

## Which Social Media Tool is Right for You?

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Whenever I start working with an advisor, I like to find out his or her preferences when it comes to communication. Some like to speak; others like to write. Some like formal presentations; others prefer to speak off-the-cuff. Some prefer to be seen on video, while others would prefer to be heard and not seen.

My philosophy is that the best marketing activities are the ones that are in line with the advisor's preferences and interests. Asking an advisor to write a weekly blog when he or she can barely put two sentences together is a recipe for disaster. In contrast, putting an advisor who loves to be the center of attention on video will produce positive results. Social media offers a rich array of tools - all you have to do is choose the one that best fits your personality and preferences.

### For the writers

#### *Blogs*

It is easier to drive people to your blog than to your website. Why? Because you are posting quality content on a regular basis to your blog. Most likely, the same cannot be said about your website. With that being said, writing a blog is a major commitment. Successful bloggers know that writing on a consistent basis is one of the keys to success. Coming up with interesting content on a daily or weekly basis is a challenge. However, if you are naturally drawn to the written word, it is an effective way to communicate your investment management philosophies and financial planning strategies.

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### *EBooks*

For those who enjoy writing but can't commit to contributing to a blog on a regular basis, eBooks may be the way to go. An eBook is the electronic equivalent of a traditional book which allows you to put your thoughts and opinions in an electronic format that can be shared for months if not years. An eBook doesn't have to be a 200 page manuscript. You can create short 10 to 25 page eBooks in pdf format on a variety of topics and promote them on your website and social networking sites. eBooks allow advisors who want to write the opportunity to do so without the commitment of writing a blog.

### **For the formal speakers**

#### *Webinars*

Webinars are great for advisors who like to speak but need a formal presentation to guide them. Since the audience doesn't see the speaker's face, it allows you the opportunity to read from your notes or a script and stay on track. Webinars can be archived on your website or shared on your social networking sites for further exposure. While webinars are appropriate for all advisors who like to speak, I highly recommended them for more structured speakers.

#### *Podcasts*

Generally, podcasts are recorded without an audience, so those who prefer structured speaking situations can use notes or a script to guide the audio broadcast. In addition, you are able to edit the podcast before you publish it, ensuring that every second is just right for those who are perfectionists. While the podcasts are an excellent option if you enjoy prepared speaking activities, they are most successful if produced on a regular basis, so a commitment is required for this specific tool.

### **For the extemporaneous speakers**

#### *Online Radio Shows*

For advisors who have always wanted their own radio shows, love to engage in both monologues and dialogues, and enjoy speaking off-the-cuff, radio shows may be the perfect fit. While advanced preparation is required in order to keep the show interesting, the interaction with callers and guests allows you to present in a free flowing manner without a predetermined script. Online radio shows also allow you to convert episodes into podcasts to share with your network.



## Vlogs

Video blogs (vlogs), a form of blogging using video, are a quick way to get your face and message out to your clients, prospective clients and centers of influence. They are an ideal option for those advisors who like to speak but don't want to spend much time preparing. A webcam or other digital video camera can produce a two-minute video that can be emailed to existing clients, archived on your website or shared on social networking sites. Video editing software can help you make your vlog a masterpiece.

From my experience, across the advisory industry no single social media tool has been more successful than another. The tool that will be most successful for you will be the one you are most passionate about and enjoy using. Choose the one that fits you the best and get started!

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