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THE SCIENCE OF  
**EXERCISE**  
**RECOVERY**



WHY AFAA'S  
**5 QUESTIONS**  
MATTER

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**BUSTING**  
4 FOOD MYTHS

CHANNEL YOUR  
INNER ANIMAL WITH  
**MIKE FITCH**  
KING OF THE BEASTS



## Make the most of social media with these tips from a fitness-marketing pro who's been there, posted that.

BY LAWRENCE BISCONTINI, MA

If you don't yet have a strong presence on social media, I can assure you it's worth the time investment. In fact, I have built most of my online business ([www.findLawrence.com](http://www.findLawrence.com)) using free social media applications to extend my career "beyond the gym" into the realms of author, mentor and public speaker, which has become my company message: *wellness without walls*. Furthermore, my company FG2000 exclusively uses social media to spread its philanthropic mission: to raise fitness standards around the world.

Here are some of my time-tested tips for maximizing free social media resources to boost *your* fitness career.

### PUT YOUR BEST FACEBOOK FORWARD: Modify Posts for Ideal Timing and Quality

If you had to choose just one application for social media exposure, most experts agree that Facebook is currently the clear winner. With more than 1.71 billion monthly active users, this resource lets fitness professionals boost productivity, attract new people to their tribe and spread their fitness message via text, photographs and video clips. Try this:

**TIME POSTS STRATEGICALLY.** Social media professionals recommend making Facebook posts on Thursday through Sunday between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. That's when most people have a chance to check on, and interact with, social media pages. However, think about your specific client base and consider experimenting with timing or asking what works best for them. (See "Now Share This" on the opposite page for one gym owner's findings.)

**MAKE QUOTATIONS COUNT.** You can quote me on this: *Avoid posting quotations from other people.* If followers want to know

what Mark Twain said on a particular subject, they will consult Google. Instead, share the unique thoughts, insights and lessons *you* have learned. The more your followers discover what's interesting about you, the more you will connect with your tribe.

**FOCUS YOUR MESSAGE.** Make posts that are: a) motivational, b) educational or c) inspirational. Alternate among these three genres when you post, using photographs and video clips (shot horizontally) to make them more eye-catching. By varying your topics, you'll appeal to a wider audience.

**INCLUDE A CALL TO ACTION.** Encourage followers to comment and share by asking open-ended questions and using the hashtag #sharethis at the bottom of your post. For example, a group fitness instructor or personal trainer might say, "Our theme next week is intensity. What song most inspires *you* to work harder? Post it here, and I will do my best to incorporate it into our playlist!"

## FIND INSTAGRAM GRATIFICATION: Increase the Payoff of Your Visual Uploads

As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. And the 500 million people who use Instagram each month are proof. Instagram allows the sharing of short video clips, photos and brief messages with few or no written words involved. Instagram can (and should) be linked to your Facebook and Twitter accounts so that one picture will appear on all three sites simultaneously, spreading your message quickly across multiple platforms. Try this:

**CHOOSE IMAGES WITH IMPACT.** Instagram works best when one strong photo speaks louder than a paragraph. Some good examples include a “before and now” graphic

### Now Share This!

We asked Teresa Hall, owner of Nautilus Family Fitness in Sherman, Texas, how she decides when to post on Facebook.

“Posting at a time when professionals and consumers have a moment to react, share, click or comment, makes all the difference between people just seeing a post and having time to help the message spread,” she shares. “I consider the life of my members, and strategically post according to this, avoiding Mondays when everyone is busy with family and work.”

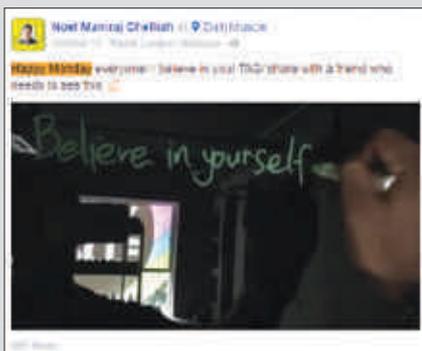
Hall has found that her business posts get the most attention and reaction when she targets them for later in the week at 6 a.m., 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Consider experimenting to see what works best for *your* demographic.



## FACEBOOK



Bernadette C. O'Brien alternates among three types of Facebook posts—motivational, educational and inspirational—on her Facebook wall.



Noel Chelliah, a movement coach based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, regularly shares motivating videos on Facebook, inviting fans to “share this with someone who needs to see this message today.”

## INSTAGRAM



Yury Rockit posts his own quotations to his life coaching clients.

“ Avoid posting quotations from other people. Share the unique thoughts, insights and lessons *you* have learned. The more your followers learn what’s interesting about you, the more *YOU* will connect with your tribe. ”

of a successful client, or a shot of an over-size check being donated to a charity following a fundraiser at your club.

**USE PHOTO-EDITING OPTIONS.** Better-quality images are more share-worthy. Instagram offers a variety of easy-to-use effects and filters to help you make smartphone snapshots look as though they were taken by a pro.

**KEEP VIDEOS BRIEF.** Shorter clips (30 seconds or less) generate more views than longer ones, so keep Instagram videos short, simple and audible.

## SET CLIENTS A-TWITTER: Motivate Your Tweets for Maximum Performance

Tweets help spread your thoughts—and, to a lesser degree, visuals—via short statements (140 characters) to Twitter’s audience, which includes 313 million users per month. Tweets are not known for generating calls to action, such as having people react to specials and discounts, but Twitter offers an easy way to involve followers in any story important to you. Try this:

**AVOID LINKING OUT.** Embed graphics in your tweets instead of making your followers click on a link to see a photo or video clip elsewhere.

**FOCUS ON PEOPLE.** Make the majority of your tweets about client successes instead of delivering a sales pitch for your brand. Profile inspiring clients, classes, colleagues and brand connections. Your tribe will appreciate being a part of your message.

**RESPOND TO EVERYONE.** If someone retweets or comments about you, that person wants to make a connection. Treat the tweet as if it were a private text message. Respond, show gratitude, and interact in a timely manner so everyone can see how connected you are.

## CHANNEL YOUR INNER YOUTUBE STAR: Boost the Intensity of Your Brand’s Videos

Think of YouTube as your own television station—one that reaches 1 billion people and stars you and your company. Unlike Facebook, which stores video posts chronologically, YouTube allows you to *organize* your video clips by topic, making them

easier to search. Of course, it’s a great idea to share your YouTube videos on Facebook to increase their exposure. Try this:

**CREATE A CHANNEL.** Two types of channels—the user channel and the brand channel—are cost-free, but the latter offers extras like a larger header and a background image. Use the tools available to create your own YouTube channel, complete with playlists, and encourage your

tribe to comment on the videos you post.

**ORGANIZE VIDEOS IN PLAYLISTS.** YouTube allows users to create individual playlists, which are collections of video uploads organized by topic, such as “core training,” “Tabata,” “inspirational stories” or “yoga.” Your followers can easily home in on info that interests them, and you can include these playlists on your channel.

**CHOOSE AN INTERESTING THUMBNAIL.** The

TWITTER



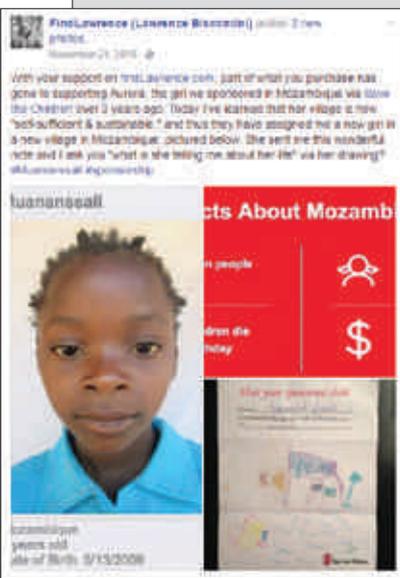
This is what it looks like when a photo is embedded in a Tweet. Here, fitness writer/blogger and subject matter expert Amanda Vogel, MA, shares some social media tips of her own.

YOUTUBE



This is my Playlist view on my Youtube channel, findlawrence.

Sponsoring Aurora via Save the Children in Mozambique meant that a portion of every purchase on my website at the time was donated to fund a sponsorship. When I received my first communication from Aurora, I posted, “What do you think she is trying to tell me in this post via pictures only, since we speak different languages?” Within 1 hour, this post generated more than 750 comments.



PHILANTHROPY

image you select to represent your video in searches should be compelling enough to make people want to view the clip in its entirety. Usually this means pulling from the middle of the video rather than the start or finish.

**USE CONTENT THAT YOU OWN.** It's best to own all of the material appearing in any of your clips, including music and choreography, to be sure that you act ethically and follow all music, content and other copyright laws. Currently, both YouTube and Facebook have teams that peruse all posts to search for any possible infringements and, when found, take action by removing material and granting "strikes" against personal and professional accounts. The most common infringement occurs with background music. If your clip requires music, consider making your own music on apps like GarageBand or hiring custom music through an inexpensive source like fiverr.com. You can also license (rent) music through sites like powermusiclicensing.com, which is used by cheer teams, dancers, video game designers and others.

## BE SOCIAL!

All of the social media outlets here can help you spread your message and build your tribe. Whereas Facebook makes you the host of an online party, Instagram showcases photographs, Twitter highlights words and YouTube features short television shows.

Get some practice using the tips in this article by interacting with AFAA's and NASM's social media channels:

### Facebook:

facebook.com/personaltrainers  
facebook.com/afaa.fit

### Twitter:

@NASM; @afaa\_fit

### Instagram:

nasm\_fitness  
afaa\_certified

### YouTube:

youtube.com/user/NASMorg  
youtube.com/user/AFAAfitness

Together, we can use the power of social media and technology to spread our fitness messages across the globe. **AF**

## How to Play Tag

Attention to detail can improve exercise form (and results)—and the same holds true for social media postings. Using the right tags makes it easier for people to access your message, and it can strengthen your fitness tribe.

Deirdra Martinez, group fitness instructor for Equinox Fitness Clubs in Los Angeles and creator of The Uplift Movement®, makes it a point to tag students appearing in her video clips. "[They] love when I know their names, call them out for making motivating progress and showcase their energy," she says. "I think of my Facebook wall really as a wall about *them* instead of me."

### TAG PEOPLE, PRODUCTS AND PLACES

If a colleague shows you a new movement tip, you could post a selfie of the two of you sharing that skill. However, if you *also* tag your colleague, the manufacturer of the equipment you are using, and the gym where you are working out, you exponentially increase visibility of your message as soon as you hit *enter*.



### USE HASHTAGS WISELY

These make posts easier to track and search, but more isn't always better. I advise limiting them to three (or fewer), each with a specific focus:

**Your brand hashtag/tagline**, such as #findlawrence, #yuryrockit, #fitnessby\_\_\_ or #bodyweightbybrad. (Include this verbally and visually in every post and clip, and you will boost brand recognition and add cohesiveness to your messaging.)

**A descriptive hashtag** for that particular post, such as #thisinspiresme, #successstory, #motivatingfitness or #newcoretrainingmoves.

**A unique hashtag** used only for that post, such as #Mondaymovement, #TRXmoves, #TabataTuesday, or #throwbackThursday. (This will make each post easier to track on its own.) Using three or fewer hashtags keeps your post on track and promotes more visibility of them; readers who see dozens of hashtags stop reading and continue scanning.

### EXCEPTION: BE GENEROUS WITH YOUTUBE TAGS!

Before posting a YouTube video, add as many pertinent tags as possible. An upload about performing a plank might have these tags: fitness, exercise, plank, core training, bodyweight exercise, abs and more. Having more tags increases the chances that people will discover it during a keyword search.

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