facebook makes this process as simple as possible by walking you through **easy-to-follow directions** and descriptions.
- Invite your Scouting community to “Like” the page, and start populating it with quality content.
- If you’re having trouble getting set up, Facebook has a ‘Help’ section with tutorials and detailed directions.

Using Facebook Like a Social Professional

Whenever possible, **post pictures or video**. Photo posts get 39% more interaction. If you're lacking content, you can go to the BSA Flickr page and scour our new image library. Once you find something you like, download it and post away!

Share content from other Facebook Pages often, especially **the national BSA Facebook Pages**. There is a lot going on in Scouting. The more you share, the better.

Post when your audience is likely to be on Facebook, typically **right before lunch** or **right after rush hour**.

Respond to people who respond to you. It's the **golden rule** of social media.

Instagram

With over 150 million users, 16 billion photos shared, and 1 billion likes happening each day, Instagram photo and video sharing is one of the most engaging channels on social media. You can share pictures and short videos with those in your network, giving them a glimpse at what Scouting has to offer.



33:1

Comment Ratio

For every 33 likes you get 1 comment, on average

Use Hashtags

More hashtags equal more engagement
#trustus #theywork

Post on Sunday

Sunday posts have the highest engagement



What Makes Instagram Unique

- Instagram is **phone-only**. You can't post to Instagram from a computer. You can, however view Instagram on your computer.
- Instagram is designed to **integrate** easily into your Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Uses **image filters**. As soon as you choose an image to post, Instagram will direct you to a menu of easy-to-use options to treat your photos.
- There's no text at all in the Instagram app. **Don't be afraid of the icons**, just use them and explore.



Proven Ways To Use Instagram

Add hashtags to your image descriptions. Pictures with **hashtags** get nearly double the amount of interaction as those that don't.

Follow people, and like their content. There's a big **you-scratch-my-back-I'll-scratch-yours** element to Instagram. If you want interaction, you need to interact.

Choose a filter and make it your own. It's fine to use **different filters** for different images sometimes, but if you want people to learn to recognize that a picture is coming from you just by looking at it, choose one and stick with it.

Use Instagram video. Instagram will allow you to take 15-second videos and post them to your account. One thing you can't do, however, is post video from other platforms like YouTube.

Twitter

Twitter is the world's most popular platform for "microblogging." In other words, if you can't get your point across in 140 characters or less, this isn't the platform for you. Twitter is about quick updates, reminders for events, or powerful quotes that can motivate and inspire. The key to making Twitter successful is to keep content timely and relevant.





Techniques for Mastering Twitter

- A **hashtag is a digital label** used to keep track of messages and create uniformity in campaigns. By simply adding a “#” before any word or phrase, you can create a searchable topic to track your activity. For example, if you’re doing an orienteering activity for Scouting you could tag **#orienteering** and **#boyscouts**. Then, anyone that’s interested in that subject can search for everything on Twitter that includes that label.
- **Follow people.** Businesses in your area that support Scouting, charitable organizations you’ve worked with, or individuals who are on Twitter that are connected with Scouting are all good examples of who to follow. [@MikeRoweWorks](#) for example.
- Retweet what other people are saying. When someone tweets something you want to share, you can **click “ReTweet”** to send that message to everyone who’s following your account.
- Mark other people’s tweets as “**Favorite.**” It’s exactly like clicking the Like button on Facebook.
- Reply to other people and **join their conversations.** If, for instance, you see a tweet pop up from [@BoyScouts](#), click “Reply” and Twitter will automatically begin your message with our handle. Then just type out your message and click “Send Tweet.”

17%

Higher

Twitter engagement is 17% higher on the weekends

2X

Engagement

Tweets with images get 2x the engagement as those without

86%

More Likely

Tweets with links are 86% more likely to be retweeted

Understanding Twitter

When you sign up, you'll choose a **Twitter handle** which starts with the @ symbol (like **@BoyScouts**).

A post is called a 'tweet' and cannot be longer than **140 characters**

You can **follow what specific people** on Twitter are saying by following them. If you follow **@BoyScouts**, you'll get an update every time we tweet.

Twitter is an open network, which means any one of Twitter's 265 million users can read your tweet at any time, even if they aren't officially following you.

Listen first. Before you start tweeting, click around (you won't break anything) and get a feel for what and how people are using the platform.

There are lots of **BSA channels already active** on Twitter. Connecting with them is a simple way to get started.

Pinterest

Welcome to the visual web. Pinterest is a virtual 'pinboard' where users can save things they've found online to keep track of them. Recipes, pictures, videos, DIY projects, and more.



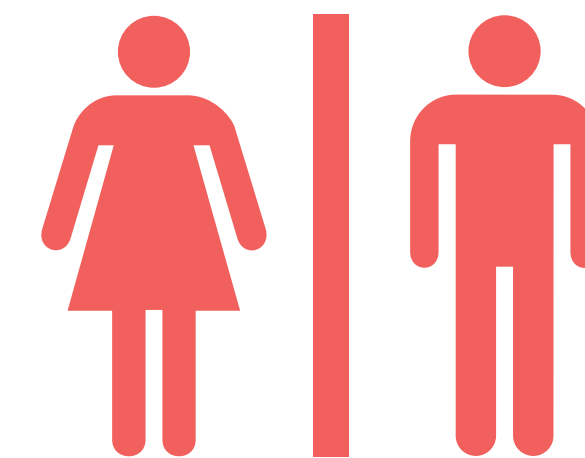


Simple Ways Pinterest is Keeping it Social

On Pinterest, you can **follow users** or specific pinboards.

Re-pinning allows you to share other people's content on your pinboards. It also identifies whose content you re-pinned.

Share your pins on Twitter and Facebook. **Pinterest will give you this option** every time you pin something new. It's a convenient way to let your other digital communities know that you're active on more than one platform.



Users: 20% Men
80% Women

50%
have kids

50% of Pinterest users have kids

42%
higher click through

Tutorials and DIY pins see a 42% higher click-through rate than other pins



Tips For New Pinner on Pinterest

Pinterest allows users to **create pinboards**, or virtual bulletin boards with whatever themes they'd like. Users browse the web and pin images they like from different websites to their Pinterest.

Pin pictures of things that are **useful or interesting** to your audience. There are literally millions of pins for recipes, crafts, games, and all kinds of other stuff that's relevant to Scouting.

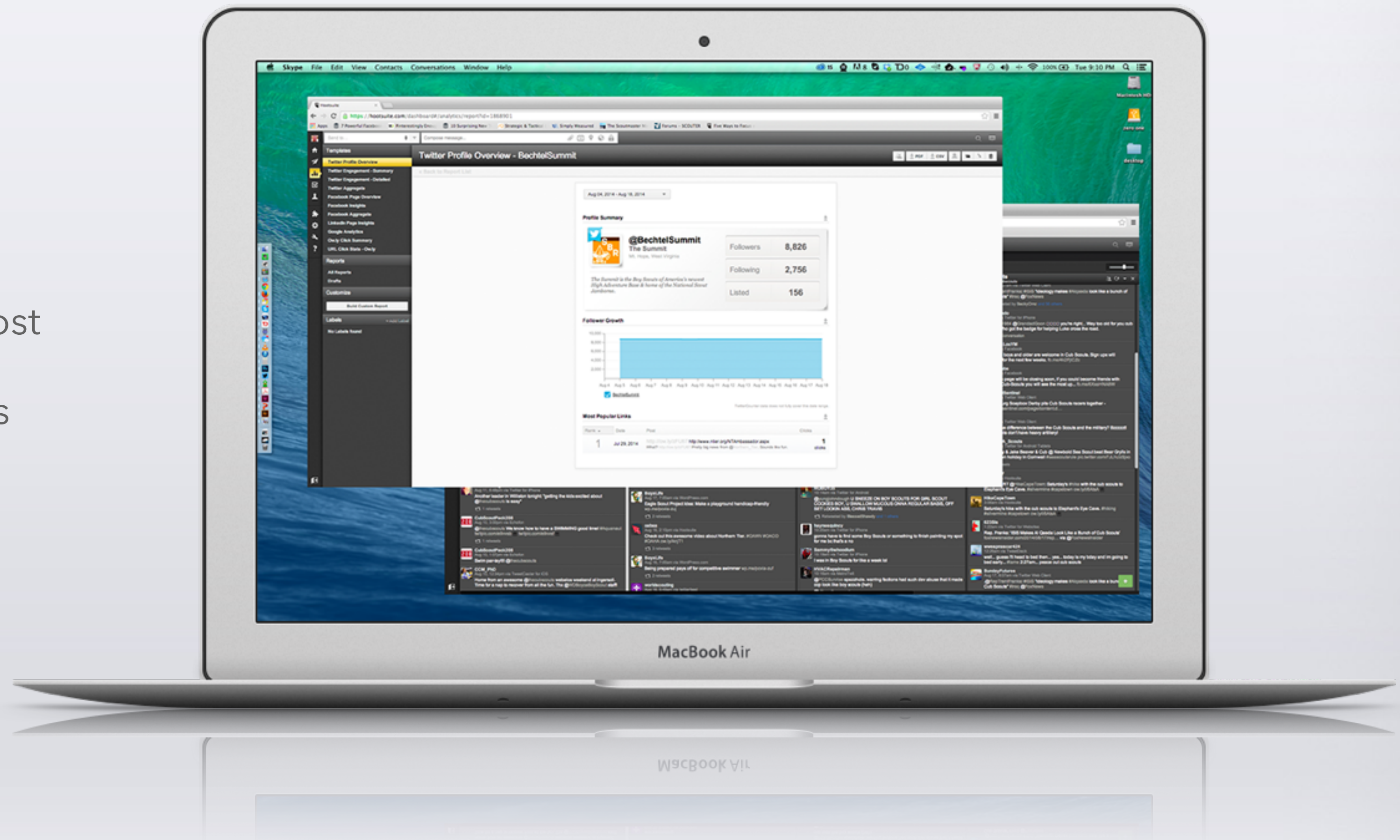
Remember, this is the visual web. **Striking images** will get the most interaction.

Keep the number of pinboards you create to a minimum. It's **better to have one board** that is consistently updated than to have 20 that aren't.

To get started, add the **Pin It** button to your browser by to quickly pin your favorite sites.

Social Media Management

Although social media can be one of your most valuable marketing resources, finding time to manage multiple channels can be hard. That's where social media management tools come into play. You can schedule posts, search for more followers, and manage all your social properties with one, easy to use tool.



How Can a Management Tool Help You?

A management tool allows you to sync all of your social media channels (or accounts) on to one dashboard, giving you a one-stop shop for access to your social networks. Also, many of these tools are low-cost or free.

You can save time and maximize efforts online by scheduling posts to go out over multiple channels automatically. Spend a little time Monday scheduling posts for the rest of the week, so you can focus the rest of your time elsewhere.

Many services are completely functional across multiple platforms. Whether you're using an Android or iPhone, tablet or notebook, you can work seamlessly across the board.

Multiple users can have access without having to share passwords to all of your social media accounts. The fewer people with password knowledge means the less likely you are to experience a mishap with poorly placed content. Security is always a bonus.

Data management can be a hassle, but a good social media management tool can help you easily gather data about your social efforts, giving a better idea regarding what's working on your platform.

744
of the Fortune 1000
companies use
management tools

50
different programs
to provide support

5x
faster when
publishing to
multiple accounts

What Tools Are Available?

There are plenty of different management tools for you to choose from, but here are a few suggestions to get you started.

Each tool will have its own unique way of implementing the management protocols you need, so shop around and find the one that best fits your needs.

- 1 Hootsuite
- 2 Buffer
- 3 Sprout Social
- 4 Bitly
- 5 Crowdbooster

Social Media Playbook

BSA Content Sources

Here's a chance to grab some of the digital content we were talking about. Follow the links to see the best in Scouting online.

[Scout Wire](#)

[Scouting Newsroom](#)

[Chief's Blog](#)

[Scouting Magazine](#)

[Boys' Life](#)

[BSA Home](#)

[Cub Hub](#)

[Venturing](#)

[Scout Stuff](#)

[Facebook](#)