

### 3.4.8: Cultivate Community

#### Learning Objectives

Use social media to cultivate community

In the previous section, we discussed ways to integrate customers into company business related to products and sales. In this section, we'll talk about engaging customers with the brand itself. Something like a change in ownership or leadership could be expressed in a simple announcement on social media and then forwarded and propagated by your own customers. Very brand-loyal customers blur the line between internal and external people; in some ways, your own customers could “work” for you via social media.

We may call this type of interaction—the energetic interaction between people about your brand or organization—a type of community. Social media cultivates this clearly and does it in often very inexpensive ways.

This issue of authenticity in social media is a challenging one. Think back to our discussion earlier about LinkedIn, where we critiqued the exchanges there as often hollow and exaggerated. Commensurate with it being largely focused on job and opportunity finding, the interaction there seems corporate rather than personal. While the *Guardian* article titled “[LinkedIn is the worst of social media. Should I delete my account?](#)” may be excessive, the article does show the pitfalls of potentially inauthentic social media use.

While other platforms better lend themselves to building a sense of community among your customer base, it is important that you are transparent with your messaging as well. Customers (especially younger customers) are pretty savvy when it comes to social media and will notice if you aren't consistent in your messages and actions.

Regardless of the tension here, certainly the goal of having more meaningful exchanges on social media is worth thinking about, and striving for. If we use a guide from a collection of thought, perhaps that will make our online interactions more real and meaningful.

#### Dove

Over the last several years, Dove has worked to build a community around its brand of self-empowered women. In fact, according to its Twitter bio, “Dove is committed to helping all women realize their personal beauty potential by creating products that deliver real care.”<sup>[1]</sup>

This mission can be seen across Dove's various social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. In fact, the three of those platforms that have banner images (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) all have the same banner image (as seen in their Facebook page in Figure 1).

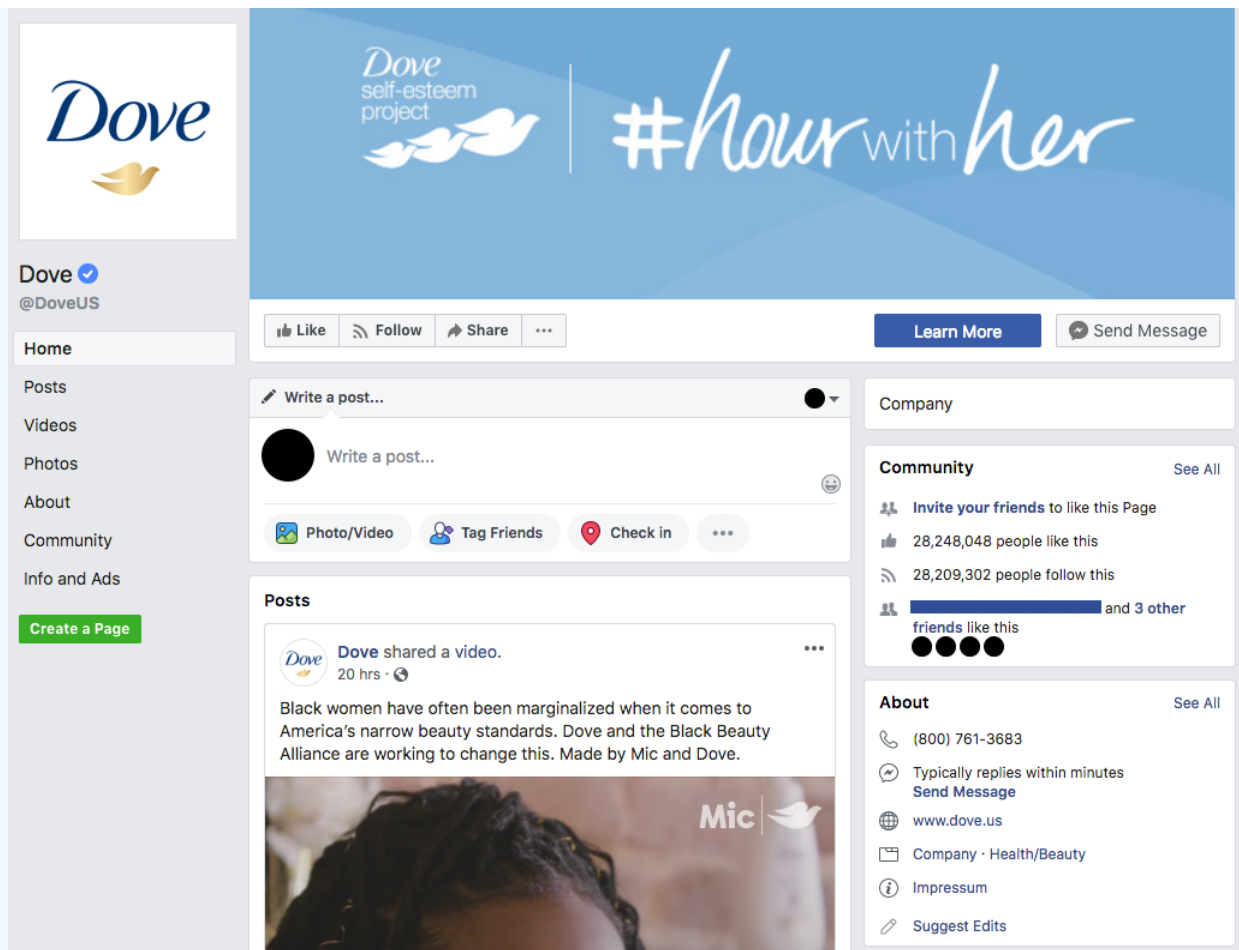


Figure 1. Dove's Hour with Her campaign is highlighted across all of Dove's social media, building their community of women.

## ? Learn More

- [7 Habits to Make Your Brand Authentic on Social Media](#)
- [How to Build a Social Community: 4 Tips](#)
- [4 Ways to Cultivate a Community For Your Brand](#)

1. [twitter.com/Dove](https://twitter.com/Dove)

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