

# Livestreaming for Beginners

*Social media is current. It's interactive. It's live. And it doesn't get more live than livestreaming. Welcome back to Wrangling Your Social Strategy. This week we will look at live video streaming and how to make it work for your business.*

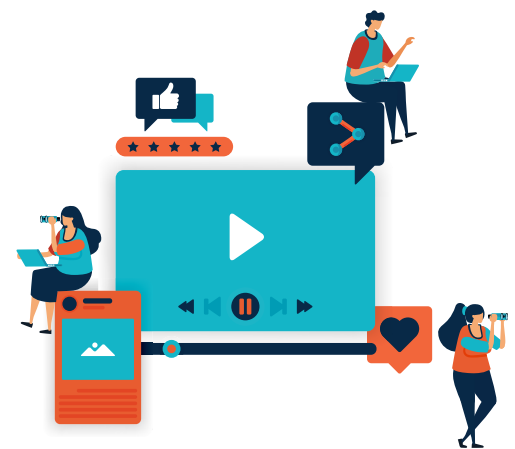
What is a livestream? It's live video, delivered over the internet, directly from your camera to your viewers. Think the nightly news, but instead of an entire studio full of equipment and technicians, it's just you, your phone and your audience.

There are plenty of streaming services out there, and some of them are already built into the social networks you already use. Picking the best service is all about balancing your needs with the needs of your audience to ensure the largest viewer base for your messages.

Most of us will probably use **Facebook Live**, but if you have more Twitter followers, you should look into **Periscope**. YouTube and Instagram also have livestreaming options. If you're an outdoor company you might want to try out **Meerkat**, which integrates with GoPro cameras to stream directly to the web.

There are also many stand-alone streaming services, such as Brandlive, that offer professional features in exchange for a subscription fee. Weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each livestream service and choose the option that removes any obstacle that would prevent your viewers from watching your stream.

Now that you're all set up, how do you host a successful stream? Here are five tips to help you broadcast your message like a streaming professional.



## THE FIVE Bs OF LIVESTREAMING

### 1. Be Engaging

Audience interaction is the key difference between a live broadcast and a pre-recorded video. Answer your users' comments on air and refer to the commenters by name.

### 2. Be Spontaneous

Don't script your entire broadcast. By all means, know what you're going to talk about ahead of time, but allow for some spontaneity and don't be afraid of a little improv.

### 3. Be Sure To Tell People When You're Going to Stream

You already have access to plenty of followers on your social networks. Let them know a day or two ahead of your broadcast so they can plan appropriately. If you're going to be answering questions, it's perfectly acceptable to query for questions ahead of time and then answer them live on stream.

### 4. Be Visually Interesting

Pick an interesting setting to act as the backdrop for your stream. Also, take the opportunity to show off the visually interesting aspects of your business that don't come across in a simple picture.

### 5. Be Sure to Save Your Video

Saving your video when you're done and offering it in an online archive creates additional content for your website and social networks. Plus it's a handy way for people who couldn't tune in to catch up and stay informed.

### 6. Bonus

Be prepared for technical difficulties, but don't freak out when they happen. Technical difficulties and minor mistakes add a sense of authenticity to your stream, and authenticity actually helps your viewers connect with you on an emotional level. (As long as the goofs don't happen too often.)

One final word about livestreaming: don't worry about your hardware...yet. When you're first starting out, focus on building your audience. When you've got a few livestreams under your belt, then you can start thinking about upgrading your equipment.

What should be your first investment? That's a matter of opinion, but I would suggest investing in a better microphone before anything else. Generally, people will forgive grainy video. Especially since the majority of your viewers will most likely be watching on their phones. But nothing kills people's desire to watch than spotty audio quality.

Livestreaming can be a rewarding experience that helps build your brand and connect you with your customers in new and exciting ways. It's easier than ever to jump on board the streaming trend, so test the waters and give it a try. You might be surprised by your results.