

MIND THE WINDOWS

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

A comprehensive guide to social media,
exploring methods to create brand awareness
for Mind The Windows using the social web.



CONTENTS

2. About
3. Why Social Media?
4. Target Audience
5. Objectives
6. Define Platforms
7. Skills Needed
8. Network Hierarchy
9. Team Roles
10. Listening to the Audience
11. Brand Voice
12. Responding to the Audience
13. Content Generation and Curation
14. Facebook
15. Twitter
16. YouTube



ABOUT

Mind the Windows (MTW) is a cricket orientated news website. The site covers a range of topics in relation to the sport, with articles discussing recent matches, reflecting on games throughout the years, interviews with players around the world, and even the odd argument piece from within the writing team, showcasing the conflicting opinions present within the community of cricket fans. With eight permanent writers from Australia, New Zealand, the UK, South Africa, and Bangladesh (as of 2015), the site offers a diverse set of writing styles and opinions, which are all united by the passion and knowledge for the game and its players.

The site aims to interest the informed cricket enthusiast, in order to create discussion around the sport beyond what is present within the 24 hour news cycle system. With a focus on opinion pieces, feature articles, interviews with players, and so on, the long form journalism appeals to those who are interested in the game beyond just knowing who won the latest match.



WHY SOCIAL MEDIA?

The days are past where the "build it and they will come" statement rang true - and this applies not just to websites, but to anything in which an audience is required. In today's society, in order for these things to be talked about, recognised, and known, some sort of promotion needs to be involved. (Weber 2009, p.117) This is where social media comes in.

AUDIENCE

As a niche article website, social media allows for clear, targeted advertising to parties of interested users. With access to so much information about who people are within their digital platforms, we are able to isolate those who would be interested in the content in order to create a strong user base. This information also becomes useful when attempting to expand the audience to a larger user base, utilising the statistics of users to find those who have similar interests to those who are already dedicated followers of the website.

COST

Social media offers a cost effective medium in which to promote the website, as opposed to what can be considered more traditional methods such as television, radio, or print advertisements. For a small website, this can be useful as funds are not always easy to generate.

TIME EFFICIENT

With the internet offering instantaneous connection, advertising on the web through social media offers the ability for up to date information all the time. This means that an article can be posted on the main website, and the social media channels can be promoting that same article just five seconds after it has been put up. It can also be useful for the purpose of keeping fans apprised of other relevant information they may also be interested in, such as upcoming cricket matches, live commentary on games, coverage of special events relating to the sport, and so on.

ENGAGEMENT

Social media provides a platform where interaction is key. This allows the brand to communicate and engage with the user base of the website, allowing for relationships with the brand and audience to form, eventually leading to brand loyalty through authenticity with consumers. Interaction can also offer the opportunity for collaboration between brand and audience, providing an opportunity to solidify the relationship between the two. Social media can also enable relationships to be formed between MTW and other similar brands, creating mutually beneficial relationships to promote content from each other.

INFORMATION

The benefit of using a digital platform to promote the website also allows the team to monitor where statistics of where visitors are coming from (within the digital realm), giving insight into which platforms bring in what audiences. It also allows the brand to monitor those who are interested in the content it is producing, allowing for understanding as to audience interests. Social media also offers the benefit of monitoring information from similar larger brands which already have an established audience, creating an opportunity to understand their tactics, how and why they work, and apply them to the Mind The Windows audience. (Brookins 2010)

Brookins, M 2010, *The Advantages of Using Social Media Marketing*, Chron, viewed 7 November 2015, <<http://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-using-social-media-marketing-18593.html>>

Weber, L 2009, *Marketing to the Social Web: How Digital Customer Communities Build Your Business*, 2nd Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New Jersey

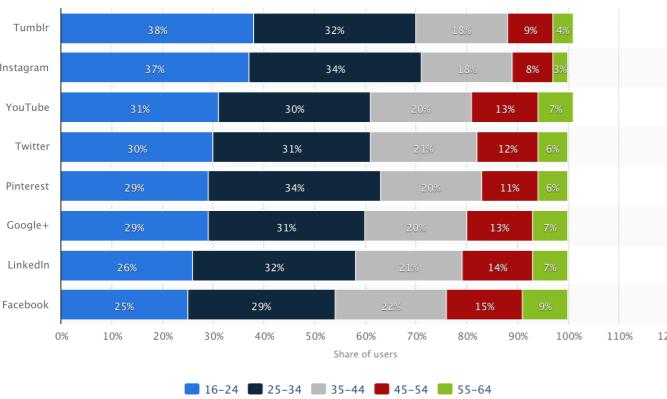


TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is looking at the educated cricket fan. It seeks to connect with those who are interested in the sport beyond just watching an occasional match once a year. It aims to appeal to fans who are interested in more than just which team wins, encouraging further thought, discussion and analysis around the game.

The brand voice is one which is passionate, educated and witty, creating a casual, yet informed environment, aimed to appeal best to a younger generation, particularly those between 18 and 35.

According to Statistics monitoring website, Statista, users aged between 16-34 in 2014 took up 61% of YouTube and Twitter users, and 54% of Facebook users.



Statista, 2014, *Age distribution of active social media users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2014, by platform*, Statista, viewed 14 November 2015 <<http://www.statista.com/statistics/274829/age-distribution-of-active-social-media-users-worldwide-by-platform/>>



OBJECTIVES

By using social media, we build an audience of interested participants who can interact with MTW, either as one who takes on a passive role, such as observing, or as one who becomes more directly involved. Below is a list of 5 main objectives which we aim to achieve through the use of social media, which can be used as a guide to measure the success of the social media strategy.

- Brand awareness
- Lead generation
- Share a mix of relevant, engaging content
- Promotion of upcoming articles
- Engage with influencers

The achievement of these five areas must be built up over time, through the actions within the social media strategy. It is important to remember that these objectives will not be completed straight away - social media requires trust to be built between audience and brand, and this takes time.

Ultimately, the execution of the social media strategy will result in creating an environment which allows the audience to stay informed about what is happening within the cricket community on a constant basis through *sharing a mix of relevant information*, while also offering them the chance to engage with opinions which are not covered through mainstream media, creating the opportunity for *lead generation* and increasing *brand awareness*. The brand accounts will provide the opportunity to promote what is happening in MTW, by offering *information for upcoming articles*. Finally, *engaging with influencers* will create relationships with already established brands and open the MTW brand up to larger audiences.



DEFINE PLATFORMS

When creating a social media strategy, it is important to consider what platforms are available, and which ones would best suit the brands identity, to reach the most people and drive the traffic back to the main website platform.

FACEBOOK

Currently, MTW receives most of its external web traffic through Facebook as a result of authors sharing articles as they publish them to the main site, and notices of new articles posted available on the brands Facebook page. The social media strategy will aim to work with the already existing network of people who are following the Facebook page, and expand the information available through this medium to more than just links to every article. Facebook offers detailed information for those who like the page, due to the large amounts of information given to the company to create ones profile page. This can be useful when learning more about the audience you are engaging with, allowing the brand to evolve with the audience, solidifying relationships between audience and brand, while staying true to the brand identity as a whole.

TWITTER

Twitter is also responsible for directing a large amount of traffic towards the MTW website. Like Facebook, it currently only acts as a link to the website and nothing more. The social media strategy will aim to focus more on community, pointing to other areas which may interest the audience, as well as the MTW website, while also engaging with those who are expressing interest in the brand. Twitter is an ideal platform for any organisation or brand that deals with information that is being generated in real time because it allows quick updates on all topics as things are happening, allowing users to be in the know almost instantaneously. As a new and unique voice within the cricket information market, twitter can allow the brand to become something users look towards for information. Twitter also generates

a larger audience of followers for brands as compared to other platforms, as users are utilising the service to keep up to date with the information they are seeking - whether it be what the latest celebrity is doing, issues around the world, or sports updates.

YOUTUBE

This is a social media network which is not currently being used to support MTW. The aim of using this website will be to create content which can engage with the audience on a visual level and support articles. Tapping into the larrikin cricket culture, this platform will allow the team to create short, engaging videos which can attract further leads towards the website. Youtube offers the benefit of visual marketing with the possibility for viral results. The visual aspect of the website allows for extremely engaging content which is able to generate leads, and with this increased audience. As larger groups of people discover the content, it allows for a wider network to be developed as people share it amongst friends, creating the possibility for the content to take off and go viral.



SKILLS NEEDED

Each social media platform requires a different approach in order to reach different audiences. This means, that a different set of skills is needed to best cater to each social media environment for the best possible results.

FACEBOOK

- Pattern Recognition
Being able to identify which posts are receiving the most attention in order to optimise posts for further exposure in the future
- Writing
Being able to summarise important information in order to generate interest and lead users to read further
- Visual Thinking
Being able to support written material with appropriate imagery in order to generate interest
- Communication
Being able to interact with the audience in order to create authentic connections
- Trend Awareness
Being able to identify trends in social media in order to capitalise on them through the brand identity

TWITTER

- Pattern Recognition
Being able to identify which posts are receiving the most attention in order to optimise posts for further exposure in the future
- Writing
Being able to summarise important information into less than 140 characters order to generate interest and lead users to read further

- Visual Thinking
Being able to support written material with appropriate imagery in order to generate interest
- Communication
Being able to interact with the audience in order to create authentic connections
- Trend Awareness
Being able to identify trends in social media in order to capitalise on them through the brand identity
- Hashtag Familiarity
Being able to identify which hashtags are relevant to the brands goals and utilise them to generate leads and create brand awareness

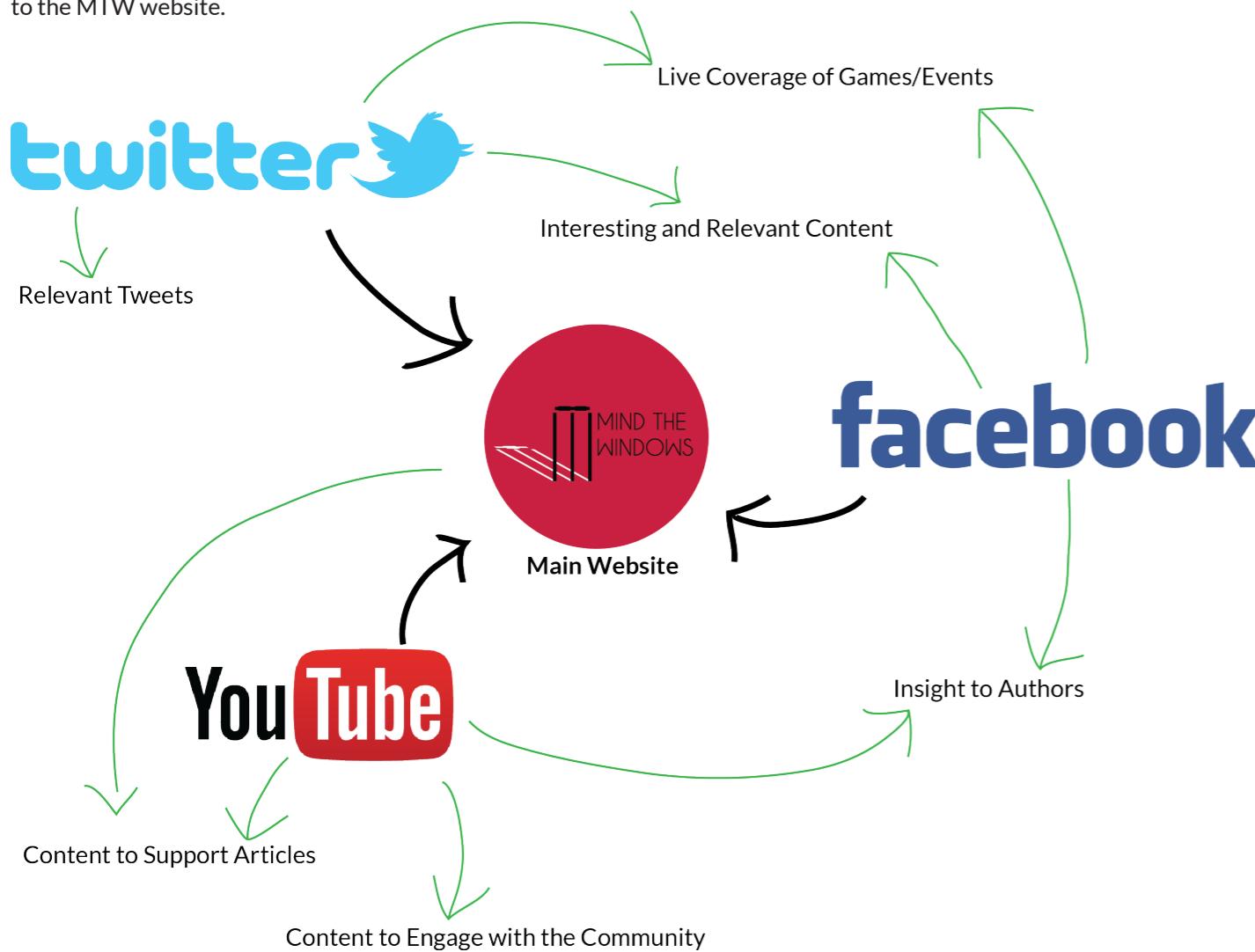
YOUTUBE

- Script Writing and Visual Thinking
Being able to organise information and visual ideas to create a clear understanding of the topic, adding value to the brand identity
- Filming
Being able to record video to a professional standard
- Video Editing
Being able to edit videos to a professional standard, ensuring that the final product results in something which will captivate the audience
- Communication
Being able to interact with the audience in order to create authentic connections
- Trend Awareness
Being able to identify trends in social media in order to capitalise on them through the brand identity



NETWORK HIERARCHY

The aims of these social networks, is to result in a network of information which support the brand identity, and lead back to the MTW website.



TEAM ROLES

Social media networks are a large network of activity, and it's often best to have a small team working on various activities in order to create a flow throughout all the updates which allows for the brand identity to remain clear.

Devon Mace and Dan McGrath will be the key curators of the content shared over social media. For something to be shared on the social media accounts, it must be approved by one of these two members. They will be responsible for ensuring information is consistent with the brand identity and ensure it is not shared more than once.

Other team members can contribute to the MTW social media accounts by sourcing content and adding it to the Mind The Windows Team group on Facebook. This allows Devon or Dan to take the content into consideration, and ensure it aligns with the brand identity.

All team members are able to contribute to the brand by linking the brands Facebook page in their updates, or twitter handle in their tweets when relevant. For example, when writing an upcoming article you may be inclined to take a photograph of your notes and share a status about it saying something along the lines of "Just started writing a new article about @JimmyNeesh for @MindTheWindows". This provides exposure for the brand amongst your personal network, and has the potential to be re-shared from the people you tag.



LISTENING TO THE AUDIENCE

It is important to remember to listen to the audience. Without them, your brand is worth nothing. This doesn't mean that you should bow to demands, but it does mean that you should listen, talk and discuss things with them. If they don't like something about your brand, chances are they will tell you about it. Discussing issues with the audience is a great way to learn to improve your brand, while also creating a relationship with the audience member.

Your audience is not only going to be looking at you as a brand, so listening to the audience can provide insights into what content they are interested in. The more you monitor their activity, the easier it is to provide content which the audience wants.

The easiest way to do this through twitter is by using a program called TweetDeck. You are able to set up multiple columns which allow for easy monitoring of multiple areas at a glance. Below is an example of one way in which

The screenshot shows the TweetDeck interface with several columns of tweets. The columns include:

- Home @MindTheWindows**: Posts from Cat Jones (@Cricketbatcat) about a new delivery, and from Ali Kamran Chishti (@akchishti) about a visit to Karachi.
- Activity @MindTheWind...**: Posts from Kane Richardson (@BilGroseStu) and Pat Cummins (@patcummins30) about cricket.
- Notifications @MindTh...**: Posts from #BeigeDayOut (@beigebrigade) and Vithushan (@Vithushan_E) about cricket.
- #MindTheWindow...**: Posts from Jimmy Neesham (@JimmyNeesh) and others about cricket, including a comment about Glenn Maxwell leaving the ball.
- Cricket Parody @M...**: Posts from Jimmy Neesham (@JimmyNeesh) and others, including a comment about Glenn Maxwell leaving the ball.



BRAND VOICE

The content posted through the social media channels needs to align with the brands ideals. This can sometimes be referred to as the brand voice.

The voice of Mind The Windows can be narrowed down to three sub areas:

- Passionate**
Enthusiastic about the topic, drawing on the love for the sport to create authentic connections with the audience
- Educated**
Utilising a critical lens when posting and responding to the audience, in order to prompt thoughtful, respectful discussion within all topics
- Witty**
Cricket has an underlying larrikin culture, and we aim to capture this using cultured, intelligent humour, resulting in a casual voice, happy to engage in some cheeky banter

When posting content onto the social media platforms, it is important to remember the brand voice. Does the post align with the brand ideals, and strengthen the brand identity? If the answer is no, then you are not ready to post.

The post to the right is an example of a good, witty post, as it is critiquing on Glenn Maxwell's decision to leave the ball. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQUqjFQH-jg>)



Not David Warner @notdavidwarner - Dec 29

An important public service announcement from Disney and the Melbourne Stars. #BBL04 #Maxi

The image is a composite of two photographs. The top half shows a man in a blue suit and a woman in a blue dress dancing in a ballroom. The bottom half shows a cricket player, Glenn Maxwell, in green gear, swinging a bat. A large green checkmark is in the top right corner, and a large red X is in the bottom right corner. The text "@notdavidwarner" is visible in the top right of the bottom image.

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



RESPONDING TO THE AUDIENCE

When responding to the audience, the brand voice plays a major role in how you interact. It is important to remember that interaction with the audience can be what makes the difference between an avid reader, and a casual one. If you respond badly, it can also alienate existing readers. When responding to any comment, ensure it aligns with the brand ideals. If these contrast to the ideals of the audience, make sure you are respectful in the way you discuss it. We encourage open discussion, and this can mean that opinions and ideas conflict, however responding harshly or in a rude manner won't encourage open community discussion and could harm the brand relationship with its audience.

Audience interaction does not always have to be in the form of retweets or replies to comments. Sometimes it can create new posts from the brand which open the discussion to a wider net.

The following response to a tweet from @MindTheWindows has the potential to be appropriated to generate further readership of the original article by referencing the response in a secondary tweet.

Craig Lewis
@Lew1570

@MindTheWindows @Goto919 top pic. I don't think I've ever seen John McGuire without a beard before. And McCurdys bouffant is sensational

8:00pm · 30 Aug 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

Mind the Windows!
@MindTheWindows

Have you ever seen John McGuire without a beard? Check it out, and read about Mick Taylor, while you are at it!
mindthewindows.com/2015/08/30/mic...



CONTENT GENERATION AND CURATION

It is important to remember to source all content which hasn't been generated by a member of the team. If you are using content available on another person's twitter account, re tweeting the tweet with a quote is the best option as it remains clear as to where the content originally came from. If this information was being transferred to Facebook, include a link to the original post in the description.

Ensure that all content posted aligns with the brand voice. Whether it be witty cricket images, comments about the latest match, or links to articles from other websites. If your posts don't align with the voice, then the brand identity loses some of its value.

Source information which interest the audience and prompt discussion. This could come in the form of opinions on current teams, theories on tactics or selection, etc. Topics which prompt discussion allow for authentic interaction between brand and audience, creating a sense of community.

Try to include imagery in posts. The audience is more likely to respond to content which leads with visuals, and this creates potential for a wider exposure.

Be aware of the trends in social media, and if possible tap into them in a way which reflects the brand image. While it may be easy to jump on board to every trending hashtag, it is important to remember that if used badly, it can damage the brand image.



FACEBOOK

OBJECTIVES

- Brand awareness
- Lead generation
- Share a mix of relevant, engaging content
- Promotion of upcoming articles
- Engage with influencers

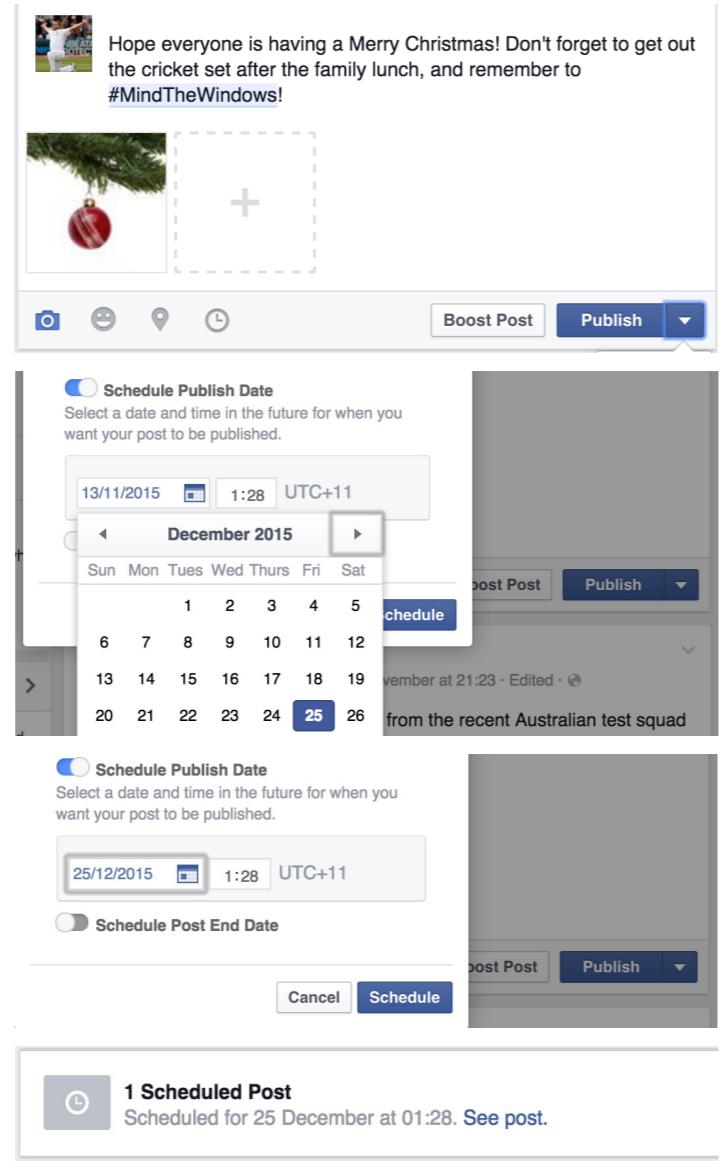
ACTIVITY

- Share articles from MTW
- Interact with audience through comments
- Share a mix of relevant information such as articles, blog posts, images, updates on games etc.
- Provide teasers for upcoming articles

KEY METRICS

- X posts per day
- Page follows
- Likes
- Engagement and Comments
- Referring traffic
- Shares
- Lead Generation

Aim for a minimum of one post per day. Scheduling of posts in advance through the Facebook page can help organise content in advance. Interact with audience on a daily basis, responding to comments.



TWITTER

OBJECTIVES

- Brand awareness
- Lead generation
- Share a mix of relevant, engaging content
- Promotion of upcoming articles
- Listen and respond to relevant conversations
- Segment influencers and create lists
- Engage with Influencers

ACTIVITY

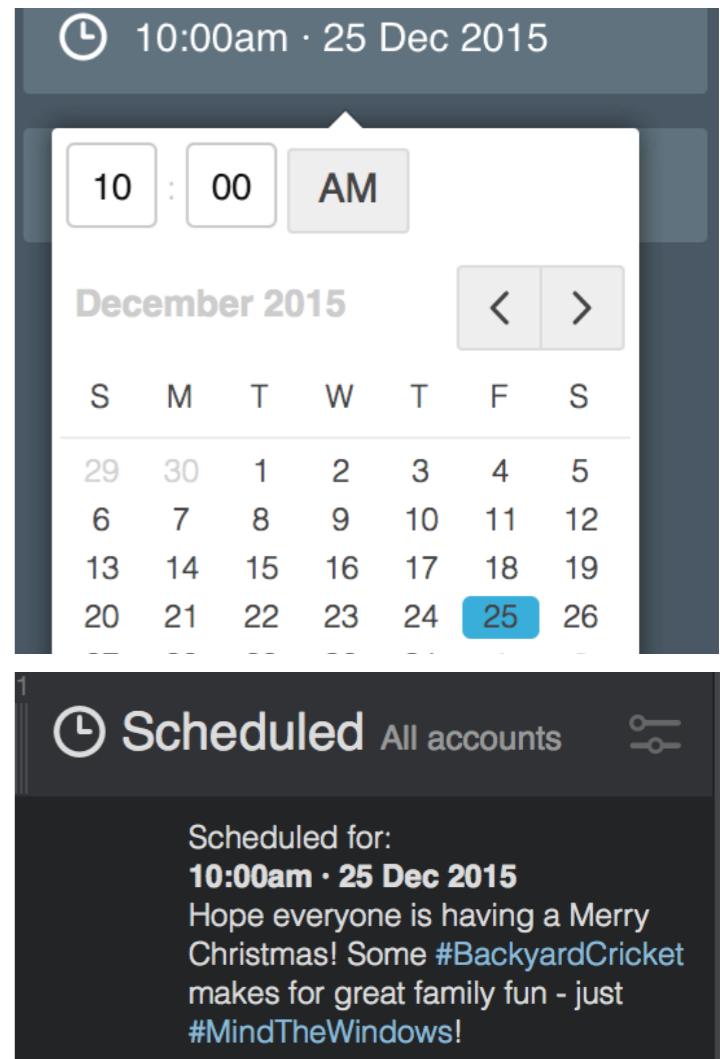
- Share articles from MTW
- Interact with audience through tweets
- Share a mix of relevant information such as articles, blog posts, images, updates on games etc.
- Provide teasers for upcoming articles

KEY METRICS

- X posts per day
- Followers
- Mentions
- Retweets
- Likes
- Number of lists
- Hashtag usage
- Influence of Twitter followers
- Lead generation
- Referring traffic

Aim for a minimum of one post per day. Scheduling of posts in advance through TweetDeck can help organise content in

advance. Interact with audience on a daily basis, responding to tweets, and relevant hashtags to generate leads and create brand awareness.





YOUTUBE

OBJECTIVES

- Brand awareness
- Lead generation
- Viral sharing
- Showcase company culture
- Create video content to share

ACTIVITY

- Share articles from MTW
- Interact with audience through comments
- Share a mix of relevant information such as articles, blog posts, images, updates on games etc.
- Provide teasers for upcoming articles

KEY METRICS

- Views
- Shares
- Referral traffic
- Comments
- Pages ranking on key terms from YouTube

This channel be used to support articles and provide a medium to host content which links back to the website through itself, twitter and Facebook. Interact with audience on a weekly basis, responding to video comments. Videos can be uploaded and put as private or unlisted to be made public at a later date to help organise content in advance.

