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Podcast Transcript:

Helping Aviation Businesses Grow by Leveraging Social Media

Hi, I am Shannon Chambers and I am here with Karissa Uko, NATA's Events and Communications Manager, to discuss how utilizing social media can improve both your company's bottom line and community stature. This is the first in a series of podcasts on social media. Welcome, Karissa.

Thank you, Shannon. I'm excited to be here today to talk about social media.

Social media is a cost-effective and easy-to-use tool regardless of business size and should be an active part of an NATA member's marketing strategy. Let's get started. Can you tell our listeners how NATA utilizes social media?

We use social media to:

- Alert the membership and aviation business community in real-time of pressing issues on the legislative and regulatory fronts with updates from Congress and agencies including the FAA, TSA, DHS and others
- We engage with the media and government agencies, as a thought leader and news source
- NATA collaborates and shows solidarity on industry challenges, such as opposition to ATC privatization
- The association shares member news by highlighting investments and relationships with the industry and community, such as helping with recent disaster relief efforts or new facility construction
- And we also provide information about upcoming NATA events or the availability of a product or service

Karissa, you mentioned that NATA shares member news in real time on its social media sites, how do you find this information?

In addition to press releases and media editorials, NATA utilizes social media to gather stories about members news, which we then share on our [social media pages](#) and publish in our weekly, e-newsletter [NATA News](#).

There are many social media platforms available. What are some of the most useful platforms that our members should consider?

[Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn](#) have the broadest reach, across all ages, genders, income levels and professions.

But be mindful though of your audience. Trends show photo and media-based platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat are most attractive to younger audiences. Members can use these channels to address personnel shortages, connect with aviation enthusiasts and engage with future general aviation leaders.



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What can aviation businesses gain from utilizing social media?

Social media is a cost-effective way to market your business digitally by giving your company a voice. Aviation businesses should utilize social media to grow business, increase brand awareness and perception, monitor competitors, nurture the customer experience, and mitigate risks.

How can our members use social media to grow their business?

Social media can be used to inform current and prospective customers of upcoming events and product offerings. This is what marketers would call “social selling.”

If you have a new facility location or new aircraft available on your charter certificate, then you should look to post that information on social media. Announce your current promotions or partnerships to incentivize your buyers.

There are [2 billion active Facebook users](#), [300 million on Twitter](#) and [100 million using LinkedIn](#). In a recent survey, [75% of B2B buyers and about 85% of executives said they use social media](#) as a source for making purchase decisions.

How can a company utilize social media to identify more about these buyers?

Many social media platforms offer demographic data and targeted advertising opportunities so you can strategically reach your end user. Your marketing and sales teams should be collaborating to leverage leads from social media.

Karissa, tell us more about social media increasing brand awareness and perception.

Social media allows companies to create a voice, share their story and be personable. Just as you want to know who your social media followers are, your followers want to know about your company. Studies show [41% of Americans value companies with a strong social media presence](#). When you have a presence, you make it easier for stakeholders to find and connect with you.

So, highlight the work you are doing in the community, new partnerships, recent hires, local economic contributions, and other company updates.

What are some of the contributions our members have been highlighting?

In the last two months alone, we’ve seen many of our members use social media to highlight their relief efforts during recent hurricane and wildfire disasters. This type of social media marketing humanizes your brand and shows how you contribute to the community.

You can also talk about how your business adds to the economic viability in the cities you serve. I encourage our members to also share interesting, relevant content from your partners, customers and community so your audience doesn't think you care only about what your business is doing.



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Another study showed, [over 60% of Americans look to platforms like Twitter for their news](#). Social media is all about sharing. And knowledge-sharing can improve your brand's recognition as a thought leader. Share blog posts, publications, video and other media to engage with the industry and become a go-to source for expert opinions.

You brought up the relationship between our members and their followers, what about with competitors?

That's a great question Shannon. Social monitoring and listening are macro and micro approaches to analyzing what's being said online about your brand or the industry. You can find valuable information online by paying attention to your competitors and you can also utilize social media to collaborate on shared interests, thus building a larger industry reach.

The aviation business industry is very competitive, how can our members differentiate themselves using social media?

Contests and giveaways are a great way to promote your business and grow your social media presence. You can gain loyalty and new fans from requesting followers to share, tag or post a branded message in exchange for a prize. This type of activity encourages engagement and can be done easily via social media.

For example, NATA celebrated its 75th anniversary last year with a social media campaign to engage with our members and the industry with complimentary event passes, free safety training, and other great prizes. This same idea can be used when launching new products, services and events.

How can our members use social media in their customer service efforts?

If you maintain an active online presence, customers who are also active on social media will seek you out to express concerns or share their praise publicly or privately.

Your personal touch can make a true difference in public perception, so be responsive to messages and posts from your followers.

That's great advice. How can social media be used to mitigate risk and safety?

The U.S. has the safest, most complex and efficient national airspace in the world. However, there are situations that cannot be prevented or controlled, such as the natural disasters I previously mentioned. During this year's hurricane season, many of our members took to social media to inform the public about facility closures, relief efforts, evacuation notices and weather updates.



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Do you have final thoughts you'd like to share with listeners?

If someone is looking for information on a service or product a company like yours offers, you are more likely to come across their screen if you have an active social media presence. You then have an opportunity to become a credible source of information.

Share not only your success and news, but that of others, including your partners and community.

Nurture your brand, be responsive to messages and posts from your followers. Most people are likely to share a bad experience before they share a good one, so you have a better chance of protecting your brand by responding to good or bad comments, than to not respond at all.

Social media is not as intimidating as it seems, while there are a number of platforms available the three main ones I discussed, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, are easy to use and most applicable to aviation businesses. Also, there are free and paid for websites that will assist with social media content publishing, digital marketing, data analytics and more!

Thank you, Karissa. This was great information and the first in NATA's series of social media podcasts.

Follow NATA on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) to get industry updates and contact Karissa at kuko@nata.aero, if you have questions about using social media. You can also contact her to share your company news with NATA. Thank you all for listening.