

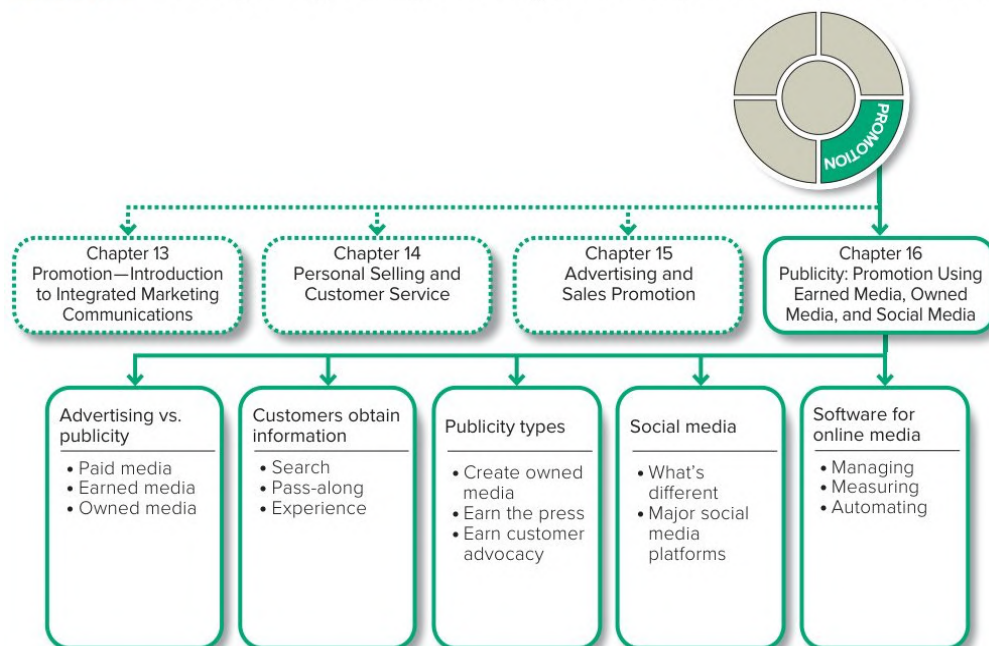
Publicity – Publicity's Role in the Promotion Mix

Promotion Using Earned Media, Owned Media, and Social Media

If you've ever scrolled through Instagram and seen a viral TikTok dance promoting a new sneaker or read a glowing Yelp review that made you try a restaurant, you've witnessed publicity in action. This chapter dives into focusing on how businesses use publicity to promote their brands without always shelling out big bucks for ads. Publicity is all about earning attention through credible sources, owning your digital spaces, and leveraging social media to connect with customers.

At its core, publicity fits into the broader promotion blend — that mix of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations (PR) we covered in earlier chapters. Unlike straight-up advertising (think Super Bowl commercials), publicity often feels more authentic because it's not directly paid for by the company. The chapter breaks it down into three media types: paid, owned, and earned. We'll explore how these work together in a strategy planning process (see Exhibit 16-1 below), contrasting publicity with advertising and tying into customer info sources, publicity types, social media, and measurement tools.

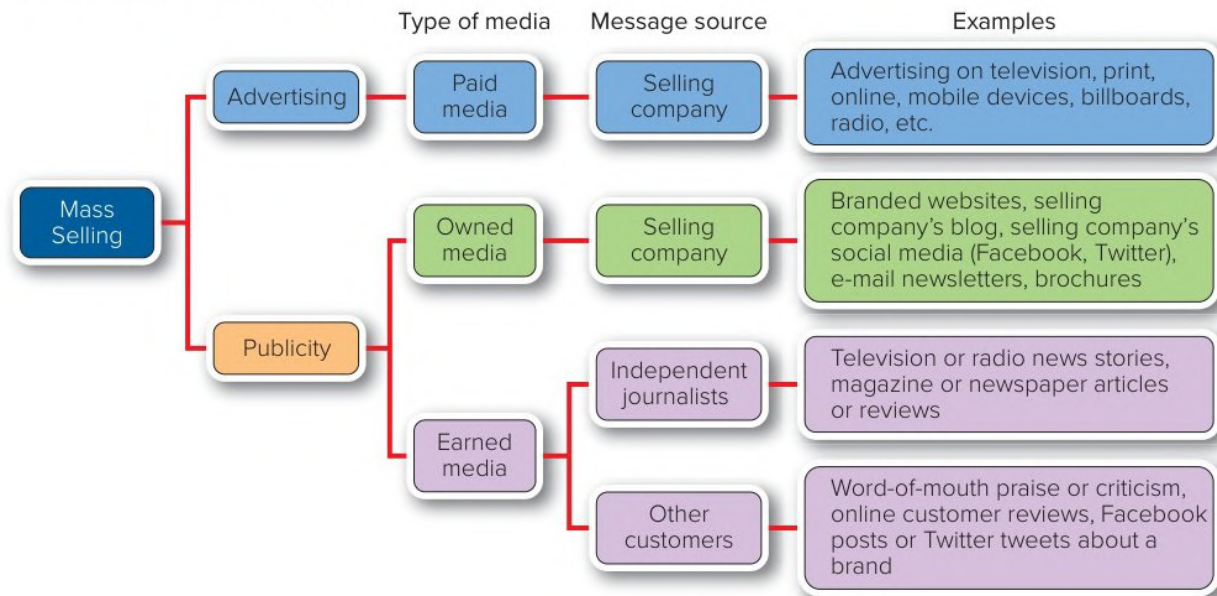
Exhibit 16–1 Marketing Strategy Planning for Publicity, Earned Media, Owned Media, and Social Media



Paid, Owned, and Earned Media: The Promotion Trifecta

Imagine promotion as a three-legged stool: **paid media** (advertising), **owned media** (your brand's Facebook page, website), and **earned media** (the free buzz from others). Exhibit 16-2 (below) lays this out perfectly with examples.

Exhibit 16–2 Paid, Owned, and Earned Media



Paid Media (Mass Selling / Advertising): This is the classic — TV spots, Google ads, billboards. The selling company controls the message and pays to push it to a big audience. It's precise targeting (e.g., Facebook ads to 18-24-year-olds), but pricey and easy to skip with ad blockers.

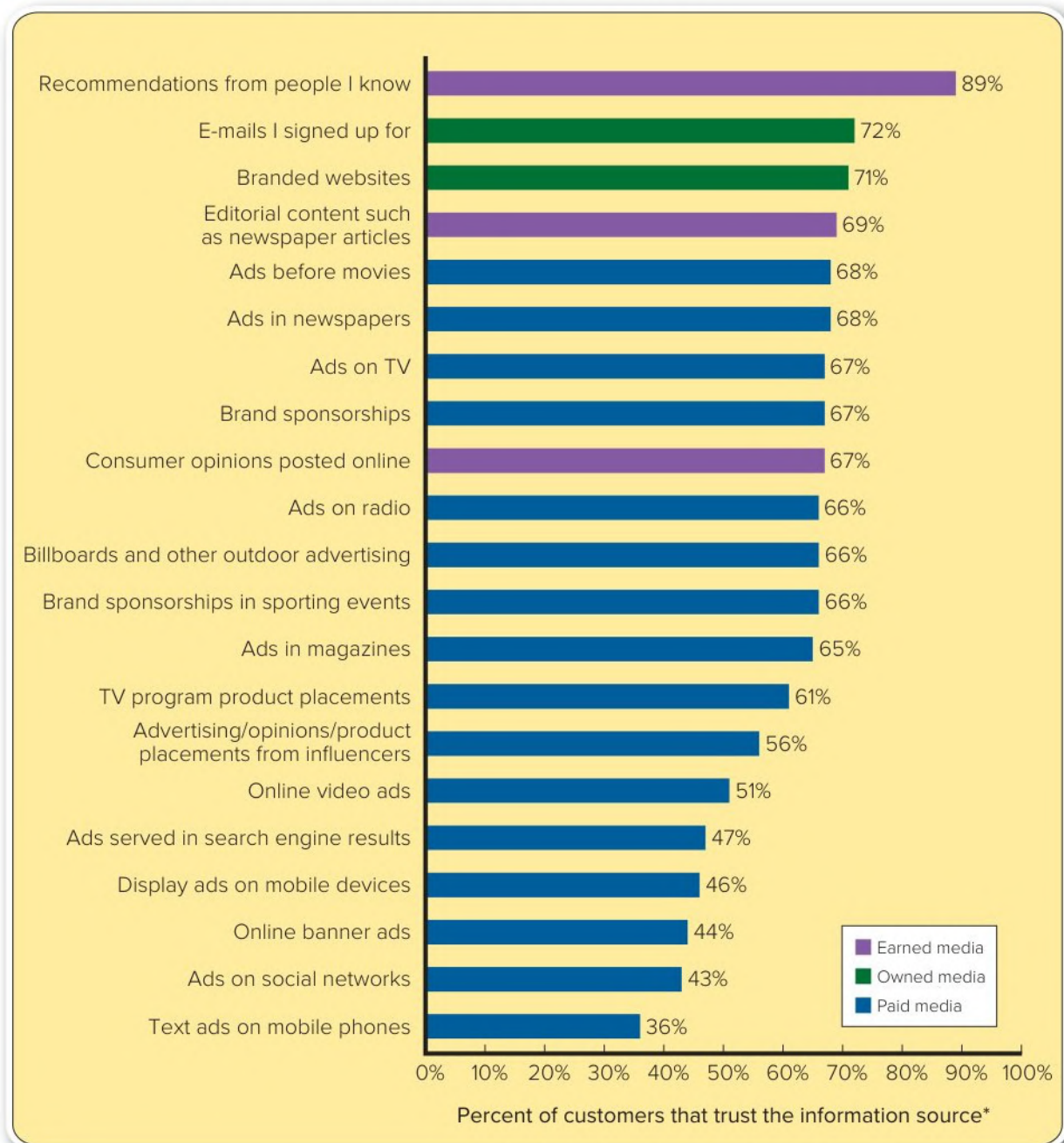
Owned Media: Your brand's home base, like websites, blogs, emails, or social profiles. No direct payment for placement, but you invest in creating content. Think Nike's app or Starbucks' newsletter — low cost, versatile, but it takes time to build traffic.

Earned Media (Publicity): The goldmine of trust. This is buzz from independent sources: a Fox News feature, a customer's Instagram story, or a viral X post (tweet). Sources

include journalists, influencers, or everyday fans. It's often free but unpredictable — could be praise or a roast.

Exhibit 16-3 (below) shows **customer trust levels**: Earned media tops the charts (e.g., word-of-mouth at 89% trust), while unwanted **text ads** lag at 36%. Why? People believe “real” voices over random texts. We just block text ad senders and delete the message.

Exhibit 16–3 Customer Trust in Various Sources of Information



But as Exhibit 16-4 (below) highlights, each has trade-offs:

Exhibit 16–4 Benefits and Challenges of Advertising Media, Owned Publicity Media, and Earned Publicity Media

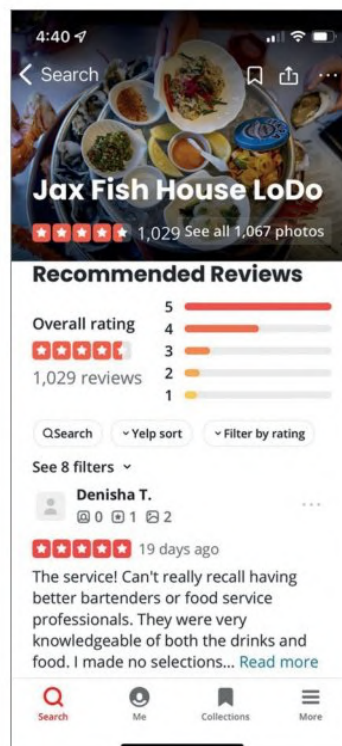
Media Type	Benefits	Challenges
Paid media (advertising)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High message control • More precise targeting • Potentially large audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less trusted • Customers easily avoid • More costly, declining effectiveness
Owned media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High message control • Relatively low cost • Niche audiences • Versatile in message content and format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow—takes time to drive or attract customers to sites and create value to ensure their return • Needs to work with paid and earned media to build an audience • Requires resources to manage and maintain
Earned media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most trusted information source • Customers most likely to act on this information • Can be lower cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unreliable, very little message control • Can be negative toward brand • Difficult to measure • Difficult to create • Difficult to target

A restaurant's Yelp raves vs. Instagram complaints — **earned media packs a punch** but can bite back. Smart marketers blend all three for integrated marketing communications (IMC), like using paid ads to drive traffic to owned sites, sparking earned shares. This framework sets up

why publicity rocks: It's about credibility over cash. Next, let's see how customers actually stumble upon this information.

Jax Fish House is a restaurant with locations in Colorado. Customers might discover it when looking for a fish restaurant in the Denver area. The 1,000+ reviews and an average of 4.5 stars would tell a new customer that many people find it to be a great place to eat. Fans of the restaurant might follow it on Instagram and learn about special events, like its support of Project Angel.

(left): Big Red F Restaurant Group/Yelp, Inc.; (right): Big Red F Restaurant Group/Instagram, Inc.



How Customers Obtain Information: Search, Pass-Along, and Experience

Customers aren't passive—they hunt for info like detectives. Customers search, then pass-along information and experiences.

Search: Google it! (Or Duck Duck Go and Brave Search for those more privacy oriented.) Marketers optimize for this via SEO (search engine optimization) so their owned content pops up. Offline too — think flipping through magazines.

Pass-Along: The holy grail of earned media. **Friends share a funny video** or tip because it's “social currency” (cool to

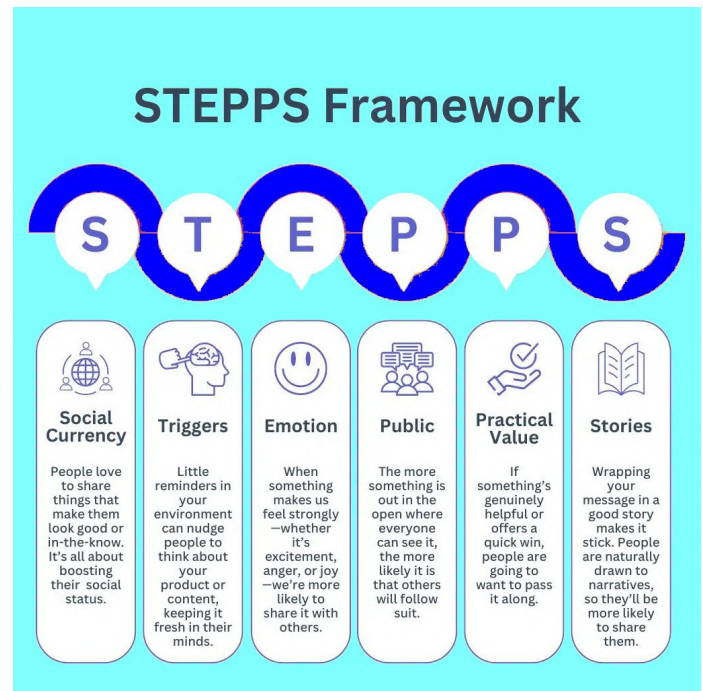
share). The textbook discusses **Dr. Jonah Berger and the STEPPS model for virality:**

- **Social Currency** (makes sharers look smart)
- **Triggers** (top-of-mind reminders)
- **Emotion** (high-arousal feelings like awe)
- **Public** (visible behaviors)
- **Practical value** (useful info)
- **Stories** (narratives that stick)

TikTok's algorithm? Pure STEPPS magic for viral dances.

Experience: Hands-on trials, like test-driving a car or tasting a sample. Branded services (e.g., Apple's store demos) turn users into advocates.

Marketers want to be “findable” in searches and “shareable” in passes. ByteDance



(TikTok’s parent) spreads via emotional, public clips. Key takeaway? Design for these paths — make content searchable, emotional, and experiential to fuel the promotion flywheel.

Deep Dive into Owned Media: Your Brand’s Digital Real Estate

Owned media is like your apartment — you control it, but you have to furnish it right. Exhibit 16-5 (below) categorizes types, discovery methods, and objectives. It’s versatile for awareness, education, leads, and loyalty.

Exhibit 16–5 Owned Media—How Customers Find Each Type and Typical Promotion Objectives

Type of Owned Media	How Customers Typically Discover Each Type of Owned Media	Typical Promotion Objectives
Educational web pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers searching for answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build awareness Educate and inform customers Foster customer trust
White papers and case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers searching for ideas, information, or solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build awareness Educate and inform customers Build reputation as thought leader Foster customer trust
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising or email campaigns Customers searching for ideas, information, or solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate leads Build reputation as thought leader Retain customers with ongoing updates
Landing pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising drives customers to landing pages Customers searching for ideas, information, or solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build awareness Start a relationship Generate leads
Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass-along from friends’ content on social media Customers searching for ideas, information, or solutions to problems Monitor blogs user finds valuable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain interest Build reputation as thought leader
Podcasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising or email campaigns to promote Customers may share if value is created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate customers Build reputation as thought leader Maintain and grow customer relationship
Branded apps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical value can motivate pass-along 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support brand positioning
Brand communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover through search Return to communities where value was found previously Practical value can motivate pass-along 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide value for customers Remind customers
E-mail newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscribe to useful email content after a purchase from the seller Practical value can motivate people to pass-along 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain relationship Remind customers Strong cross-sell as current customers see other offerings.

Landing Pages to Engage Customers

A landing page is a customized web page that logically follows from clicking on an organic search result, online advertisement, or other link. Landing pages may be linked from social media, an e-mail campaign, or search engine optimization around specific key terms. The goal of a landing page is to move customers along in the purchase process. Because customers can easily click away from a web page, a landing page that directly addresses a customer's needs minimizes click-away. Often a landing page will make an offer to the customer — perhaps the opportunity to download a white paper — and ask for his or her contact information in return.

Challenges? Building an audience takes grit (integrate with paid / earned), but rewards are huge: Loyal fans who return. Think of owned media as your LinkedIn profile — nurture it for long-term career buzz.

Earning the Spotlight: Publicity from PR and Customers

Publicity shines when others amplify you — earned media at its best. PR and Press: Pitch stories to journalists / bloggers for coverage. Key issues: Get found via online pressrooms (e.g., searchable fact sheets). Tools like HARO (Help a Reporter Out) connect you to media. Goal: Credible third-party endorsement over ads.

Customer Advocacy: Turn fans into megaphones. Elements include:

- **Word-of-Mouth (WOM):** Organic chatter — high trust.
- **Opinion Leaders / Influencers:** Trendsetters like mommy bloggers (Rookie Moms example from the textbook — target new moms with sponsored tips).
- **Ratings / Reviews:** Yelp / Google stars drive 10x more visits.
- **Social Media / Referrals:** Programs like Dropbox's "invite friends for space."



New moms looking for advice might go to the *Rookie Moms* blog. The site offers tips on pregnancy and parenting.

Risks? Negative word of mouth spreads fast. Solution: Monitor and respond — turn critics into converts. How to spark shares? Restaurants use Instagrammable plates and witty packaging. Salons could offer “glow-up” photo booths for tagged posts. Encouraging word of mouth – authenticity wins.

Social Media: The Game-Changer vs. Traditional Media

- Traditional (Advertising): One-to-many, paid / planned, high cost.
- Social: Many-to-many, paid / owned / earned blend, low placement cost (but time-intensive), reactive / real-time.

Exhibit 16–7 Social Media User by Age (U.S. adults)

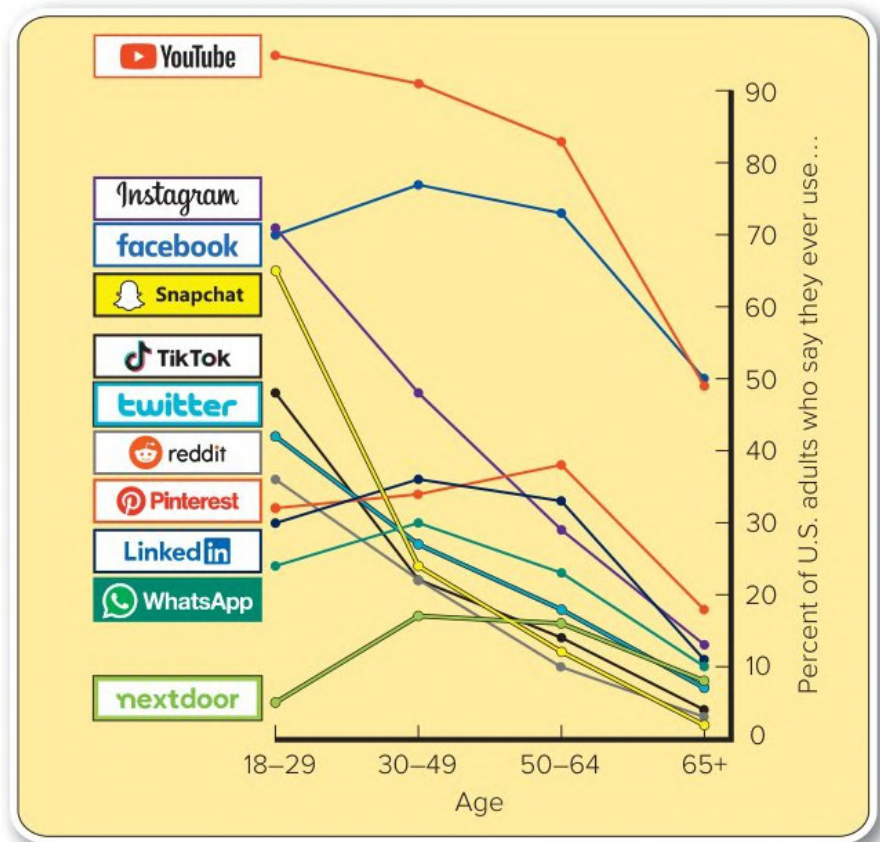


Exhibit 16-7 (above) breaks U.S. adult usage by age: YouTube (81% overall, 90%+ for 18-29), Facebook (69%, dips for Gen Z), Instagram (47%, peaks young), TikTok (33%, exploding with youth), X/Twitter (27%), Snapchat (29% young), LinkedIn (30% professionals), Pinterest (35% women / retail).

What they do best: **TikTok** (short vids), **X / Twitter** (quick bites), **Snapchat** (ephemeral fun), **LinkedIn** (B2B), **Pinterest** (visual inspiration), **Instagram** (aesthetic shares), **Facebook** (broad reach), **YouTube** (long-form). It matters: Social fosters communities, not broadcasts. For Gen Z, it's where brands live. Ignore it – and be irrelevant.

Exhibit 16–6 Big Eight Social Media Platforms—User Demographics

	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn	Snapchat	Twitter	TikTok
% of U.S. adult population using	81	69	40	31	28	25	23	21
Global active users (millions) ^a	2,562	2,910	1,478	444	310	557	436	1,000
U.S. Demographics^b								
Male	82	61	36	16	31	22	25	17
Female	80	77	44	46	26	28	22	24
White	79	67	35	34	29	23	22	18
Black	84	74	49	35	27	26	29	30
Hispanic	85	72	52	18	19	31	23	31
<\$30K annual income	75	70	35	21	12	25	12	22
\$30K–\$49,999	83	76	45	33	21	27	29	29
\$50K–\$74,999	79	61	39	29	21	29	22	20
\$75K+	90	70	47	40	50	28	34	20

^aStatista, January 2022, global monthly active users (all ages), except for LinkedIn, *Influencer Marketer Hub*, January 5, 2022.

^bPercentage of U.S. adult population (by gender and race) who say they ever use social media; 82% of all adult females and 80% of all adult males use YouTube.

Sources: Unless otherwise reported, data from survey in the United States from January 25 to February 8, 2021, by Pew Research Center and reported in "Share of U.S. Adults Using Social Media, Including Facebook, Is Mostly Unchanged since 2018," *Pew Research Center*, April 7, 2021. Questions asked as percentage of U.S. adults who say they use.

Crafting a Social Media Strategy: 7 tasks from objectives to execution

1. **Set Objectives:** Tie to big goals, like boosting purchases or awareness.
2. **Understand Market:** Who is your audience? (Age data from exhibits on previous pages.)
3. **Choose Platform:** TikTok for virality, LinkedIn for B2B.
4. **Deliver Valuable Content:** STEPPS again — emotional, useful stories.
5. **Engage Followers:** Reply, poll, collaborate — not broadcast.
6. **Increase Purchase Likelihood:** Calls to Action (CTAs). These are strategic prompts or buttons embedded in content like "Shop Now," "Learn More," or "Get 20% Off" — designed to guide users toward the next step in the buying process

7. **Experiment and Monitor:** try different test social media posts or emails and see which has the best response (A/B testing), then track the metrics.

Publicity's power lies in authenticity — blend paid control, owned depth, earned trust, and social spark.

Publicity – Publicity's Role in the Promotion Mix Exercise

Review the material in the previous pages and answer the following questions:

1. How does **publicity differ from traditional advertising** in the promotion mix, and why might a brand prefer to blend earned media (e.g., a viral Instagram story) with paid media (e.g., targeted Facebook ads)? Give an example for a brand you follow.
2. Promotion can be described as a “three-legged stool” of **paid, owned, and earned media**. If you were marketing a restaurant with a limited budget, which “leg” would you prioritize first and why?
3. What risks come with **over-relying on earned media**, like customers Yelp or Google reviews? Give examples.
4. Think about a time you discovered a product through a friend’s TikTok or Facebook recommendation rather than an ad. What strategies could a brand use to encourage more of these **organic shares**? Give examples.
5. **Publicity feels more authentic** because it’s not directly paid for. Do articles by a news source you trust, or a viral X post from an influencer you trust, have more importance to you than a Super Bowl commercial? Why or why not?
6. How do you think **Gen Z’s preferences** for platforms like TikTok or Instagram change the role of social media in publicity? Give examples.