

# PR 101

## FOR IFDA MEMBERS

### AT IFDA, HELPING OUR MEMBERS SUCCEED IS OUR JOB.

We know that many of our members don't have full-time employees dedicated to public relations so we've created this toolkit to assist you in getting the word out about the great work you do.

#### WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

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# WHAT IS PR?

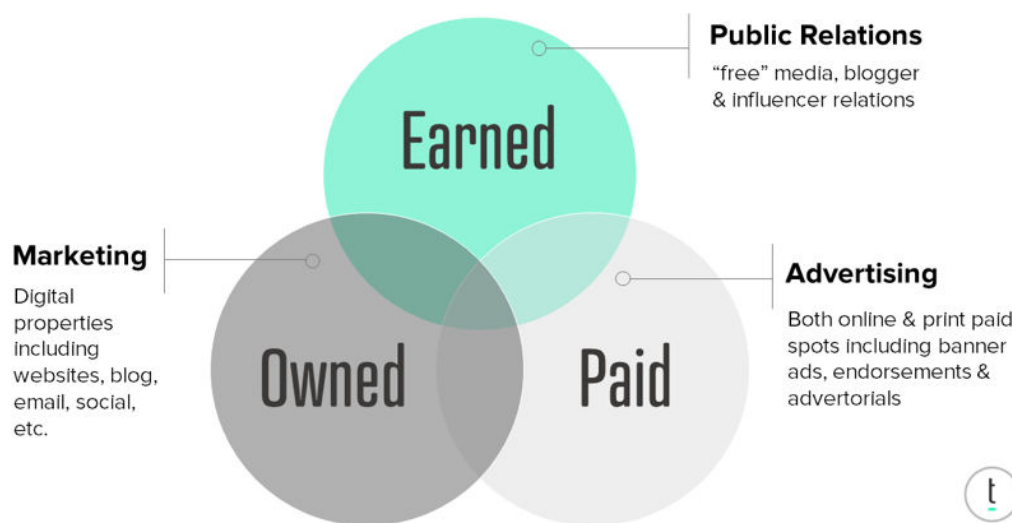
Public relations is a branding tool that helps you build your name recognition and credibility. PR is building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders. Ultimately, your PR activities should keep your brand top of mind within the foodservice distribution industry and among business and customer targets in a positive way.

PR includes a variety of activities, ranging from creating a specific strategy to positioning a brand in the marketplace; leveraging relationships with the media (media relations) to tell a brand's story; facilitating opportunities for key spokespeople to speak at industry events; and developing and executing social media plans.

PR, when done well, provides an extraordinary opportunity to build a positive reputation for your brand/product while simultaneously reaching your target audience with your message.

# WHAT ISN'T PR?

PR is not straight marketing or advertising. The best strategies involve all three elements but it's important to understand the difference. We think this handy venn diagram explains it pretty well.



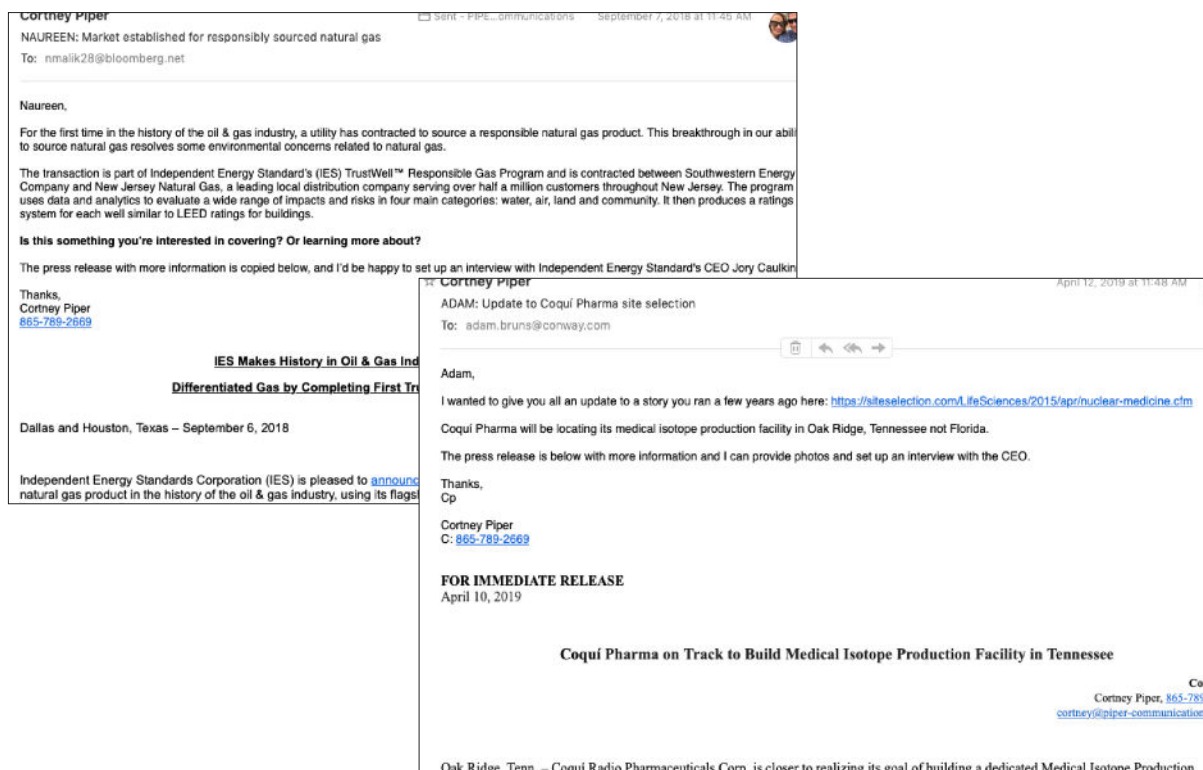
Source: <https://blog.twentyoverten.com/public-relations-101-the-basics/>

# PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNDAMENTALS

Identifying the media outlets to send your press releases and other PR materials to so you can reach your target audience is crucial. Do your research, and stay connected to the media with these tips:

**Build a personal contact file.** Identify the demographics you want to reach and build a list of publications that target those people. Create a list of reporters and editors from those publications who cover our industry so you know you're reaching the right person.

**Personalize and follow up.** Make sure you tailor your pitch to make it relevant to the reporter and follow-up via email or social media several times.

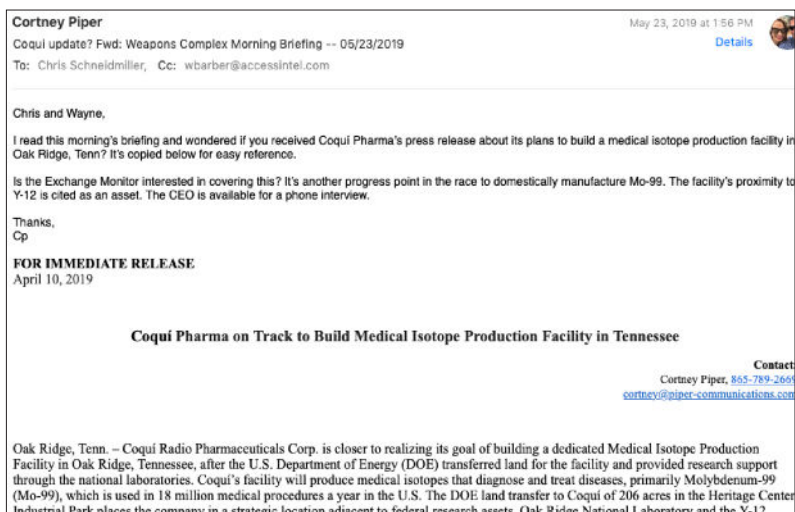


## PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNDAMENTALS

**Offer an exclusive.** If it's important for you to get into a particular publication, offer the editor an exclusive on the story (meaning you won't send out a press release to other media until that publication has run it first).

Media are not interested in you or your product. They care only whether your story will interest their readers or viewers.

**Remember:** Media are your customer. They are buying stories, and you are selling. Meet their needs, and they will run your stories.



# CONVINCING EDITORS TO PRINT YOUR PRESS RELEASE

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Editors receive hundreds of press releases weekly and they toss out most of them. To make your press release stand out and get the attention of an editor, 1) make sure you are sending it to the correct reporter or editor. Read the reporters stories and profile, they should cover business or stories similar to what you are pitching and 2) make sure your press release is professionally prepared, the content is important and newsworthy, and it's short and to the point.

Editors determine if content is newsworthy if the subject matter is relevant to their readership or community. For example, your local daily paper will not run a story about the newest products you are adding to your line up. That doesn't affect the people in your community. They might consider a large scale volunteer effort newsworthy or a partnership that you've created to address a community/industry need-- like a high school CDL or other workforce training program.

Hosting an elected official at your facility? That might be considered newsworthy. Check with the elected official first and ask if they want the media to attend.

## **KEY ELEMENTS TO PITCH YOUR NEWS:**

1. Get to the point, quickly.
2. Subject line should be short and indicate what you are pitching.
3. Summarize your main point in 2-3 sentences.
4. Ask the question: Is this something you are interested in covering?
5. Copy and paste the press release or media advisory below your signature line.  
Do not send it as an attachment.

## CONVINCING EDITORS TO PRINT YOUR PRESS RELEASE

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### EXAMPLE:

Truck Driving Championship, published in FreightWaves:

<https://www.freightwaves.com/news/ifda-truck-rodeo>

Subject: Invitation: IFDA's Truck Driving Championship

Chad,

I'm writing to invite FreightWaves to attend IFDA's annual Truck Driving Championship

This year's event is Sept. 21 – 23, 2018, at Disney's Yacht & Beach Club Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

The Truck Driving Championship spotlight truckers' expertise and commitment to safety by honoring them with special awards. Along with celebrating excellence and competition in the industry, the weekend is family-centered to encourage truckers' families to join in the fun. The Championships bring together industry leaders, CEOs, and hundreds of trucking professionals for the weekend, so for FreightWaves' purposes, the weekend is a prime opportunity to develop stories and sources and score on-the-record interviews. It would also make a great remote podcasting spot.

**Is FreightWaves is interested in attending the Championships?** I'd be happy to talk in more detail and answer any questions you may have. Please also forward this invitation along to any of your colleagues who might be interested.

Thanks so much, and please let me know if y'all might be interested in attending.

# CONVINCING EDITORS TO PRINT YOUR OPINION

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Submitting a letter to the editor, guest column or op-ed is a great way to share your message and opinion about a current issue or trend that is currently or may affect your industry or community. Your information will not be edited so, it's also a good way to share your exact message.

First, find the correct contact. For a letter to the editor, usually there is a form online or an email address that begins with letters@. Letters are usually capped at 200 words. For a column or op-ed (usually 500-600 words) find the email address for the opinion page editor or the editor.

## **KEY ELEMENTS FOR THE PITCH:**

1. Get to the point, quickly
  - a. If you're pitching a local paper, the author of the piece should be local to that paper's readership. Emphasize the author's tie to the community. Do they live there, work there? Sometimes you might want to include the person's home address.
2. Subject line should indicate what you are pitching.
3. Summarize your main point or argument in the pitch.
4. Ask the question, "Are you interested in running this?"
5. Copy/paste the words into your email. Do not send attachments.

## CONVINCING EDITORS TO PRINT YOUR OPINION

### EXAMPLE:

DRIVE-Safe Act, published in the *Modesto Bee*:

<https://www.modbee.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/community-columns/article231884093.html>

### The Pitch:

Community Column? Dave Dein, Patterson High School [Details](#)

To: Garth Stapley, Cc: Dave Dein, Bcc: Meghan Cieslak

Garth,

I'd like to submit the below column on behalf of Dave Dein, CDL Coordinator/Instructor at Patterson High School. He is all too familiar with the national truck driver shortage and developed a program to help fix it. However, outdated federal legislation is getting in the way.

His column outlines why a legislative fix is needed to alleviate the driver shortage and how his program is ready to put more well trained, young adults in a meaningful profession if the Central Valley's Congressional Delegation would support the DRIVE Safe Act.

Are you interested in running it?

Thanks,  
Cp

Cortney Piper  
President | Piper Communications  
[www.piper-communications.com](http://www.piper-communications.com)  
C: 865-789-2669

**Providing purpose, one driver at a time**

By Dave Dein

As a teacher, what do you say to a parent who thanks you for saving their son?

I'm telling you from experience, it will leave you speechless.

Javier Diaz was a high school senior. Like many his age, he felt lost. He was on a path of self destruction, due to the fact he felt unappreciated, detached, and without purpose. High schools do a great job in recognizing those who "fit in." Athletes, honor roll students, those in the performing arts are showered with awards and praise. But for the marginalized kids, lower test scores and grades form their school identity. Not surprisingly, those who fail are labeled as failures and often find great success in their ability to fail at the highest level.



## CONVINCING EDITORS TO PRINT YOUR OPINION

### EXAMPLE:

DRIVE-Safe Act, published in the *Quincy Herald Whig*:

<https://www.whig.com/20190617/commercial-drivers-license-age-should-be-lowered>

### The Pitch:

**Cortney Piper** Sent - PIPE...ommunications June 10, 2019 at 2:13 PM  
Guest column, Your Turn: Kohl Wholesale [Details](#)

To: [jlw@whig.com](mailto:jlw@whig.com), Cc: [letters@whig.com](mailto:letters@whig.com), SPHR Darla Rischar

Jason,

I'd like to submit the below guest column on behalf of the Director of Human Resources at Kohl Wholesale, Darla Rischar. Darla lives in Quincy and was recently in Washington DC to talk with members of Illinois' federal delegation about a legislative fix to the national truck driver shortage.

Her column outlines how this issue is affecting the Quincy based company and what Illinois' federal delegation can do to alleviate it.

Are you interested in running it?

Thanks,  
Cp  
Cortney Piper  
O: [865-329-0553](tel:865-329-0553)  
C: [865-789-2669](tel:865-789-2669)

**Safety first—and foremost**

By Darla Rischar

When it comes to road safety, there are no sides. Pro-safety is pro-family, it's pro-business, it's pro-American.

At Kohl Wholesale, we strive to train qualified and skilled drivers. While both federal and state governments have their own safety requirements, as a family-owned company with a five-generation heritage and history in the Quincy community, we go above and beyond these requirements. When training new drivers, we do more than what's required with a customized in-house training program and road test to assess whether a recruit is ready to drive and represent our company—and the community.

No driver shortage—which the U.S. is currently experiencing—would ever compel us to act differently, as safety is of primary importance. Drivers are one of our greatest investments. Their record is our record, which is why we are meticulous and carefully screen our drivers.

Our company's biggest challenge isn't meeting or exceeding safety requirements. We emphasize safety every day. Our biggest challenge is recruiting and retaining the new personnel needed to meet demand, to keep food goods flowing into schools, nursing homes, and mom-and-pop shops in the tri-state area. And, one of the biggest obstacles to recruitment is an outdated federal regulation that does not allow 18-20 year old drivers, who are able to earn a Commercial Driver's License to cross state lines or transport interstate commerce until they turn 21, which is not really great for a company located at the junction of three major states.

As a company, we were pleased to see the DRIVE-Safe Act introduced in the U.S. Senate and House. While providing mechanisms to enhance and modernize safety regulations, the DRIVE-Safe Act would also allow adults old enough to vote, old enough to enlist in the military, the ability to drive interstate, in the process, opening up lucrative career prospects to 18-20 year old tri-state area workers in a field that offers job security and benefits.

# SOCIAL MEDIA

## TOP 9 BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

1. Increased brand recognition
2. Improved brand loyalty
3. More opportunities to convert
4. Higher conversion rates
5. Higher brand authority
6. Increased inbound traffic
7. Decreased marketing costs
8. Richer customer experiences
9. Improved customer insights

## GUIDE TO POSTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn can be utilized to gain market insight, interact with your audience, highlight special promotions or events, position your company as a leader in your industry, build your overall online presence, and ultimately reach more qualified leads and drive them to your website.



Frequency/ Time	5-10 times per week 1-4pm	1-5 times per day 1-3pm	1-2 times per week 7-8:30am & 5-6pm
Tone	Discussion and education about common interests	Headlines and questions about your industry	Education about industry news and products
Purpose	Discover audience interests and audit competitors' audience and content	Drive audience to your website	Establish your company as an expert in your industry
Posts	Post about your audience values, including original content from website	Post snippets of website content with an intriguing headline or question, keyword hashtags, and link to your website	Post blog articles, join discussions, answer industry questions

# SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

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## THE 30/30/30 RULE OF CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Only 10% of social media content should be promotional.

**30%**

Talk about and share your services, products, expertise, success stories, authority, and competitive edge.

**30%**

Talk about and share relevant stories, content, and visual graphics and videos created by partners, affiliates, industry leaders, media, and other organizations and businesses that share your target audiences.

**30%**

Have no sales, marketing, advertising, or customer service agenda – simply be HUMAN. Inspire, connect, live, dream, motivate, laugh, entertain.

## MORE BEST PRACTICES



Content that includes visuals gets 94% more views than content without. That's because the brain processes information visually. If you want to draw your audience's eye, images are the way to do it.



One third of online activity is spent watching video content, and 92% of mobile video viewers share that content.



Lists and infographics. It's easier – and faster – to absorb information in bite-sized pieces.

## LINKEDIN BEST PRACTICES

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### CLICKABLE CONTENT

Make content engaging, visual and with the right call to action.

### AUDIENCE SPECIFIC

Who reads your content? Who follows you on LinkedIn? Who can you target?

### PIQUE INTERESTS

Ask questions, give insights and discuss topics within your industry.



### INDUSTRY EVENTS

Share company events and outings or causes you support.



### VISUALLY APPEALING

Use larger images and avoid typical stock photography of work environments.



### CAREER ANGLE

Have a career angle with content. Post job openings or work environment stories.

## FACEBOOK BEST PRACTICES



## TWITTER BEST PRACTICES

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### Introduce New Followers

When a new batch of followers come in, tag them and give a shout out for the follow.



### Ask Important Questions

Don't ask boring questions. Ask about what followers want from your product or what's not working.



### Tweet About Industry Events

Ask for details about conventions, talks and other events you can't attend.



### Jump on Trending Events

Try to find a way for your company to be involved with a trend.



### Tweet Multiple People a Day

Try to Tweet at least three people a day.



### Don't Bore Your Followers

You can't afford to be boring. Entice readers and be actionable with your words.

## BUT WHAT ABOUT PROMOTION?

While self promotion should not be the majority of your content, that doesn't mean you can't share information about your events and programs! You just need to do so in a way that is relevant, educational and engaging.

- Releasing research? Create several bite-sized infographics to share on social media.
- Promoting an event? Share video testimonials.
- Wrote an article? Share and tag people highlighted.

It's called social media for a reason. People want to connect! They want to engage with causes they care about, they want to support and help their friends and families, and they want to feel and share those feelings.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR HASHTAGS

One	Two	Three
Use proper etiquette on each social network.	Use hashtags to fit your brand.	Create hashtags for your promotions.
Four	Five	Six
Keep them memorable and short.	Capitalize the first letter of each word.	Use hashtags in Twitter chats.

### Best number of hashtags on every social network

Facebook: ##  
*Use 1-2 hashtags per post*

Instagram: #####  
*Use 10+ hashtags*

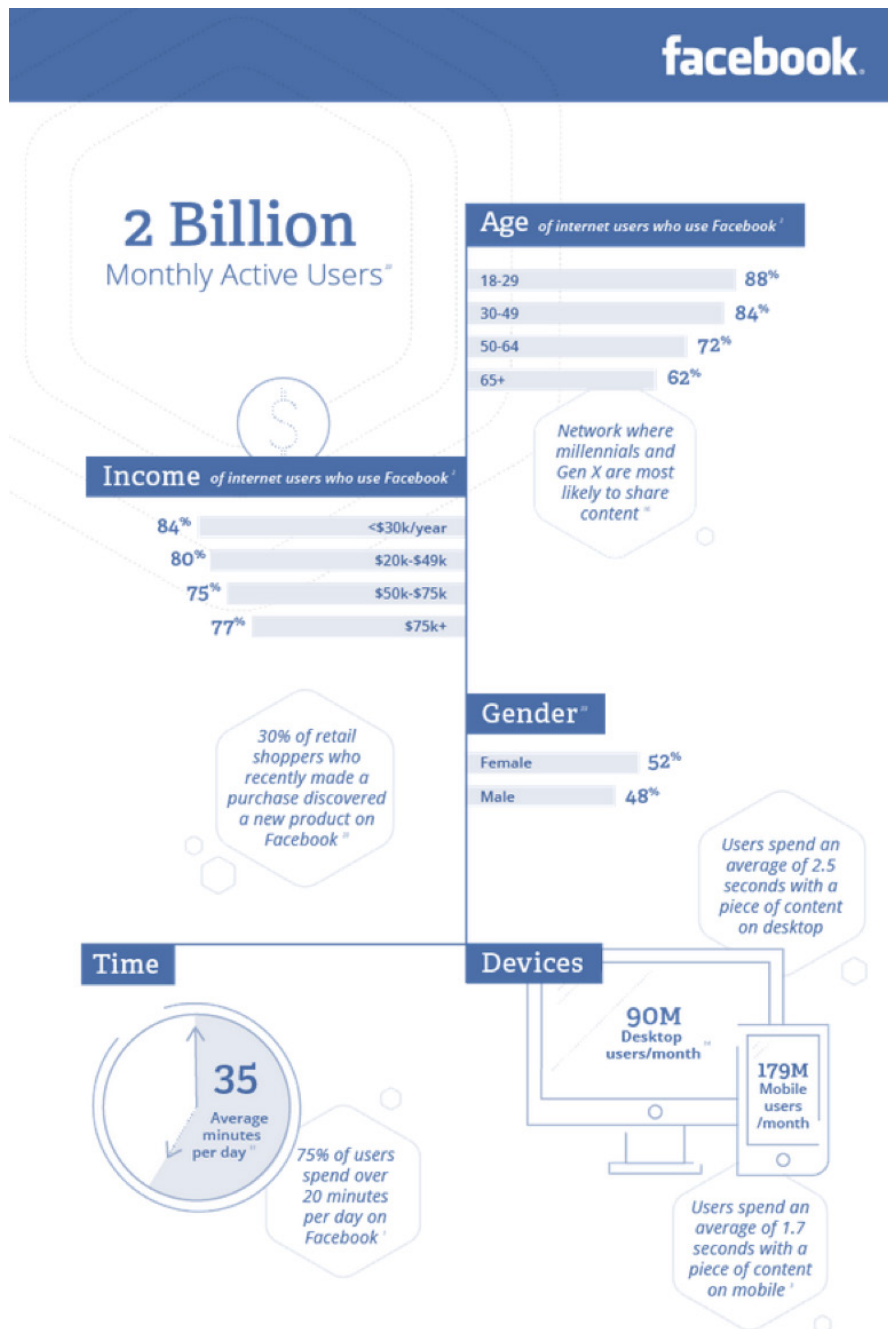
Twitter: ##  
*Use 1-2 hashtags per tweet*

Pinterest: ###  
*Use 2-3 hashtags per pin*

### Social Media Metrics that Matter

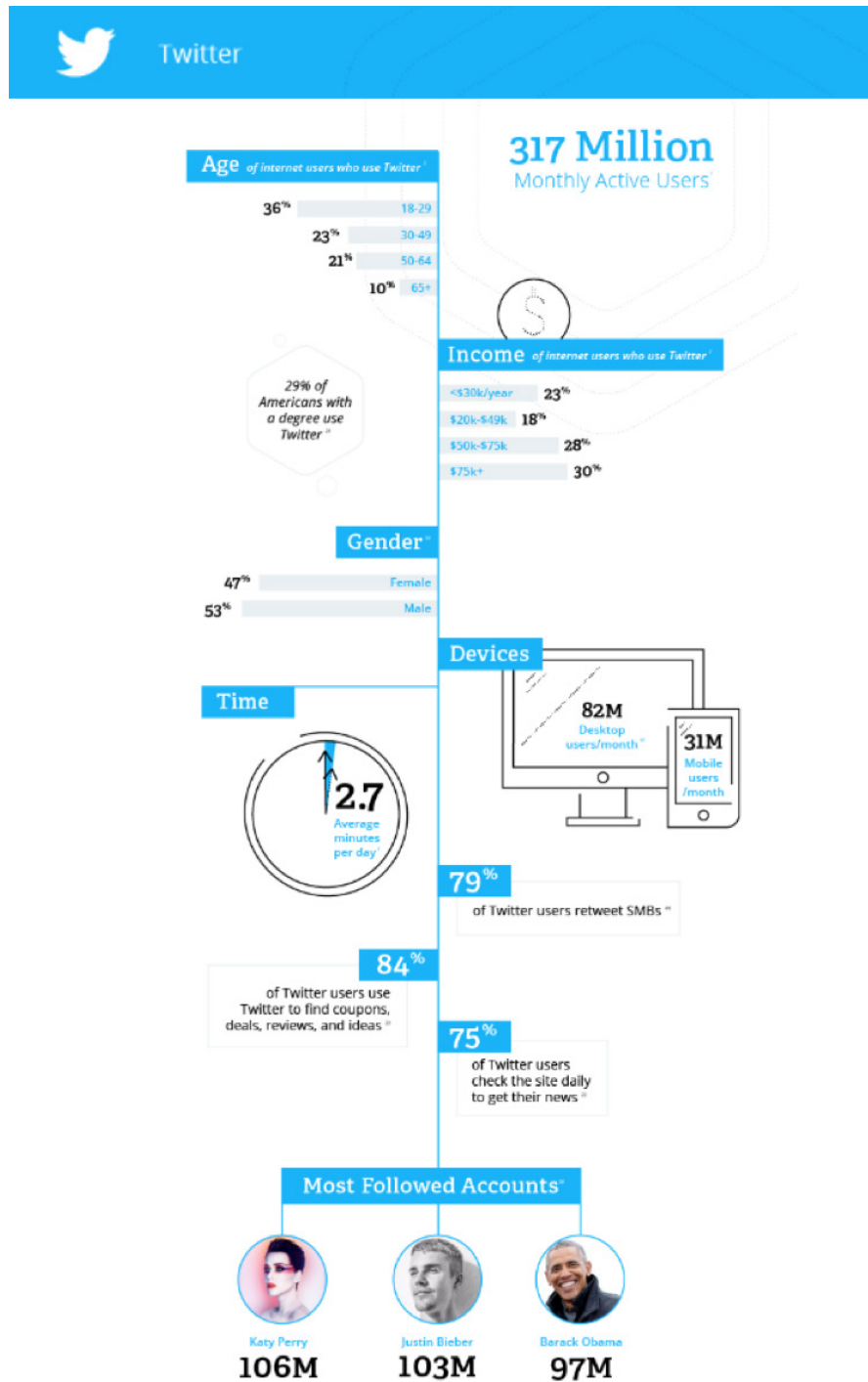
Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	LinkedIn	Pinterest
→ Likes	→ Followers	→ Retweets	→ Likes	→ Repins
→ Shares	→ Likes	→ likes	→ Shares	→ Referrals
→ Comments	→ Comments	→ comments	→ Comments	→ Conversions
→ Clicks	→ Video views	→ video views	→ Clicks	
→ Engagement	→ Engagement rate	→ referrals	→ Engagement	
→ Referrals		→ conversion rate	→ Referrals	
→ Video views		→ engagement rate	→ Video views	

## SOCIAL MEDIA DEMOGRAPHICS

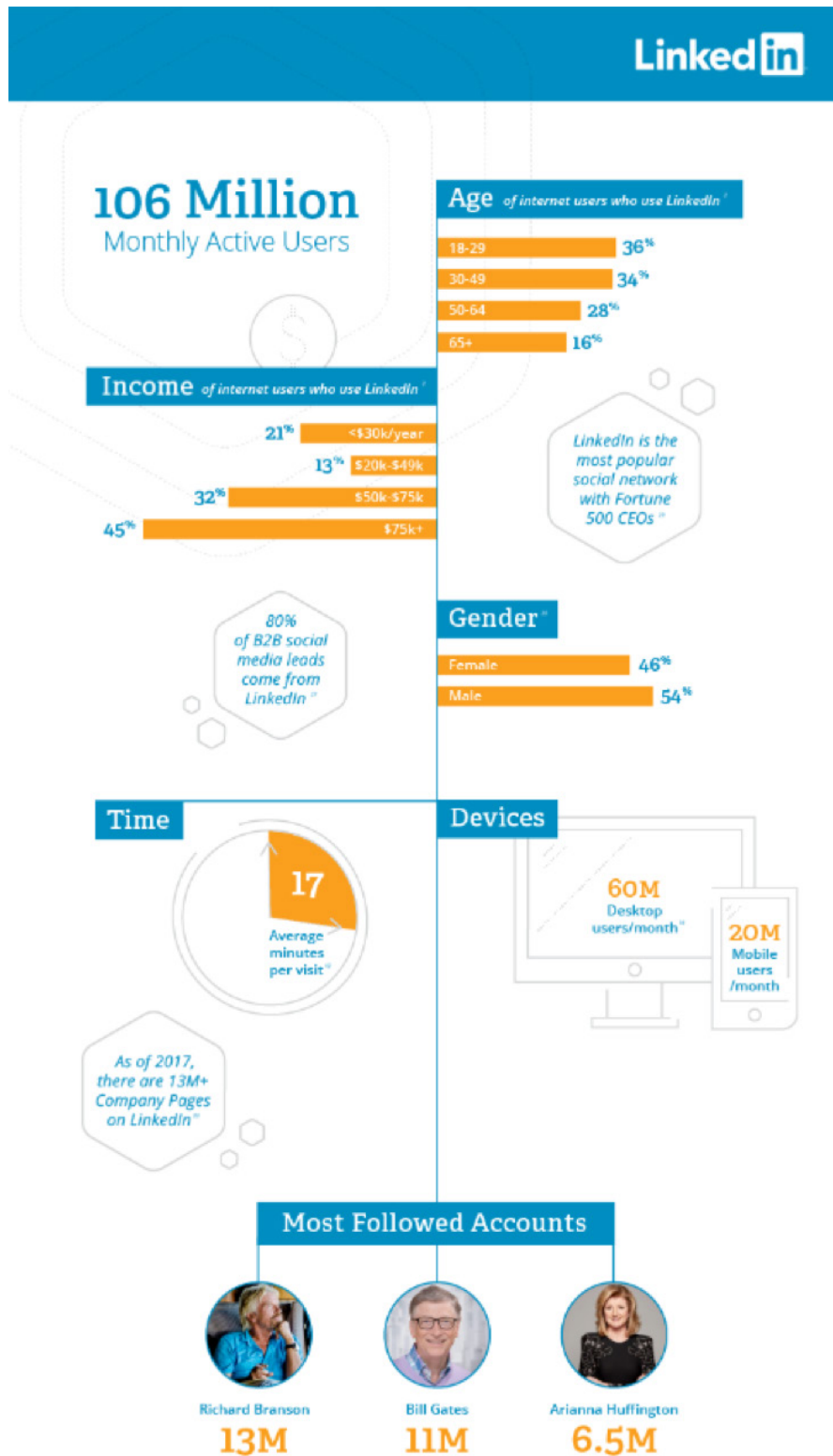




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