

Job Directory



Social Media Manager

Interviews with

Joellen Lu

Dana Dang

Gabrielle Rizzo



Editorial Director

Puno

Art Director

Hanna La Salvia

Sarah Sarazen

Copywriter

Caitland Conley

Course Instructor

Joellen Lu

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

ilovecreatives.com — @ilovecreatives

Text and Cover copyright © 2024 ilovecreatives



Table of Contents

Introduction	04
Social Media Career FAQs	06
The 101: Intro to Social Media Management	08
Job Outlook and Trends	18
In Conversation with Joellen Lu	20
The 201: Getting Started	24
In Conversation With Dana Dang	28
The 301: How To Grow	32
In Conversation With Gabrielle Rizzo	38
Wrappin’ It Up	42

Introduction



Wonder what it takes to be a stellar social media manager?

It's so much more than being "chronically online," though that certainly can help you zig when the algorithms zag.

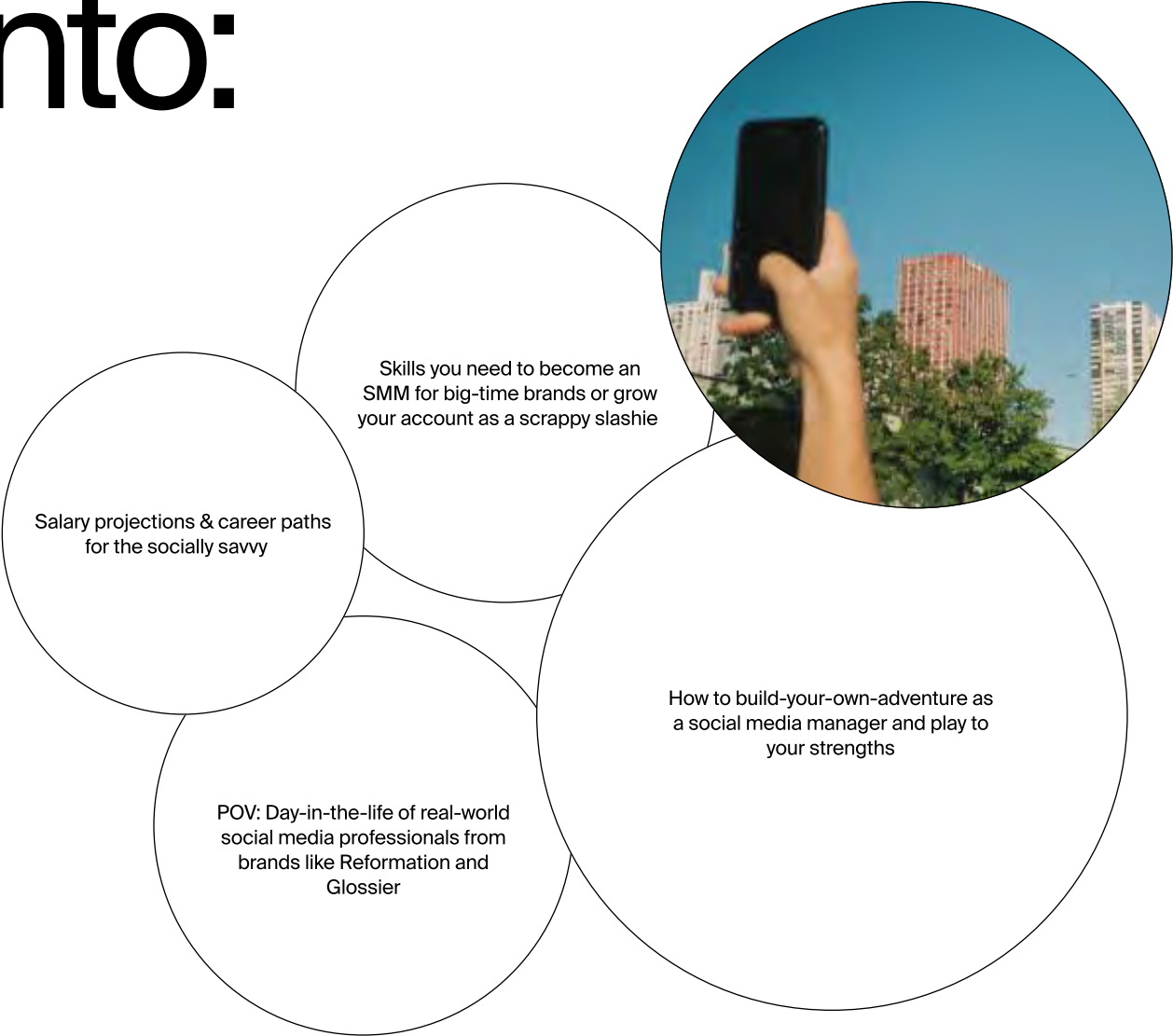
Do you have the fearlessness of the Duolingo owl? Are you full of quippy zingers, like Wendy's notorious X account? Do you genuinely like connecting with people online? Love making content? These are all qualities of a social media manager that can go the distance.

In social media, the only constant is change. Social media managers (SMMs, if ya nasty) know how to shift strategies on a dime, test wacky concepts, and provide receipts on the impact of their work. If you choose this adventure — whether you're a slashie promoting your side hustle or making your way as an in-house social media expert — you'll quickly perfect the art of the pivot.

Brands are doing social differently these days. They're full-throttle on video, of course. They've torn down the veneer of ultra-aesthetic feeds that defined the 2010s. There are -cores and micro-trends to contend with, sure, but today's social media shines with a different (dare we say, more relatable?) patina.

We get into the nitty-gritty in our [Social Media Manager Course](#), where you'll learn how to manage social strategy for a brand (or yourself!), produce content that hooks viewers and gets that sweet, sweet 📈 engagement, and meaningfully measure your success — changing algorithms be damned. This field guide is your roadmap to becoming a social media manager.

We'll get into:



Social Media Career FAQs

What does a social media manager do?

A social media manager is the faithful steward of a brand's online presence. They create and post content; build digital communities by interacting with followers; and use social media to grow a brand's impact and bottom line. Social media managers are expert curators of eye-catching visuals. They're trend-setters (and trend-followers) who genuinely love creating content, interacting with people online, and fostering brand loyalty.



How do I get started as a social media manager?

There's no one-size-fits-all approach to getting started as a social media manager. Some start by posting content on their personal channels and growing their own accounts. Others take courses — just like [ilovecreatives' Social Media Manager Course](#) — to get their sea legs in social alongside a good-vibes community. Some start as marketing associates, content producers, or pivot from entirely different fields of work. To kick off your social media career, you'll need a basic understanding of social strategy, content production, and reporting.

How much can social media managers really make?

An entry-level social media manager salary can range from \$47,500 to \$76,500 in a high cost-of-living (HCOL) area like New York or LA. As you work your way up, many SMMs at bigger brands go on to make six figures (or more). Smaller teams and nonprofits tend to earn less.

If you diverge from the traditional 9-5 route, you might find there are some pretty sweet \$\$\$ benefits. Some social media managers go on to be content creators and make money from brand deals. Others take the social skills they've learned in house and become freelance consultants.



Are social media courses worth the \$\$\$?

We sure do! One of the benefits of taking a course is that you learn by doing, which can save you years of trying things out on your own. Courses can't teach everything — the algorithms are one of life's great mysteries, after all — but they can arm you with the ability to master a social strategy (for yourself or clients) and up your content production chops. Beyond that, a course can introduce you to other social media darlings and help you build a strong network 🙌

The 101 Intro to:



Social Media Management

So what do social media managers do, exactly?

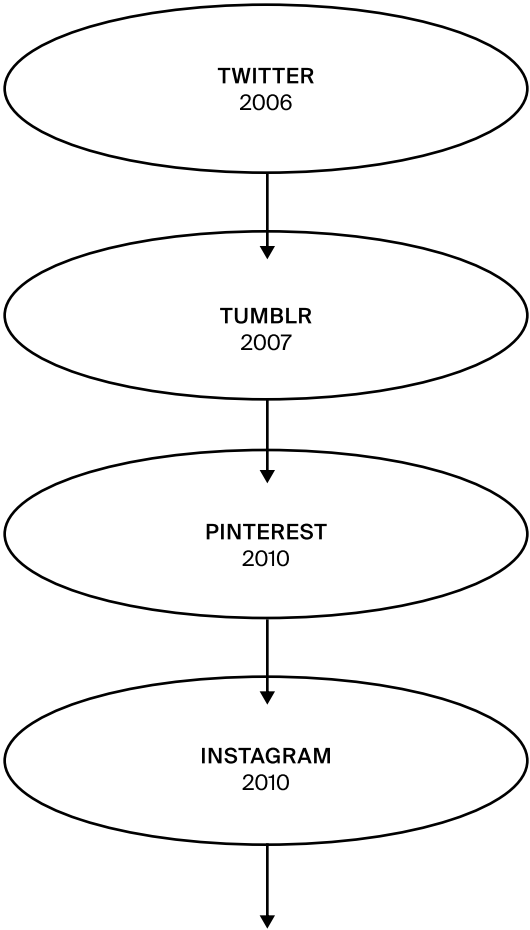
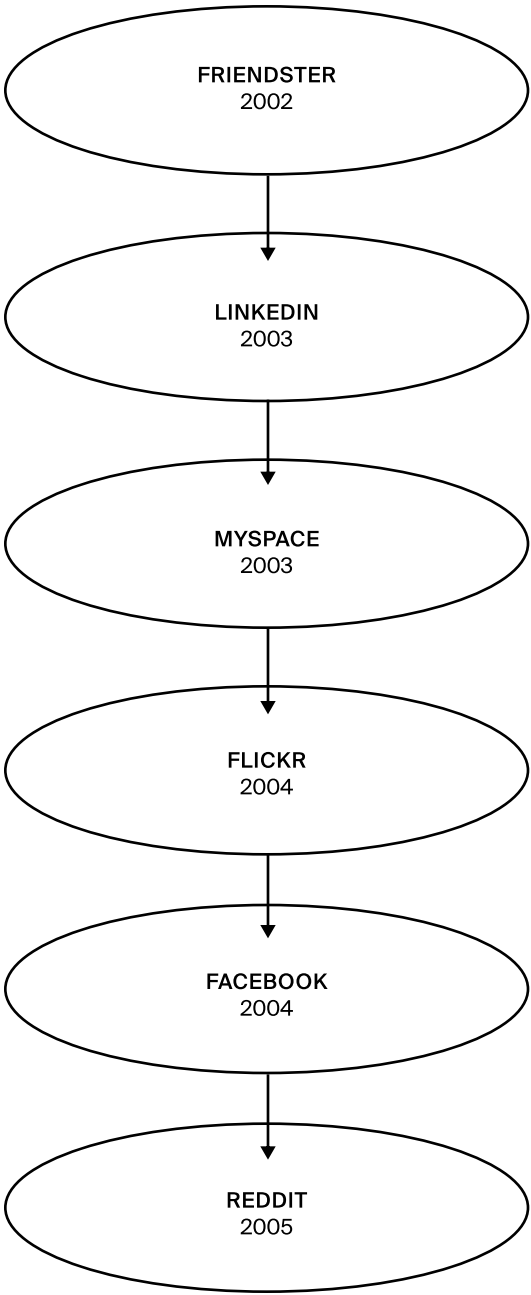
Since you're here, you probably already have soooooome idea of what social media managers do, but let's break it down together.

But first, let’s get into a little social media history.

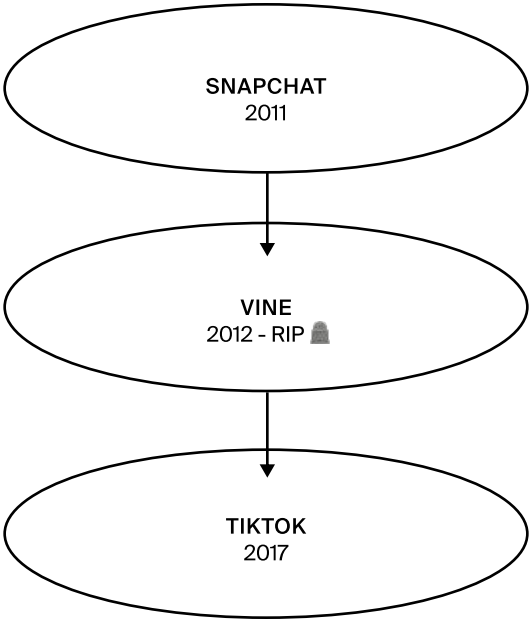
Forbes puts it well: “Social media managers help brands solidify their online identities, engage with users, and enhance social reach.” Before we go in depth about what makes a great social media manager, time for a history lesson.

Since the dawn of the internet, people have yearned to connect with one another. Some bulletin boards and online newsletters date back to the late 1970s. By the early 90s, we had mom jeans and AOL Online, and the first “social networking” site, called Six Degrees, burst onto the scene in 1997.

The early aughts brought about a true social media renaissance. We saw the birth of many (still) influential platforms like:



The 2010s saw another burst of innovation, particularly in short-form video, like:



Then, a spate of acquisitions. Yahoo bought Tumblr, Facebook (a.k.a. Meta) bought Instagram, and Twitter snatched up Vine. All of these changed the social media landscape, transforming many apps from static feeds of friends to video-first content engines.

This doesn't even scratch the surface on how social media platforms forever altered advertising and media, online dating, and essentially invented the attention economy. Understanding the storied history of social media gives SMMs valuable perspective on shifting trends, changing algorithms, and social patterns that now define our daily digital lives.

Excellent social media managers know what came before them, and that new platforms are popping up all the time. As a social media manager, you'll want to stay adaptable and curious to these kinds of changes — so you can prioritize the channels that mean the most to you or the brands you work for.



What makes a great social media manager?



There are some key differences between a beginner social media manager and someone who knows the ropes.

Here are skills you can hone as you progress in SMM-land:

(ENTRY LEVEL SKILLS)

(EXPERT LEVEL SKILLS)

o Knowledge about the top social media platforms, what makes them different, and the types of content that succeed on each.

o You stay on your toes when it comes to algorithms, always keyed in on the latest and greatest in social.

o You find yourself saying often, “I have an idea!” (And you can take that idea and run with it.)

o You can plan a robust content calendar and execute on creating and scheduling content ahead of time.

o Basic knowledge of design tools like Canva and Adobe Illustrator, and video editing apps like CapCut.

o Skilled with industry design programs like Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator, Figma, and Premiere Pro/After Effects.

o A knack for writing conversational, engaging copy.

o Able to manage large scale social media campaigns, taking a concept and turning it into a multi-channel marketing push.

o You're a people person who likes being on camera and filming content 📹

o Good at establishing partnerships, influencer relationships, and engaging with other brands on social.

o Can follow a brief and create scroll-stopping paid ad content.

o Proficient in platforms like Facebook Ads Manager, Google Ads, and LinkedIn Campaign Manager.

o Good at organizing, handling outreach, and the art of the follow up — keepin’ those deadlines and deliverables on track.

o Manages budget, vendors, and third-party creators (including paid partnerships) and can effectively articulate their creative vision to others.

o Resourceful at finding images, memes, and videos to reference and remix.

o Knows trends and which ones are going to resonate with their target audience.

o Double checks their work (design, copy, video elements).

o Triple checks their work. Takes full responsibility when a mistake is made and proactively fixes it.

o Stays on top of community engagement on the feed and keeps an eye on related brands, influencers, and communities.

o A knack for crisis management at moments when a brand might see a dip in positive sentiment.

o Understands how to read social media analytics and KPIs (key performance indicators, IYKYK).

o Can build a strategy and set KPI goals that meet overall company objectives.

o Can use social schedulers like Buffer or Hootsuite to plan posts.

o You can plan a robust content calendar and execute on creating and scheduling content ahead of time.



What does a social media manager do all day?

Spoiler alert 📢 it's so much more than scrolling IG and TikTok! Being hungry for content IS a skill that helps social media pros learn what works and what doesn't. It's also true that social media managers are often on their phone, and that they often are in charge of posting content on nights and weekends.

This is a career path where strong boundaries work wonders in preventing burnout. When you're constantly consuming content on social apps, it can create an echo chamber of ideas and content formats. Some social media professionals like to have a separate phone for content creation and account management. Occasionally, you've gotta peek your head out of the social universe and turn off your phone entirely.

Some social media managers say that every day is a little different — you might respond to comments and DMs on the daily, but also need to pencil in strategic content creation and filming days. If you're working for large brands, you'll need to stay fully aligned with other teams so you can promote product launches, come up with social media campaigns, and partner up with content creators. If you're nestled under a wider marketing team, you'll likely partner up with creative teams, designers, product teams, PR, and more.

Depending on the company and the role (especially smaller ones), you might also play the parts of copywriter, graphic designer, video producer, and editor. It's not all coming up with video concepts and outsourcing to creators. You'll likely design text-based carousels, set up shot lists, and film your own content for platforms like Instagram and TikTok. We're also seeing a rise in "employee-generated content," where you'll provide a peek behind the curtain of life at the company. This is a common strategy at both larger brands and startups alike.

So whether you're nailing a brand's tone of voice in a social caption or exporting a high-res Reel, social media managers end up being a valuable asset to any company because they're both generalists and highly specialized.

Great SMMs are the picture of versatility and adaptability, and they love to try new things.

SALARY & PAY

If you're in-house or at a branding studio, you'll typically see salaries of \$50-65k for entry-level social media roles, or in the ballpark of \$25.00 per hour. On Zip Recruiter, a social media manager's salary in New York can range anywhere from \$47,500 to \$76,500.

Top earners with several years of experience may see six-figure salaries at bigger companies. Small businesses, nonprofits, and startups generally offer lower salaries; often, social media management will simply be rolled into a broader "Marketing Manager" job title.

A senior social media manager or Director of Social Media in a high cost of living (HCOL) area can see an average salary ranging from \$99,383 to >\$150,000 in some cases. It's not uncommon to see salaries over \$150,000 as you accumulate more experience in the field.



	Junior (1-2 Years)	Mid-Career (3-5 Years)	Expert Mode (5+ Years)
JOB TITLES	Junior Social Media Manager Social Media Strategist Social Media Manager	Senior Social Media Manager Associate Director of Social	Head/Director of Social Media
HCOL* SALARY RANGE	\$47,500 to \$76,500	\$80,000 to \$150,000	\$150,000+
FREELANCE HOURLY RATE	\$30-50	\$90 to \$150	\$150+

Based on salary data from ZipRecruiter, GlassDoor, and conversations with real-life social media managers

Social media managers are usually paid salaries or hourly at full-time jobs, while freelance content creators and social media managers may scope projects out by hour, per post (or video), or a flat project rate. It can be tricky in social media to estimate how long things take – replying to DMs and engaging with accounts versus editing short-form videos are very different skills, so don't forget to take that into account as you price freelance projects.

Resources

If you're unsure how to come up with your rates, or nervous about going too low or too high, we get it. Here are a few resources that you can check your salary or freelance rates to make sure you're being paid fairly:

Freelancing Females Rate Database

Freelancing Females Rate Database has robust data from a wide range of industries, including social media marketing

Zippia Social Media Manager Salary Report

Zippia Social Media Manager Salary Report can help you compare salaries by company or by location

ilovecreatives Freelance Rate Calculator

ilovecreatives has a social media project rate estimator included in the course (and for freelancer rates, they've got another calculator too).



Job Outlook and Trends

Interestingly, the Bureau of Labor Statistics doesn't report specifically on "social media" or "content creation" in their Occupational Outlook Handbook. However, based on the outlook for "[Advertising, Promotions, and Marketing Managers](#)," they project growth at a steady clip of 6% between now and 2032, which is faster than the average for other occupations.

However, becoming a social media manager is just one slice of the larger influencer marketing pie. In 2021, the [creator/influencer marketing economy](#) skyrocketed from nearly \$2.0 billion to almost \$13.8 billion, and the landscape is made up of over 50 million content creators.

Working in social media can teach you how to replicate the growth you achieve for brands and apply those learnings to your personal efforts as a writer or creative.

Many in-house social media experts go on to become independent content creators or use the audiences they build for their personal brands to kickstart paid partnerships. Based on these stats, it's safe to say social media isn't really going anywhere.



In Conversation with Joellen Lu

ILC

Hey Joellen! How did you first realize you wanted to pursue a career in social?

JL

I've always loved social. Being a millennial, I grew up with the inception of the internet. I was on social before it was social, just making GeoCities on LiveJournal, Xanga, and then Myspace happened and then Tumblr, and I was just really all about it...

I just love that social is super accessible to everybody. Anybody who wants to access it has the information that they need to do so, and social connects people who wouldn't have connected otherwise.

ILC

Could you walk us through key moments in this career trajectory from your personal interest in social to now?

JL

I got the job [at Nasty Gal] from Twitter. Basically, the founder had just put out an open casting call on Twitter and was like, "I need a social media assistant Make me laugh." I started doing the founder's social and also the brand's social. From there, I grew to creating content, being a social photographer, and a social media associate.

After that, I was doing the LinkedIn thing and a recruiter found me for StyleHaul, which was a marketing and talent agency. That's where I learned to actually manage a team. At Nasty Gal, I was fully managing social end-to-end, but I didn't have a team under me. Style Haul is really where I learned managerial skills, like learning people's learning and working styles and being able to communicate effectively across different personalities. It's also where I got my agency experience working on Sephora, CoverGirl, and H&M.

Then I was ready to be like, "Okay, I'm going to do freelance." But the timing just worked out that a recruiter from Reformation hit me up. I was already such a huge fan of Ref. It's just crazy the way that you can manifest things and work hard. A lot of it is luck. Luck is involved in landing the jobs that you want, but you can increase your luck by being a hard worker and a good person and by networking.

Joellen Lu, Associate Director of Social Media at Reformation and formerly a social media associate at Nasty Gal



ILC

If you are trying to get in social... do you think it's necessary to be a content creator or really active on social media personally?

JL

I don't think that if you work in social you need to be a content creator. Some of the best social content are memes. Some of them are screenshots of things. It's less about shooting and video. If you can do that, amazing. But if you're able to piece content together and create interesting messaging out of that, that's so much more important.

Basically a social media manager is like a unicorn. A really coveted one will be good at the creative side and the analytical side and also super organized. A lot of those times, those things don't go hand in hand, but that's not to say you can't do it if you're not all three. Those are skills you can work on.

And if you're a copywriter or a writer for social media, I think that's really cool too. Just having some kind of social passion project will help. If it is your personal Instagram, that's great too. That's what mine was when I got hired. It's really up to each person.





ILC

What does a typical day-in-the-life look like for you as a social media manager?

JL

It's different for everyone and it's different across brands. I wouldn't say there's like an everyday routine, but maybe a weekly routine. It's definitely planning out the calendar for social across different platforms, sourcing user-generated content (UGC), and connecting with different stakeholders for different requests.

This can look like getting approval on concepts, weekly brainstorms, connecting with the marketing team on any upcoming campaigns, and building out different strategies. There's also content creation and production - weekly or biweekly shoots, making TikToks, and shooting BTS content. Being a social media manager is a lot of planning, concepting, posting, and analyzing.

Especially if you have a lean team, it's important that roles are clear. There are different areas that require a lot of focus--strategy, production, creative--and the team works together to bring everything to life. In my role at Ref, I oversee & manage all of our owned social strategy and programming.

ILC

What do you wish more people knew about your work in social?

JL

Social is more critical to a brand than some people think. Sometimes, if there's not like a direct [purchase], like last click revenue type numbers, they don't think social is making as much money as it really does. It's super important, both for branding and driving revenue.

The 201 Getting Started

*How to land your first role
or client as a social media
manager*



Keep in mind, even if you're pivoting from another industry, there are always transferable skills you can bring up in interviews that are relevant to social media.

For example, meeting important deadlines, collaborating with other teams, or working on any type of creative projects. Have video or audio editing chops? That counts! Grew a small brand's social presence from scratch? Add it to the resume.

We asked Joellen Lu, Associate Director of Social Media at Reformation about how your passion projects can help you stand out in social media:

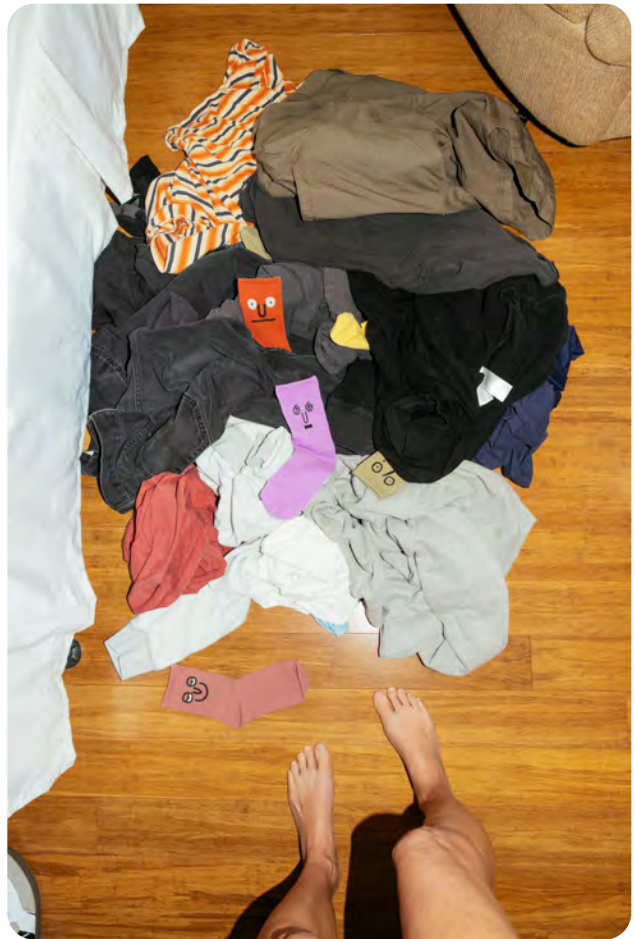


“I absolutely don't think that someone needs to have a big social following or be a content creator themselves. For example, I think having something to show for is important, even if it's like a passion project.

One of my best friends who actually used to report to me and I was her mentor, she had a an Instagram account dedicated to beautiful bathrooms, which I thought was so cool. It didn't have to be about her, but it was just something that she was working on that shows that she has initiative and that she can curate strong imagery.”

JOELLEN LU, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT REFORMATION

What Social Media Managers Don't Like About Their Jobs



As much as social media managers love their jobs, there are always challenges. But that happens with any job, no? We asked real SMMs to anonymously share the juicy details with us. Here's what they said:



On being chronically online

“This is an always-on job, and social changes super quickly. Sometimes a trend will come in after hours on a tight deadline, and you have to shift your content strategy to take advantage of the trend while it’s hot. It may be structured as a 9-5, but many SMMs use social as a personal tool in their off hours to stay on top of what’s trending.”

On doing it all

“Any social media manager that I talk to now is a Swiss army knife. They can do graphic design, they can do contracts and negotiations for content creators that they’re working for to secure content for their channels and then all the way up to like producers of events too. We do it all. I definitely admire people across the aisle from me for being able to do it all too.”

On endless rounds of feedback

“There’s a lot more that goes on behind the scenes other than just like crafting a beautiful post or writing a witty caption. There’s so many rounds. The actual idea that you started with as a social media marketer gets distilled down into what ends up going live.”

On social media being an “easy” job

“There seems to be a misconception online that jobs in social media are “easy,” when there’s so much more to what lands on our feeds. I wish the title “social media manager” would be rebranded as a social media marketer, because I think the narrative needs to shift a little bit more to us being considered holistic marketers and strategists.

Social media marketing is always-on job and by that I mean you can go and have a complete plan of how your day is supposed to go and then one thing can happen that can, completely pivot it within an hour and you have to start from scratch.”

In Conversation with Dana Dang

ILC

Hey Dana! How did you know you wanted to pursue a career in social?

DD

While I was in college, I would work on the weekends and assist a celebrity hairstylist who happened to have a following. I was exposed to the power of social media, brand deals, the importance of posting consistent quality content, etc. I worked my way up and eventually helped her create products to launch into Target. This is where I learned how to launch a brand with someone who already had a large social footprint.

At the same time, I also had a food instagram (I am obsessed with food). I would post recipes, places to eat, farmers market hauls, etc and that is truly where I learned what the algorithm was and how it evolved so quickly. That account is now retired, but it was my first experience where I would take the time and effort to concept, shoot, edit, cut, write copy, etc for an account where I could track the return on my output.

Taking my learnings from my past two experiences, I launched (general marketing & ops) a few more local Los Angeles based brands who did not have any social footprint to begin with (challenging, but learned a lot) while also assisting and managing influencers in the fashion space. I would shoot their content, write the copy for all their blogs (back when blogs were in their heyday), attend NYFW, cut brand deals, etc. This eventually evolved to running the social channels of actors, doing their PR, and showing them the ~world of brand deals~ that were possible for them that were not necessarily national commercials, but smaller brand deals between talent x brands like Delta or Heineken.

With my combined learned experience plus my knack and love of all things creative and data, I sat with myself and asked myself: what do I enjoy the most of all the hats I have worn? The answer will always be: working with overarching brands in lieu of individuals AND staying in the organic social, content and influencer marketing space. I haven't looked back since.

ILC

How did your company, Digital Media Architects, come to be?

DD

It's hilarious because I never set out to do this. I have always been a freelancer and I formed the LLC (taxed as an S Corp) to save money on taxes. However, once I formed the company, I decided to commit, expand on it and grow it to what it is today– a small team who supports each other while building brands

Dana Dang is the Founder & CEO at Digital Media Architects, a social media agency whose clients DedCool, Starface, and Unwell Network



ILC

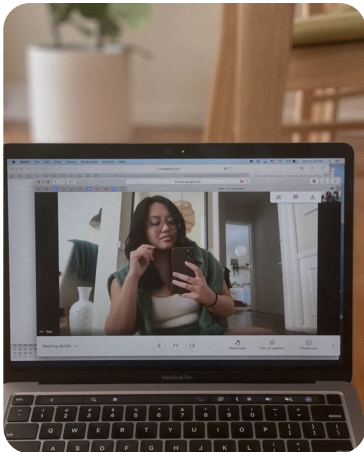
In your agency, what's it like to delegate and oversee all of these different branches of social for your clients?

DD

In the beginning it was difficult. It's very easy to say "I'll just do it myself." However, that's not a long term solution for anyone, especially if they have tendencies of spreading themselves thin. That said, when I do bring on help, I recognize that means I have to not only empower them, but trust them to do the job. When I hire for DMA, I hire according to where our strengths do not exist. I am so happy to hire people that are better than me at things. It pushes us to be greater and do better.

My superpower in Social Media is definitely related to the fact that I have always had a natural knack for numbers and grew up as a dancer / expressed myself creatively for as long as I can remember. Social Media is the intersection of creativity and data. In embracing my so-called "superpower" and knowing what it is not, I can hire and delegate accordingly. The key to success here is trusting the team to do their jobs and avoid micromanaging. If there are bumps in the road, I will of course give feedback, but I am a firm believer in giving everyone the opportunity to show what they can do.

When it comes to juggling multiple clients at once, each person on my team knows their role. I focus on auditing, building strategies, implementing processes and overseeing execution across social, influencer and content. I have members on my team who focus solely on content creation vs. community management vs. influencer gifting & partnerships, etc. Across each client we all relatively play the same role so each work day includes similar work just across different brands.





ILC

What does a typical day-in-the-life look like for you?

DD

I definitely work a nonlinear work day. I'm online all of the time. I'm a night owl, so I do go to bed pretty late. I'm working on that. It's funny, but I get the most of my work done at night because I'm not getting slacks or calls or texts. This is just the time I have to myself to get the true grunt of the work done and then to decompress. I do go on Tik Tok and I scroll, but also I scroll because I need to know what's going on. And I scroll at this time because I don't have time to during the day.

When I wake up though, I do have a moment for myself. Then I will jump in, check my emails, check my Slack, check all social channels to make sure there's no emergencies or any red flags or anything's that happened overnight. Then I jump into my day-to-day meetings. And after my meetings, I work.

ILC

Are there any boundaries you set in your work life that help you maintain a healthy relationship with social media and productivity?

DD

Yes! I would say everyone on my team knows this: Four o'clock is my time. 4 to about 7 or 8pm — those four hours in the day are always blocked off for me. I can use that time to either continue to work, or I can close my laptop and not feel guilty about it. So I would say this is the healthiest boundary I have, which is knowing that after 4pm, I am having the day I want.

I also recognize that I am a night owl, and I will open up my computer again at around 9 or 10 at night. And so knowing I do that, the 4 o'clock sign off is the boundary I hold the closest to me, and that would probably be why I can sustain a non-linear work day.

A set time is so crucial to my routine. I don't wake up at the same time every day, I don't go to bed at the same time every day, but at four o'clock I know I'm free to sit in the sun or do whatever I want until I open it up again without feeling guilt.



The 301 How to Grow

So you've got some experience as a social media manager under your belt, whether that's as an independent freelancer managing the social presence of your clients, or as an in-house social media strategist for a brand.

Many social media teams consist of one person, which means you thrive on being a jack of all trades. As you progress in your career, it's also important to know what is too much for one person, so you can advocate for more budget or resources.

Specialization

There are so many ways you can grow as a social media manager. There are algorithm updates and new platforms coming up all the time (Threads, anyone? 🤔), and being a good SMM means you never get too comfortable with one approach. Social media managers **THRIVE** on change and growth.

Maybe you've got the essentials down pat and you're ready to take things to the next level. It might be time to graduate from ~**~doing it all~**~ to getting some help — outsourcing video editing, for example, or delegating captions to a dedicated social copywriter. These are the kinds of practices that are gonna take you from an entry-level SMM to a strategic social leader.

Here's are a few things you can do to nurture a growth mindset in this career path:

- Training, courses, and certifications
- Build community and mentorship



Training, Courses, and Certifications



Learning about social media doesn't always mean that you need to go back to school and get a major in it. There are so many ways to learn and grow in this field through online courses and certifications. Plus, many entry-level marketing roles are basically on-the-job training in social media these days.

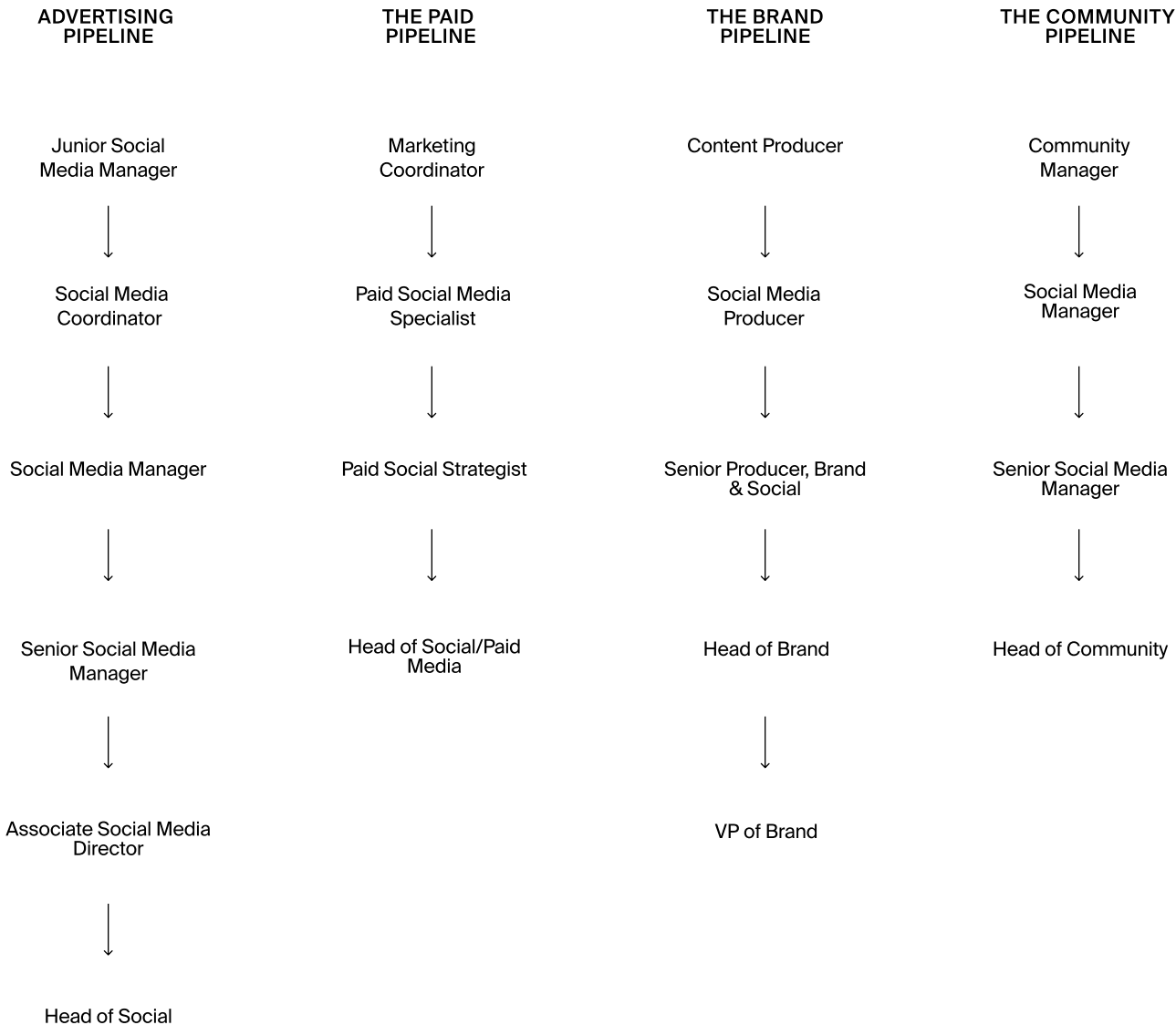
If you do want the structure and support of an online course or certificate program, here are some of the top choices:

COURSE / TRAINING	PROS	CONS	COST
Hubspot Social Media Academy Certification Course	<div>Free</div> <div>A quick hitter for small businesses who have limited know-how of social media</div>	<div>Only contains 5 hours of learning material, so it's more of an introduction to social media</div>	<div>Free</div>
Meta Social Media Marketing Professional Certificate by Coursera x Meta	<div>Accessible cost</div> <div>Developed by Meta and hosted on Coursera, an e-learning platform</div> <div>Is part of a 6-course series culminating in a capstone project</div>	<div>A 5 month-long program (if you put in 10 hours of work per week)</div> <div>There is a focus on ads and paid social, which might not be the right fit if you are looking to specialize in organic social</div>	<div>Coursera subscription + cost of exam(s)</div>
ilovecreatives Social Media Manager Course	<div>Practical course taught by real social media managers and content creators</div> <div>Teaches you to develop a social media strategy from the ground up, how to create compelling content, and how to manage social media professionally for yourself or clients</div> <div>Deep dives into freelancing and how to charge for your services, win clients, and lock in gigs</div>	<div>Self-paced, which can be tricky for people who need more structure</div> <div>Costs some money (but you might be able to get reimbursed by your current employer!)</div>	<div>\$899.00</div>
eCornell Social Media Marketing Certificate Program	<div>Can finish in 3 months with 5-7 hours of study per week</div> <div>Brand recognition from a top university can be helpful at catching the eye of prospective employers</div>	<div>The most costly of the certificate options we came across in our research</div>	<div>\$3,750.00</div>

Related Roles And Career Paths

There are many different trajectories for social media aficionados.
This isn't even all of them!

Some social media people specialize in paid vs. organic search.
Others are content producers and video editors before they make the
leap to SMM. Some work at small brands, then transition to big brands
or agencies as social strategists.



In Conversation with Gabrielle Rizzo

ILC

Hey Gabrielle! Can you tell us about how you got into social media?

GR

I think I fell into it. I'm not sure anybody during that time — when I first got started — knew that social media was going to be such a viable option for a career. I started around 2016/2017, and it was at the height of the Instagram boom with, bloggers and brands like Glossier really defining what social media marketing looks like and carving out that path for other brands too. It was a really interesting time — way different than what it is now.

I saw that it was an emerging space and thought that I organically gravitated towards it. I knew how to speak to folks on the platform and build communities, so that kind of came naturally. And I didn't start off brand side at first. I was agency side after I got my master's in marketing. After that I freelanced for a bit for multiple clients and Glossier was one of them. So that's where I am today, on the brand side of Glossier (still freelancing!) but that's long and short of it.

ILC

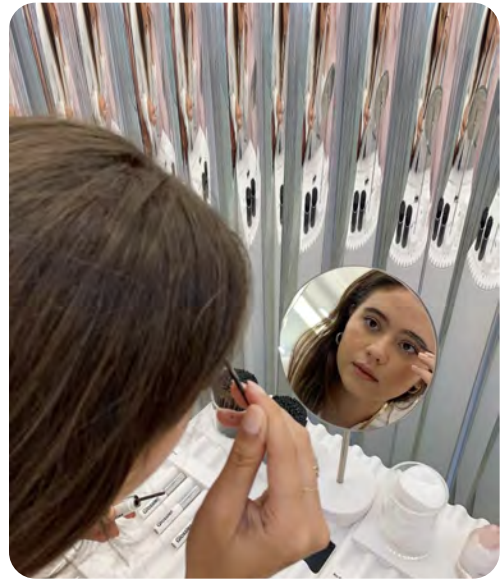
You take a people-first and community-first approach to storytelling. What does that look like when you create content?

GR

It's layered. It's a little bit of an onion. We have a little bit of a rule at Glossier that you should be able to scroll within the first six seconds on our Instagram or TikTok and see yourself within the content. So on a surface level, that's how I always make sure that I'm putting Glossier's audience and community first is making sure that they are reflected in what we are creating for them to consume.

***Gabrielle Rizzo, Former Manager,
Social Media & Digital Content at
Glossier.***





ILC

If you're comfy with sharing, how have your finances or rates progressed throughout your career in social media?

GR

I found more often than not that clients were looking for somebody that was going to be more on a retainer basis than an hourly basis...What I have found is based upon my time, I usually don't go more than like 20 hours a week. That's enough time for me to be successful and give them the keys and teach them along the way to be an expert. But my rates for retainer range anywhere from \$5-6k a month.

You also have to look at it like this — that takes you out of the game from being available to any additional clients. How much money do you need to make at the end of the day in order to afford your finances and be able to juggle multiple clients? You can do the math at the end of the day when you figure out what that would look like more full time.

ILC

Do you have any advice for someone who is struggling to unplug? How do you like to unplug?

GR

When I open up the app, I don't really look at it from my personal perspective. I used to talk about this with my colleagues all the time. No matter the minute that you open up TikTok, the minute that you open up Instagram, you're coming at it from like a business perspective when it is your job.

What networking can you do? Are you interacting with people that you want to bring into your community? Are you sharing posts that you've helped make go live? That perspective shift for me has helped, because I used to struggle a lot with what are my boundaries here in like me using this for personal use versus using this for my day-to-day 9 to 5.

ILC

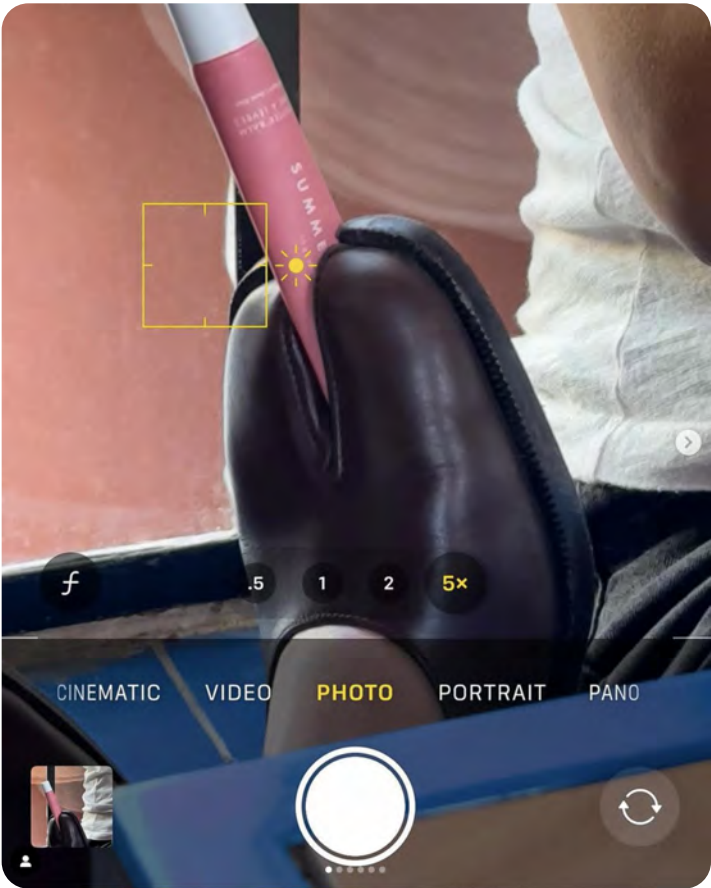
Any favorite social accounts you follow?

GR

Oh, I have some comfort creators on TikTok that I love. I've been so fortunate to be able to actually work with some of those folks too, from a long standing me following them on the internet and bringing their stories to life on Glossier's channels.

For instance, one of them was [Rachel Nguyen](#) at That's Chic. I know that she does a course with ilovecreatives, I was able to work with her on a Cloud Paint "Get Ready With Me. That was a pinch-me moment. I also was able to work with a UK based creator, [Lizzie Hadfield](#), and do a get ready with me with her. Most recently, I worked with a creative director named [Telsha Anderson](#) and bring her story to life on "Get Ready With Me." She actually just styled Kendrick Lamar's wife for a music video.

Right now, those are the kinds of people that I end up relating to most at the end of the day and like to follow.



Wrappin' it up

Social media management is an top-choice career for those who are obsessed with telling stories across a wide range of formats. You might be a video darling or a quippy writer, or maybe you love connecting people and forming new communities. You're also good at reiterating the importance of social media to people who *don't* get it.

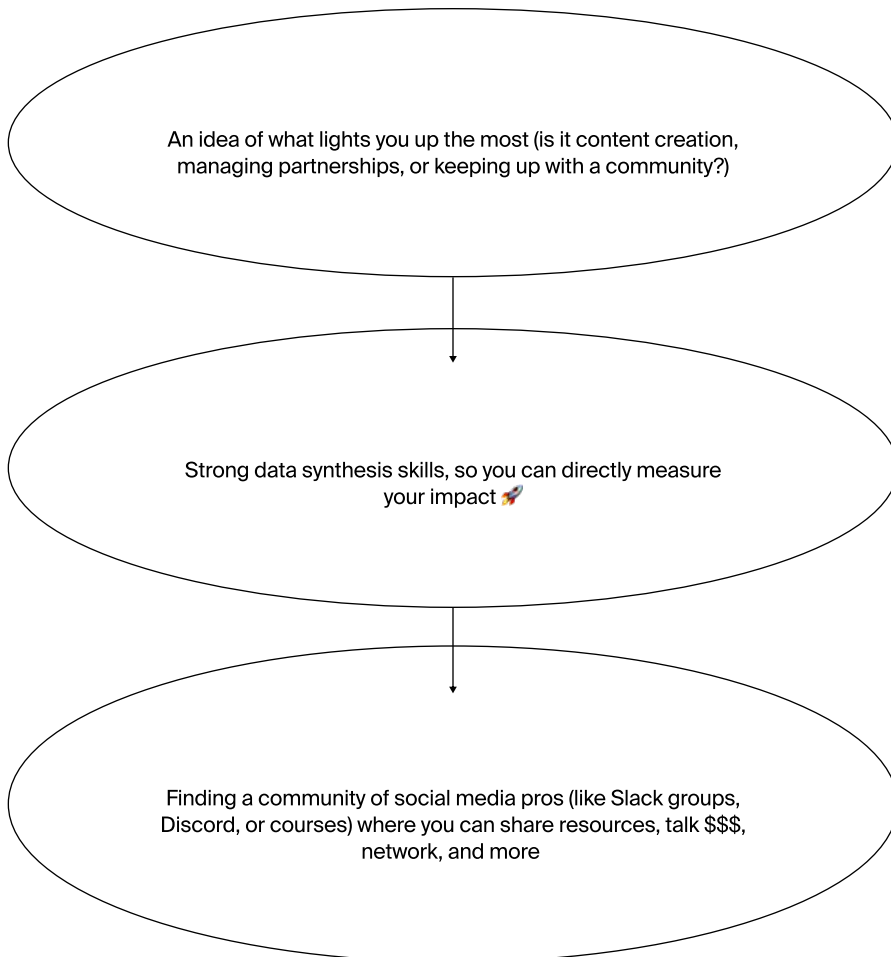
There are so many adventurous, winding paths in this field. You might start in content production or community, video editing or as a marketing manager...and end up as your company's next CMO (yes, really).

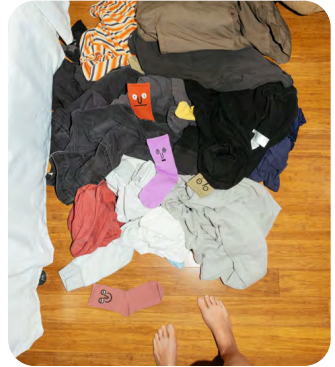
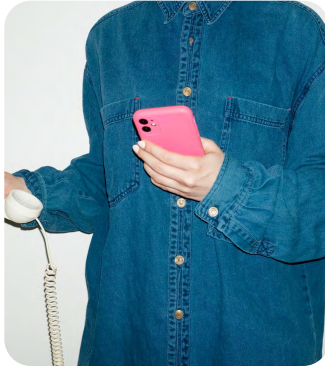


LET'S SUM UP WHAT YOU NEED TO KICKSTART YOUR CAREER IN SOCIAL MEDIA:

- A love of change. You're willing to try new trends, adapt to changing algorithms, and curious about new platforms when they crop up
- A knack for video concepts and creation from start to finish, plus an excellent eye for the little details (like noticing when text gets cut off on your 9:16 video before you post it)
- Expert storytelling skills and a deep knowledge of how to "hook" viewers
- Connecting with people is one of your biggest passions

And then, there's leveling up:





Alright. You've made it to the end. Consider this your (literal) download to a new career. You're ready to shine bright as a social star ✨, whether you start as a social media manager for a brand, or as a superstar slashie content creator. See you on the Internet!



Job Directory

@ilovecreatives



ilovecreatives.com

Social Media Manager