



Social Media/Mobile Technology Tools for Ag Businesses

Miranda Hileman¹ and Matt Ernst²

Introduction

The internet and cell phones changed the way we communicate with each other. Many consumers now use their smartphones or tablet devices to connect to and interact with local businesses. Mobile technology tools can be a practical way to communicate, connect, and engage with your customers, especially as social media becomes increasingly important. The challenges of 2020 made mobile technology and social media more important than ever to direct marketers and small businesses. Mobile technology tools are becoming more accessible to rural areas, offering different options to both businesses and customers to connect with each other and increase the ease of transactions.

Mobile technology tools and applications are also increasingly used by producers in farm management and marketing. Tools and applications that help with record-keeping, commodity updates, weather reports and other management areas are increasingly being used by producers, with specific applications created for farms of all sizes and types. However, there are so many tools and applications, it can be hard to decide which to use. This profile is intended to provide a summary of social media tools and mobile technology applications that may be useful to growers in connecting to their customers, as well as keeping better records for themselves. With so many mobile technology applications available for all types of farmers (crops, grain, cattle, weather, news, finances, etc.), producers interested in more applications for agriculture should visit



<https://www.growingproduce.com/fruits/here-are-the-top-mobile-apps-for-ag-in-2020-and-beyond/>, or <https://smallbiztrends.com/2018/09/agricultural-apps.html>, or browse online app stores by searching “Agriculture Apps” or “Farmer Apps.”

Social Media

Social media is the virtual interaction among individuals and businesses in which they create, share or exchange information through online networks and communities. Social media allows users to quickly and easily share photos, graphics, text, videos and other content. Often, frequency and immediacy are the top advantages noted for using social media channels as part of a business marketing plan. Social media is useful for building and strengthening relationships with both current customers and potential customers, as the increase in

¹Miranda Hileman is a former Extension Associate in the Department of Agricultural Economics.

²Matt Ernst is an independent contractor with the Center for Crop Diversification.

use of smartphones and tablets to seek and communicate with businesses continues with current and future generations. Social media offers the ability to interact with customers in an online space where they are comfortable. Also, many of the social media sites are free to use and can provide cost effective options for advertisement and promotion to targeted audiences.

With many different online tools and platforms that increase and enhance your ability to share information, how do you choose which channels to use? First, ask your customers! At the same time, define your goals for using social media. Then, spend your marketing hours where most of your customers are and sharing the information that you think is important to your customers.

Here are some tips to help you start marketing your business through social media:

1. Find the time: set aside time daily to work on Marketing
 - Multiply your efforts
 - Write one blog post → pull the most discussable sections and post on your Facebook Page → Use interesting quotes from it on your Twitter status → Edit the post for your paper/email newsletter → archive on your original website, too.
2. Sample Daily or Weekly Goals – pick a specific time to do this each day or week
 1. Update your Facebook and Twitter status (words or pictures)
 2. Respond to comments
 3. Like five interesting links or businesses on Facebook
 4. Retweet three interesting links on Twitter

Mobile Technology

Mobile technology is broadly defined as devices used for cellular communication. The device is most commonly a smartphone or tablet that can store, create, access and organize data in various forms from a wireless location. Mobile devices use cellular phone connections to connect to the internet. Consumers frequently use their mobile phones and tablets to connect with each other, and search for businesses and information that they want. Social media sites are highly used by mobile device users, which can make market-

ing via social media channels very important, because consumers are constantly checking their phones for updates. Other applications or “apps” can also be used on smartphones and tablets. An “app” is a specialized program or piece of software downloaded onto a mobile device that is designed to fulfill a particular purpose.

In recent years the number of apps available for use on mobile devices has exploded. Apps are available for agricultural businesses and producers to help with record-keeping, time management, expected yields, livestock forecasting, pesticide information, marketing, up-to-the-minute weather forecasts, news, credit card payment systems, and organizing business contacts, among other things. It is often helpful to have all of this information at your fingertips, no matter where you are — in the field, in your truck, or waiting in a doctor’s office. Mobile technology can help you collect and record better information about your business.

The end of this fact sheet lists some applications that are helpful in day-to-day farming activities, mobile payment options, agricultural business directories and other helpful websites for farmers. Note that many successful businesses use only a few of these tools — it’s better to be on one social media platform and manage it well than to be on every platform without managing content and responding to potential customers.

Selected Resources

- “How to Choose Which Social Media Sites to Use” (Penn State University, 2018) <https://extension.psu.edu/how-to-choose-which-social-media-sites-to-use>
- “Developing a Social Media Strategy” (Penn State University, 2018) Free recorded online webinar. <https://extension.psu.edu/developing-a-social-media-strategy>
- Keep Your Social Media Marketing Legal (Penn State University, 2019) <https://extension.psu.edu/keep-your-social-media-marketing-legal>
- Social Media for Ag Business: How Can You Use This Tool? (Penn State University video) <https://extension.psu.edu/social-media-for-ag-business-how-can-you-use-this-tool>
- Social Media for Agricultural Businesses publication series (Penn State University, 2016) Facebook <https://extension.psu.edu/social-media-for-agricultural-businesses-facebook>

Twitter <https://extension.psu.edu/social-media-for-agricultural-businesses-twitter>
Blogs <https://extension.psu.edu/social-media-for-agricultural-businesses-blogs>
YouTube <https://extension.psu.edu/social-media-for-agricultural-businesses-youtube>

Suggested Citation:

Hileman, M. and M. Ernst. (2021). *Social Media/Mobile Technology Tools for Ag Businesses*. CCD-MP-7. Lexington, KY: Center for Crop Diversification, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Available: <http://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/socialmedia.pdf>

Reviewed by Kati Bowman, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, and Brett Wolff, UK Center for Crop Diversification

Photo courtesy of Social Media Tab

[\(http://www.socialmediatab.com/more/social-media-websites-directory/\)](http://www.socialmediatab.com/more/social-media-websites-directory/)

April 2021

For additional information, contact your local **County Extension** agent

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

(

?)&489&'@)31\$-)1A'0%\$&' +) *'-''-5)'B)) *1''8'2%+;)+1'		
A"9>2\$(())))))	A"9>2\$(23("3"5\$3("48(823*92%6*2&4(+5"0&91(63\$8(%7("43(&0(*) &63"483(&0(0"1 2&2\$3(\$"#)(. \$\$(*(&(%67(5&#"50&&8(09&1(0"91 \$93("48(823*92%6*93/(A"9>2\$(800\$93(#63* &12; \$8(0"91(3)"9\$3=9\$#2+\$36.: \$3*2&43="48("4("##\$332%5\$(+5"0&91(0&9(8\$3' *&+("48(1 &%25\$(*(&1 " " \$2("\$"37(0&9(1 \$ 1 % \$93(*&(36++&9("5&#"5(0"91/(A"9>2\$()\$5+3(0"91 \$93(8\$>\$5&+("1 "9' \$*24: (+5"4="1 " " \$92"53="48(63\$(\$ 1 " " 48(3"5(1 \$82"(1 "9' \$*24: (*&(3\$55(*) \$29(3)"9\$3/(j 00\$93("6* &1 " "2#(\$ 1 " " 23(*&(1 \$ 1 % \$93=#63* &12; \$8(5"%\$53(0&9(\$"#)(3)"9\$="48(\$"37(9\$&9*24: (&0("55(#63* &1 \$9("48(024"4#2"5(8" " " " (*&(1 " " " \$2("\$"37(0&9(0"91 \$93(*&(1 "4": (\$*) \$29(%6324\$33\$3/()**+3,--. . . /)"9>2\$/0"91-0&90"91 \$93-31 "500"91 C#\$4*9"5-(
M: EG6"9\$8())))))	M: EG6"9\$8(+9&>28\$3("(&1 +5\$*(0"91(1 "4": \$1 \$4*(+5"4(3&56*2&4/(K) \$(3&0". "9\$(24#568\$3("3\$*(80(+5"4424: ="1 "4": \$1 \$4*=\$9\$&98C' \$ \$+24: ="48("4"57323(*&53(*) " "(C" "5,+ "<)D)'(*&)\$5+(7&69(0"91(964(1 &9\$(3 1 &&*)57/(X&69(3\$ "3&4"5(#9&+(+5"4(*9"430&91 3(24*&(7&69(8"57("3' (523*(7&69(*"3' (523*(3\$9>\$3("3(*) \$(3"9*24: (+&24*(0&9(7&69(9\$#&983("48(7&69(9\$#&983(%\$#&1 \$*) \$(0&648"2&4(0&9(*) \$(4\$N(7\$ "9L3#9&+(+5"4/(M: EG6"9\$8(#"4) \$5+(7&69(0"91 (%\$(1 &9\$(+9&86#*2>=\$+9&02" "%5\$("48(363"24" "%5\$/()**+3,--. . . /": 3G6"9\$8/#&1 -(()**+3,--. . . /": 3G6"9\$8/#&1 -3&56*2&43(
!"912: &(YEM(E&0*. "9\$())))))	!"912: &(9&>28\$3(YEM(3&0*. "9\$(">"5" "%5\$(*&(0"91 \$93(\$>\$97.)\$9\$(*"*) \$5+3(0"91 \$93(9\$ "24(YEM(#63* &1 \$93=9\$86#\$(#&3*3=21 +9&>\$(\$002#2\$4#7="48(24#9\$ "3\$9\$>\$46\$("48(%\$#&1 \$1 &9\$(+9&02" "%5\$/(K) \$(373*\$ 1 (23(#&1 +5\$*\$57(#63* &12; "%5\$(. 2") (Ri -D(36++&9("48(#&1 \$3(. 2") ("1 &4\$7(%#" (: 6"9"4*\$\$(/K) \$(!"912: &(3&0*. "9\$(+9&>28\$3(#&436 1 \$93(. 2") ("4(\$"37(. "7(*&(36%392%\$(*&(*) \$()9>\$3*(&0("5&#"5(0"91 ("3(. 55("3(36++5\$ 1 \$4*(*) \$29(. \$ \$ 57(0&&8(4\$ \$83(*)9&6: (*) \$(0"91 @(. \$(%3*&9\$/()**+3,--. . . /0"912: &/#&1 -(()**+3,--36++&9"/0"912: &/#&1 -((
YEM. "9\$(())))))	YEM. "9\$(23(3&0*. "9\$(*"*) \$5+3(YEM(0"91 \$93(964(*) \$29(%6324\$33\$3(1 &9\$(3 1 &&*)57/(H*(3*9\$ "1 524\$3(3&1 \$("8 12423*9"2>\$("3' 3("48("6* &1 " "3(\$*) \$93/(H*) \$5+3(YEM(0"91 \$93(+5"4(*) \$29)"9>\$3'=3#) \$865\$(8\$5>\$92\$3="1 "4": \$(89&+(32*\$3="48(' \$ \$+("4(\$7\$&4(*) \$29(%&* &1 (524\$/(H*3(\$#&1 1 \$9\$(*& &53(1 " " \$(&4524\$(9&8\$924: (\$"37(0&9(1 \$ 1 % \$93/(YEM. "9\$(23("3\$9>2#\$(/0(b&#"5A"9>\$3*/()**+3,--. . . /#3". "9\$/#&1 -((
O"94R[&&9(())))))	O"94R[&&9("5&9C1 " " \$3(. \$%32*\$3("48(\$#&1 1 \$9\$\$(+5"0&91 3(0&9("92#65"69\$C%"3\$8(%6324\$33\$3/(H("55&. 3(0"91 \$93(*&(800\$9(*) \$29/#63* &1 \$93("(&4323*\$4="#&4>\$42\$4*(%6724: (\$N+\$92\$4#\$(" #9&33(. \$%="1 &%25=(3"5("48(\$ 1 " " 44\$53/()**+3,--. . . /%"94R8&&9/#&1 -((

(

(

(