



# 2019 RAHS CONFERENCE

*Illuminating the Past*



## Social Media: Making sure your Historical Society gets its share of the limelight

Image: Peel Street, Tamworth, ca. 1930s [RAHS Photograph Collection]

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## A. ABOUT THE HANDOUT

This handout is a combination of the presentation given at the 2019 RAHS Conference and the supporting handout handed out to delegates who attended the talk.

It was prepared in late September 2019, which is good for an online reader to know as information becomes obsolete quickly in the world of social media. However some parts of this handout will remain relevant for awhile, particularly regarding the importance of having a social media presence, how to manage some of the challenges of having a social media identity and the unique skills that historical societies have that could help them get their share of the limelight in the digital world.

If you want to keep track of the major trends in social media, then the yearly reports published for free by *We are Social* are useful. These free reports are broken down by regions so you can learn the major trends in Australia - <https://wearesocial.com/au/digital-2019-australia>

Facebook is still the number one social media platform but YouTube users are increasing as YouTube becomes the second most searchable engine in the world: Google is still the top search engine.

What this means for the RAHS is that we are going to continue to focus most of our attention on Facebook but will start planning on how we can produce Australian history content for YouTube for free that is good quality and will appeal to inter-generational audiences.

## B. OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

Despite the increasing number of controversies around hacking, privacy, trolling and fake news, Australia and the rest of the world continues to use social media across multiple generations. Facebook continues to be the number one social media site, with an estimated 16 million users in Australia.

Historical societies are increasingly recognising the importance of social media to promote their work and to engage with their communities. Of the twenty-nine historical organisations represented at the 2019 RAHS Conference, 70% are on Facebook and 90% run a website.

This handout will answer the following questions:

- Where are the current statistics and trends in social media that historical societies should be across so they can best promote the goals of their organisations?
- Given that volunteers have so much to do, why should historical societies invest time in social media and what can they do to get the most out of this investment?
- What is the best way to deal with some of the pitfalls of social media, including online trolls?

## C. DEFINITIONS

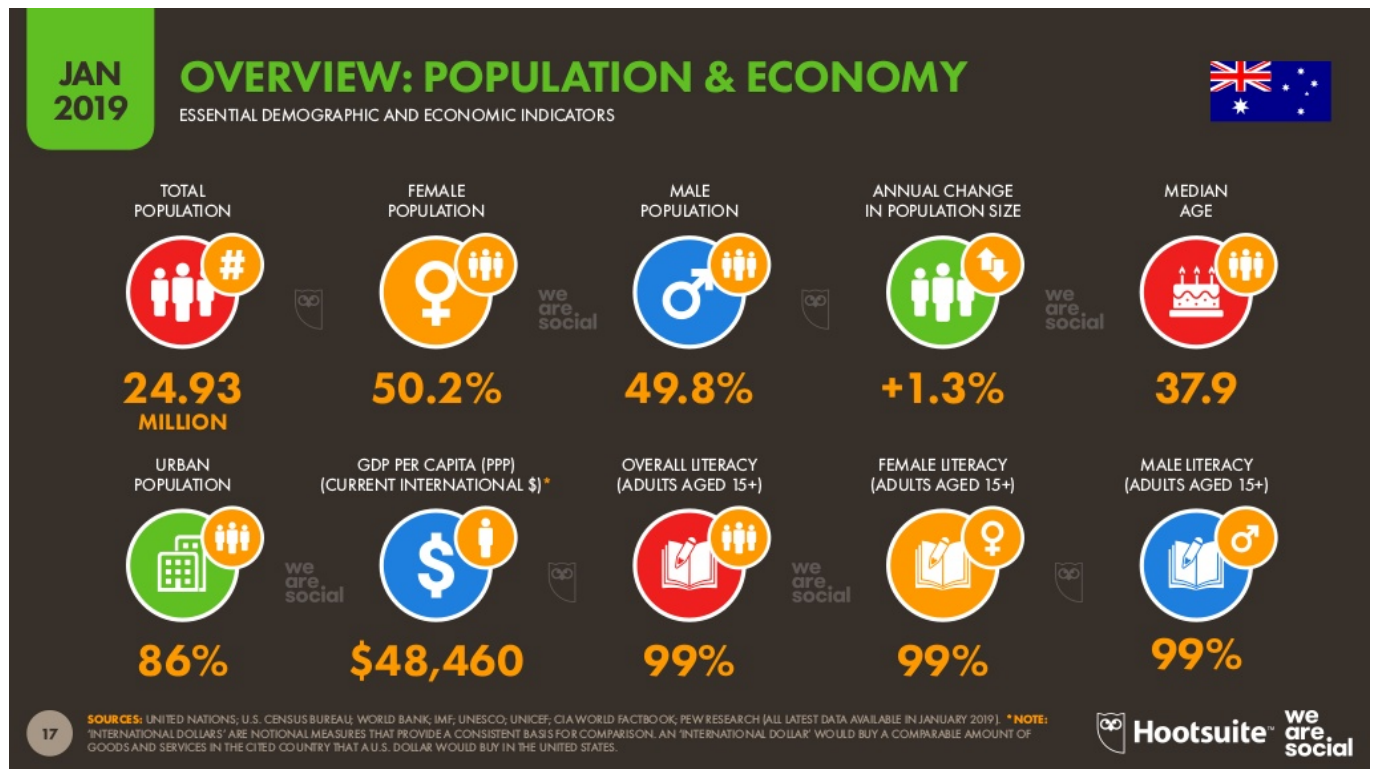
There is a lot of ways of defining social media. Below are two that simply explain what it means and give good advice on how to manage the 'social' part:

- *Social media are primarily Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings.* – Wikipedia
- *Social media is like going to a large party. Put on your best outfit, try to be entertaining, don't put own foot in mouth* – @srufo (Twitter)

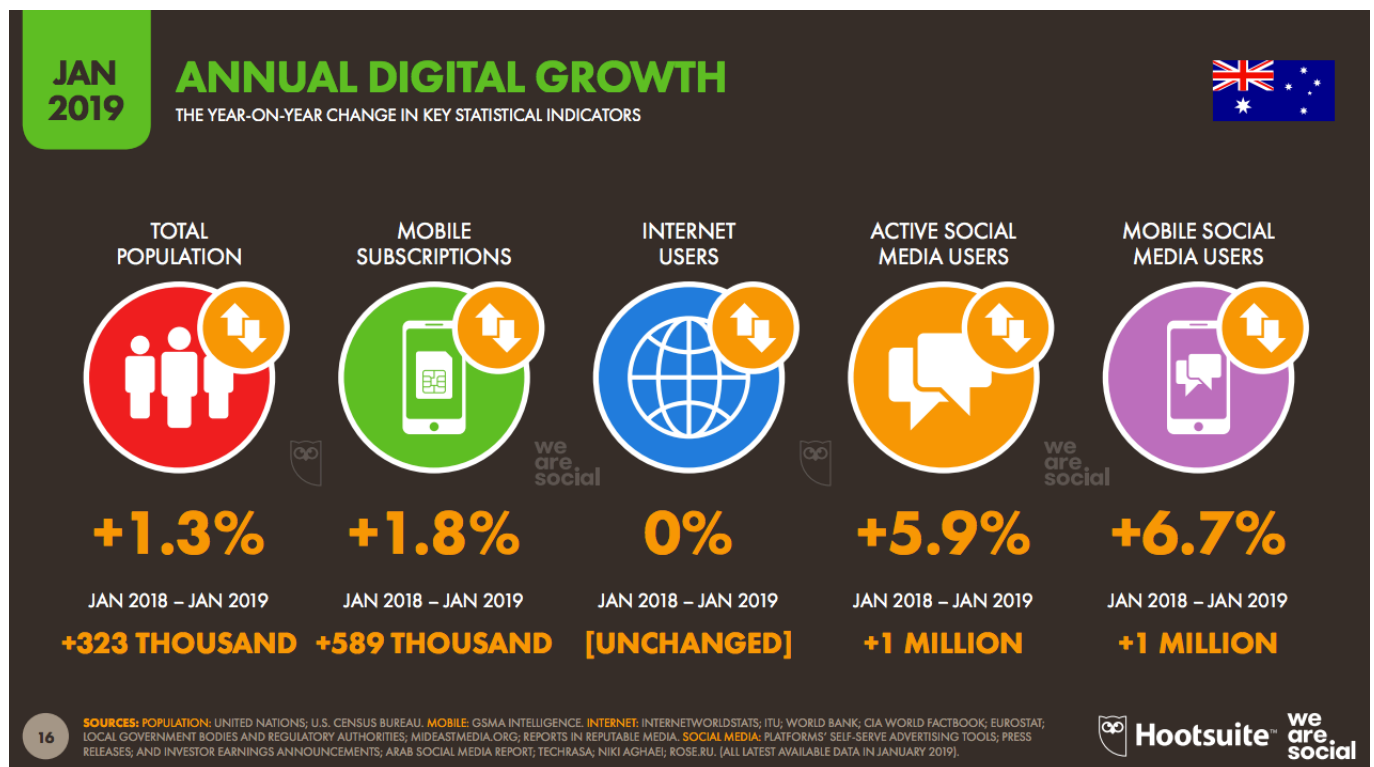
The main thing to remember about Social media is that it performs the same functions as a real-world meeting. It enables communication, too. So if your society wants to get more active on social media then have a plan before you invest your previous volunteer time on a social media tool.

## D. MAJOR TRENDS

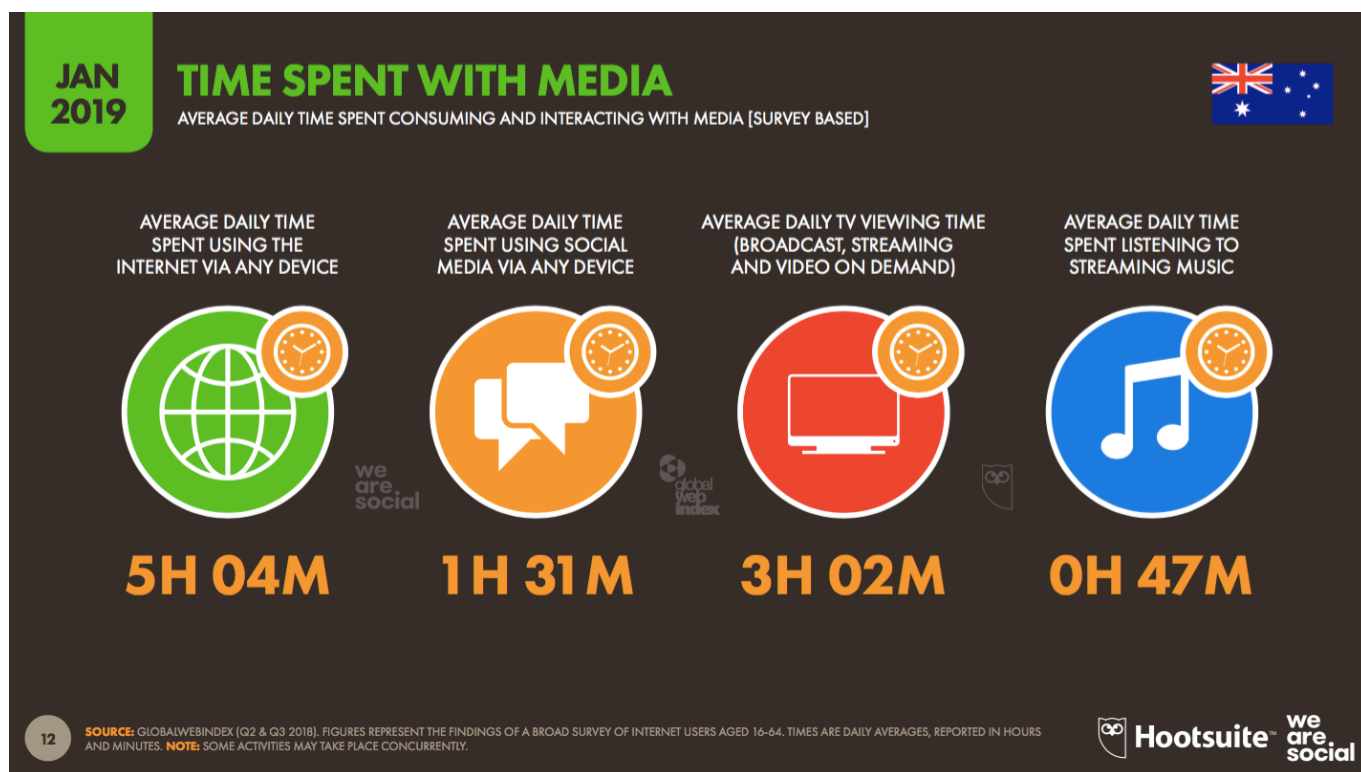
### 2019 Digital Australia



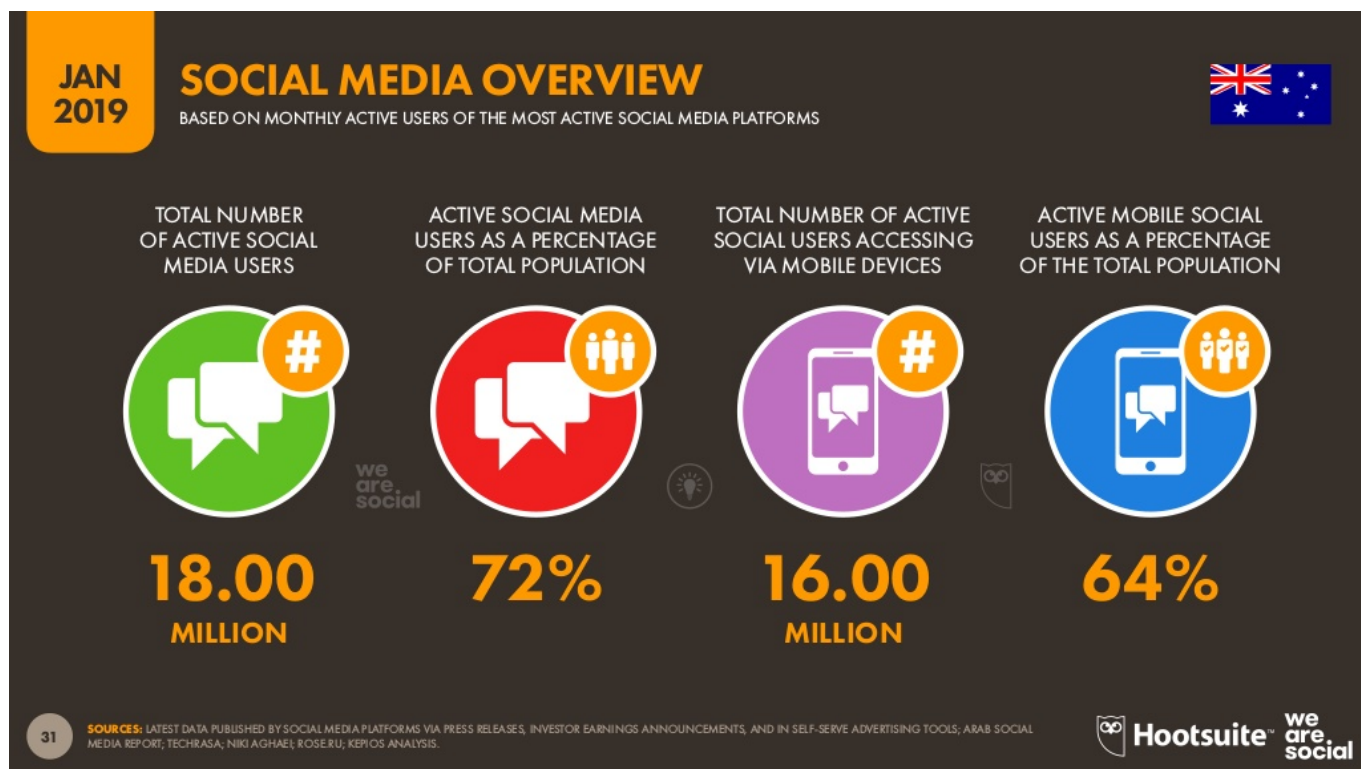
Source: <https://wearesocial.com/au/blog/2019/02/digital-report-australia>



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## SOCIAL MEDIA BEHAVIOURS

HOW INTERNET USERS ENGAGE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA [SURVEY BASED]



VISITED OR USED A SOCIAL  
NETWORK OR MESSAGING  
SERVICE IN THE PAST MONTH



96%

ACTIVELY ENGAGED WITH  
OR CONTRIBUTED TO SOCIAL  
MEDIA IN THE PAST MONTH



77%

AVERAGE AMOUNT  
OF TIME PER DAY SPENT  
USING SOCIAL MEDIA



1 H 31 M

AVERAGE NUMBER OF  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS  
PER INTERNET USER\*



6.1

PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET  
USERS WHO USE SOCIAL  
MEDIA FOR WORK PURPOSES



13%

32

SOURCE: GLOBALWEBINDEX (Q2 & Q3 2018). FIGURES REPRESENT THE FINDINGS OF A BROAD SURVEY OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16-64. FIGURES FOR 'TIME SPENT' ARE DAILY AVERAGES, IN HOURS AND MINUTES. \*NOTE: FIGURE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS MAY NOT INDICATE ACTIVE USE OF ALL ACCOUNTS EVERY MONTH.

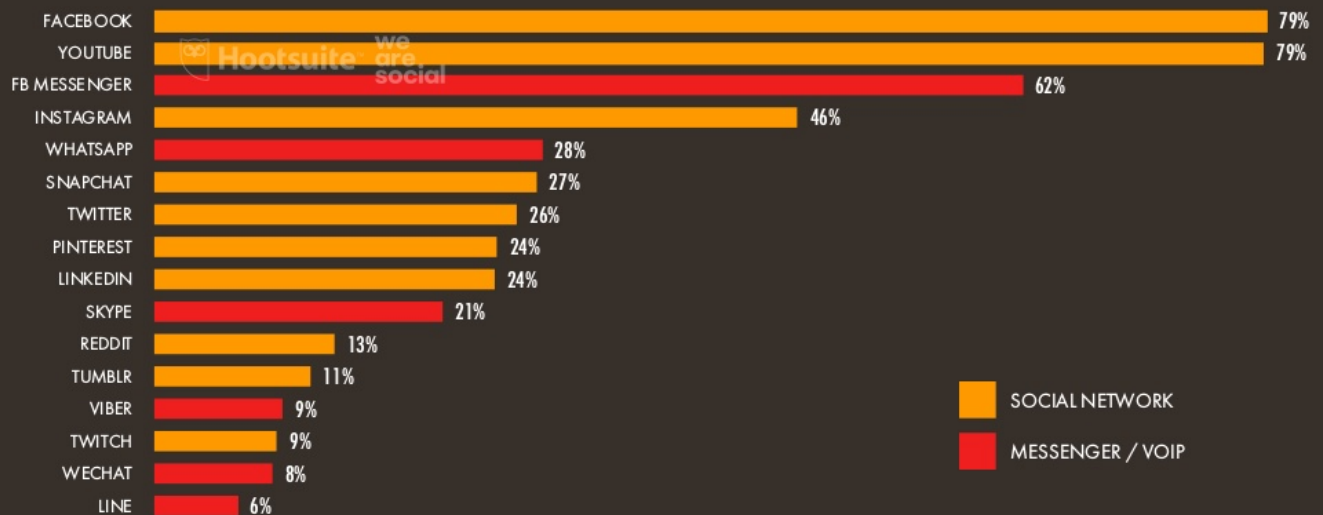
Hootsuite™ we  
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social

Source: <https://wearesocial.com/au/blog/2019/02/digital-report-australia>

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## MOST ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET USERS WHO REPORT USING EACH PLATFORM [SURVEY BASED]



33

SOURCE: GLOBALWEBINDEX (Q2 & Q3 2018). FIGURES REPRESENT THE FINDINGS OF A BROAD SURVEY OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16-64.

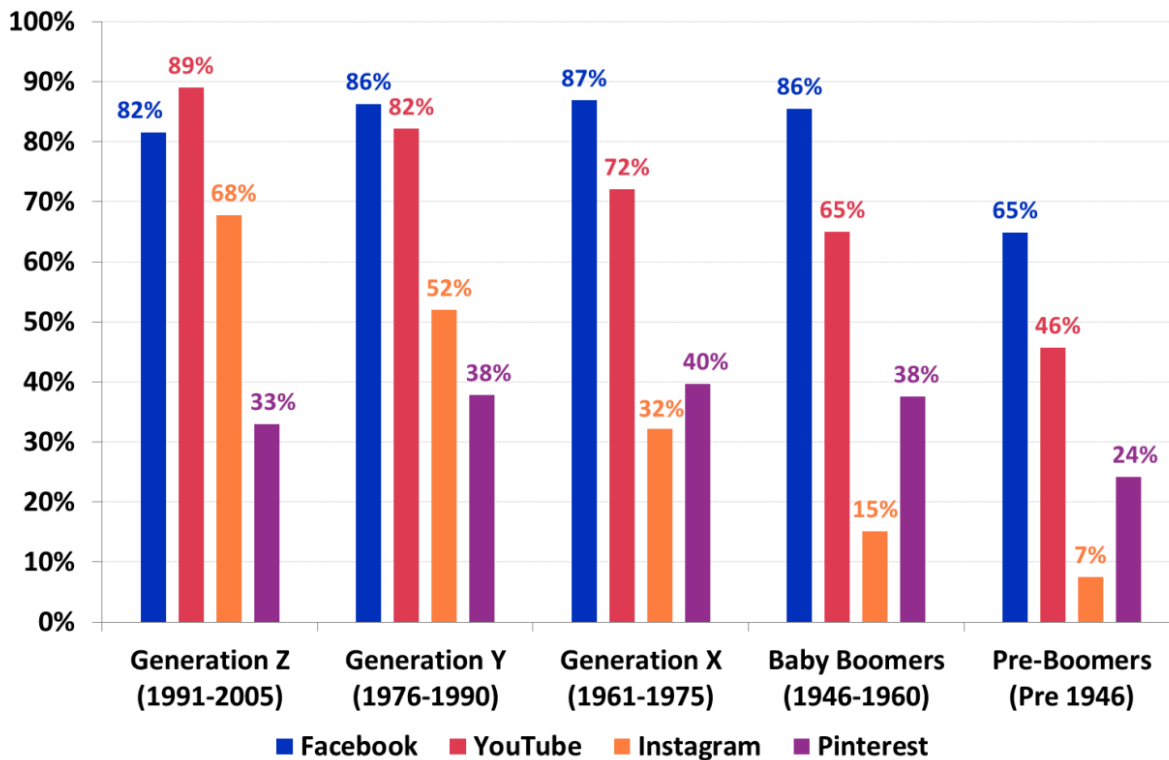
Hootsuite™ we  
are  
social

Source: <https://wearesocial.com/au/blog/2019/02/digital-report-australia>

- 87% of Australian population is using the internet, 74% are mobile internet users, and 72% of is actively using social media. So if you have a webpage or doing social media posts, then make sure that they look good and are readable on a mobile device.

The following chart shows how all generations are using social media

#### % of Generation using leading Social Networks & Online Communities – March 2019



**Source:** Roy Morgan Single Source, March 2018 – April 2019, n=51,362. **Base:** Australians aged 14+.

Roy Morgan, an Australian market research company, released a report in May 2019 that revealed some useful insights into how different generations are using social media. The main findings were:

- Facebook has a user base that is strong across all five generations with a majority of Australians in every generation using Facebook – the only social network with that level of penetration.
- Australians aged between 43-58 years old in Generation X are (marginally) the most likely to use Facebook with over 87% of Generation X using Facebook in an average four weeks. There are also over four-in-five Australians in Generation Z (82%), Generation Y (86%) and Baby Boomers (86%) who use the popular social network. Facebook is also the most popular social network for Pre-Boomers aged at least 72 years old and is used by 65% of this generation.
- YouTube has now displaced Facebook as the leading social media platform for Generation Z. It was visited by 89% of Australians aged 14-27 years old in an average four weeks. Unlike Facebook, usage of YouTube declines by age with 82% of Generation Y, 72% of Generation X, 65% of Baby Boomers and 46% of Pre-Boomers using the video-sharing site.
- The correlation between age and usage is even stronger for Instagram. Over two-thirds of Generation Z (68%) and a majority of Generation Y (52%) use Instagram compared to under a third of Generation X (32%), under a sixth of Baby Boomers (15%) and 7% of Pre-Boomers.
- Facebook still dominates but growth has stalled, YouTube is on the rise and is now the second most popular search engine in the world – Google is still the number one search engine.

Source: <http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7979-social-media-trends-march-2019-201905170731>

- There is some research to show that Facebook is becoming the platform where family members across different generations interact. It has managed to hold onto the number one spot in 2019 partly due to a 'silver surge' with Baby Boomers and Pre-Boomers using it to stay connected with family and friends. An article published in *Wired* this year discussed how current teens may look back at Facebook like a static scrapbook of their childhoods:  
<https://www.wired.com/story/teens-cant-escape-facebook/>

## **E. WHAT IT MEANS FOR HISTORICAL SOCIETIES**

So what does this all mean for your history organisation?

- If your goal is to promote the history of your community then you need to have a social media presence. It is not a magical elixir to get more members, visitors or sales but it is a critical communication tool.
- It is not just for young people – Facebook is still doing well because of the 'silver surge'.

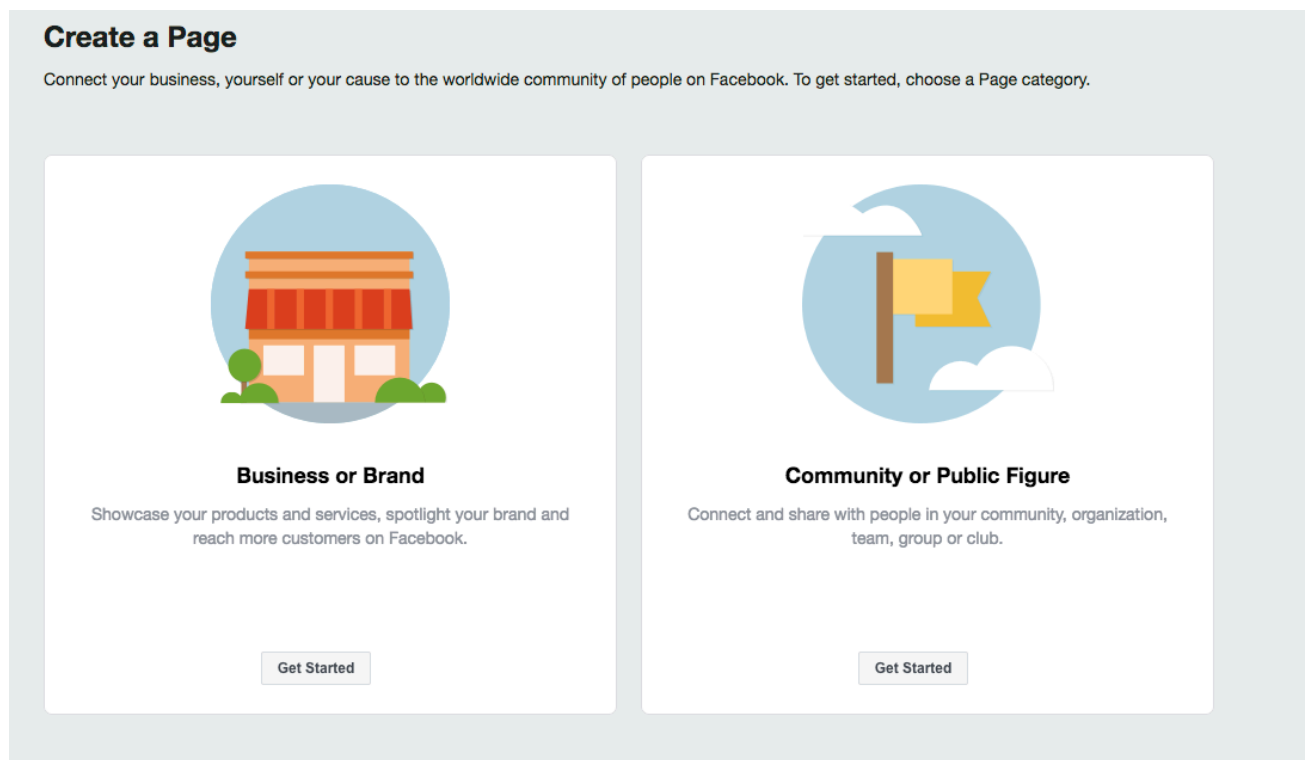
## **F. WHY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES SHOULD SPEND TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Share content – achieve your goal of promoting your local community history.
- You earn attention – it is a marketing tool for the contribution your organisation makes to the community and this can be critical if you are applying for funding, dealing with a local council or running an advocacy campaign. Most government agencies, funding bodies and journalists will do a 'desk audit' and look at your social media presence.
- Ability to connect to people from near and far.
- Easy and instant connections.
- Creates opportunities.
- It's fun, and can be a satisfying experience.

## G. FACEBOOK

### G.1 For 30% of audience not on Facebook: How to set up Facebook account

- It is free (earn by advertising and capturing).
- Things you will need:
  - A personal Facebook account
  - Internet Access
- If you have not got a personal account but need one to set up:
  - Need to use a 'real name' e.g. Suzanne History doesn't work
  - Date of birth – can just make it 1/1/2000 but there will be checks to make sure you are 'not a Robot'.
  - Need to provide an email for 'notifications'.
  - Need to provide mobile in case your password gets locked.
  - Can provide very basic details – just your name.
  - Will need to provide an image – not necessarily your own photo (cat pictures are popular).
- Once you're logged in to your personal account on Facebook, go to Pages to create your new page.



- You will be given an option 'Business or Brand' / 'Community or Public Figure'.
- Add a name to your page (the name of your organisation). Make sure you enter the name correctly as you cannot always change it later.
- Pick an organisation category. They are very limited – no 'history organisation' only 'museum' so keep it general e.g. community organisation. You can always update it if Facebook introduces new categories.
- Add a cover photo (851 x 315 pixels).
- Create content.
- Start recruiting friends – newsletter, website, emails, 'request friends'.

**Source:** <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-set-up-a-facebook-presence-for-your-organisation-guide>




## G.2 Facebook users: Be across the people with page roles.

The screenshot displays the Facebook Page Roles management interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation links: Notifications, Messenger Platform, Facebook Badges, Page Roles, People and Other Pages, Preferred Page Audience, Authorizations, Branded Content, Instagram, Featured, Crossposting, Page Support Inbox, Payments, and Activity Log. The main content area is divided into three sections. The top section, 'Assign a New Page Role', includes a search bar labeled 'Type a name or email', a dropdown menu labeled 'Editor', and an 'Add' button. Below this is a description of the Admin role. The middle section, 'Existing Page Roles', also describes the Admin role. The bottom section shows a list of existing roles, with 'Suzanne Holohan' listed as an 'Admin' and an 'Edit' button next to her name.

Three key roles are:

- **Administrator** – (full power) at least two.
- **Editor** – can do everything except update roles.
- **Moderator** – responds to comments, delete or hide comments, answer messages.

If you're an admin:

1. Click Settings at the top of your Page.
2. Click Page Roles in the left column.
3. Type a name or email in the box and select the person from the list that appears.
4. Click Editor  to select a role from the dropdown menu.
5. Click Add and enter your password to confirm.

## H. FACEBOOK USERS: INSIGHTS

- Page likes does not mean people are paying attention – it is engagement: comments, shares, likes that matter.
- Facebook defines "engagement rate" as the percentage of people who viewed a post and either liked, shared, reacted, or commented on the communication. When a large number of users engage, then the post holds some meaningful impact on the viewer. For historical societies, the engagement rate allows them to measure the type of history content and stories that their community is interested in.
- Use Facebook Insights to see what people like and when they are active: this will not only help you with writing better posts but it can give an indication of historical topics people are most interested in, which can be invaluable information when planning events and publications.
- You can also 'watch' what other organisations are doing – you might get useful stories for your newsletters/ideas for your own posts

## **What RAHS has learnt from using Insights:**

- Do not make it all about promoting events or selling your publications – interact, share articles, post photos, provide research tips.
- Plan and schedule posts to tie in with commemorative events/when users are active. We have a calendar which includes ‘On this Day’ items, as well as important events in the History community (NAIDOC Week, History Week, Women’s History Month, Library and Information Week, heritage festivals). Volunteers prepare content that we schedule for release.
- Content that is popular on our Facebook page:
  - Asking to identify a photograph
  - Latest online research resources
  - ‘Story’ telling
- Watch other organisations – and see their popular posts. As well as knowing what topics are trending in the history community, it can also be a useful source of stories for your newsletters, potential speakers or topics for talks.
- Do not over do the posting – the RAHS does between 3 and 5 a week

## **I. PITFALLS AND TRAPS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Do not overstretch yourself – better to be good on one or two channels than to have ‘dead’ profiles on multiple channels.
- Be patient – it takes time to build a profile and to figure out the content that works.
- Always give a cultural context for historical quotes/letters.
- Do not ignore copyright – RAHS provides references for images/text on its social media posts.
- Be careful of privacy – do not give away specific personal details.
- Always give a cultural context for historical quotes/letters.
- Make it really clear if you are sharing content that is not yours: “ A message from...”
- Don’t ‘feed the trolls’.

## **What is an online troll?**

- Trolls are different from people with a sincere complaint.
- Signs that you are dealing with a troll:
  - Exaggerate – use strong words
  - Like the shadows – often hide behind a fake name
  - Make it personal – attack a person’s character
  - Grammar and spelling issues – Type in all caps, say ‘I’ a lot, excessive use of ‘!!!!!!!’
  - Not seeking a resolution – motivation is to upset people.

## **What if you are the target of a troll?**

- First response: Be polite, correct any factual errors and deal with any complaints. Sometimes an online troll isn’t a troll: it could be a person wanting to be heard but going about it the wrong way.
- If it continues: Do not get baited, see how your community responds.
- If it goes too far: Delete comment, block or ban them.

## **J. WHAT TO DO NEXT AFTER READING THIS HANDOUT**

- Join a social media channel – have a digital presence.
- Have a ‘social’ media calendar for the year and start preparing content in advance.
- Check the ‘administrative’ function.
- Learn how to use the analytical tools – so you can improve.