

# 109 - Taking Time Off this Summer as a Social Media Manager: Part 1 - Content Planning and Getting Ahead

**Laura Davis:** [00:00:00] In today's episode, we're talking all things content planning and helping you get organised for the summer.

**Laura Moore:** Welcome to JFDI with the Two Lauras. This is the podcast for freelance social media managers where we share our decades of experience and give you tips, advice, and hopefully some inspiration to help you in your business as a freelance social media manager.

We release a new episode every Tuesday and right after the show, we hang out in our community, the Social Media Managers Hub to answer your questions. Dive deeper into the things that we discuss here.

Today's show is part one of a two parter, and we're talking about how you can start getting ready for the summer so you can take a break. Today we're diving into all things content planning, and next week we'll be back to dive into everything client related, because let's face it, none of us went freelance to work every hour God sends. And we all deserve a break in the summer, whether it's to swan off on a holiday or just sit in the garden if the sun comes out. [00:01:00] Let's get into it.

**Laura Davis:** Bring on the sun.

**Laura Moore:** Oh, I wish.

**Laura Davis:** So, yeah, we, people will be thinking, oh, hang on a minute, Laura, you know, it's, it's miles off. The summer is way off.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah.

**Laura Davis:** The summer may not even happen if you're in the UK.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Laura Davis:** But we wanted to kind of stop you there and this podcast is going to help you realise that the more you can do now and the more organised you can be. It will help you come summertime.



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**Laura Moore:** Yeah, whatever that is for you. Like for us, summertime is six weeks of school holidays. For you, it might be a two week break in August. You know, whatever that is for you.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah, and I think people find it really difficult taking a break because of, you know, we've got that kind of guilt because we're freelancers and we, you know, we've told our clients we're going to be doing one thing.

And therefore we've got to do it. So there's that whole, that side of it. There's also the problem with taking a break when you're a social media [00:02:00] marketer and you want to use social media yourself. Like you're constantly, even if you're having a day off or a week off, you constantly, if you go on Instagram, you're being pulled back in.

So it can be difficult to take a break, but at the end of the day, you deserve a break just as much as an employed person who has their 25, 30, whatever people have nowadays, days annual leave. Um, so you 100 percent deserve it. So that's worth saying.

**Laura Moore:** And I think also you don't have to physically be flying off on a plane and going and lying on a sun on a sunbed to tell your clients and that you're not working for a while and we'll talk more about this on next week's podcast. But you don't actually have to physically be going on holiday to have a holiday, it might just be that you want to lay on your sofa for a week, it's raining outside and you want to watch Netflix for a week. That is totally fine. Just, you know, you do you.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah, you might just want to go and see some, see some friends, or you might want to go and spend some time with your elderly parents. Like, [00:03:00] this, we're not all just talking about, you know, jetting off to wherever and sipping cocktails, because that isn't it for everybody, is it?

**Laura Moore:** No, no.

**Laura Davis:** And obviously not everybody has children, not everybody wants to have to worry about six week school holidays, and that's fine.

**Laura Moore:** And we're jealous of you!



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**Laura Davis:** But hopefully you'll still want to take a break at some point. So this is all relevant.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, and also this, what we're going to say today, is relevant no matter when in the year you're going to take a break.

Yes, we're talking about it in terms of summer, but if you're going to take a break in the winter, you know, you're going to have a skiing holiday in February, whatever it is, everything we're going to talk about today in terms of your content, is relevant. Remember it for next time you're going to take a break because it will help you if you get organised in advance.

**Laura Davis:** A hundred percent.

**Laura Moore:** So, what are the things that we need to kind of consider before we can start planning then?

**Laura Davis:** Okay, so you want to know, you know, is it that I'm just going to take a week off in July? Or is it that you've got a six week school holidays that [00:04:00] you want to be able to take a step back and spend more time with your kids?

Or you have to because you've got no childcare? So you need to kind of establish what that is, when that is, when it starts, when it ends, you know, what and what your need is to get you through that. And we're all going to be different as we've just discussed.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. Yeah. Like in terms of content, like, do you need as much content as you normally do?

Are you going to have to scale that back? Like, what does it look like for when you come back after that break? What do you need to have happened? Really think about all those sorts of things. Cause the worst thing that you can do is go off on holiday, have no content going out, come back, lose a client and you haven't been marketing your business and then you've got to start from scratch, like that's a nightmare.



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**Laura Davis:** Yeah. And the other, the worst thing, and I've done this before and I'll never do it again, is I will get really sorted and be really like cocky confident that you've covered the whole of the summer and then you land back in reality, in September, you're, the kids go back to school and you've [00:05:00] got three clients, your own business, and you've only scheduled up until then, and that first week back is always hard, isn't it?

It takes you ages to get your brain back into reminding you what you do, you, you realise that your kids have outgrown their shoes and you haven't got new ones, you know, it's all of that kind of busy getting back into that routine. And you add to that, you've also realised that your schedulers are empty and dry. So you just always try to schedule a little bit extra.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, definitely agree. Definitely agree. And so I think on that point, you're not just thinking about your own content, are you? You're thinking about your client needs in advance too. You need to know what's going to happen, like, in that time afterwards.

So that's definitely something to kind of get to grips with.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah, you want to know key dates. Like I, I saw my client on Tuesday and I said to him, what are you launching between now and September? And you could see even he was like, like, cold twitching to get his cogs working in his brain [00:06:00] because I, I need to think, I need to be thinking about it now.

I didn't need to know the specifics. I just needed, is something going to be launching in the summer? When roughly might that be? So I knew when I'm thinking about the content going forward into the summer, I know I've got to make space for that. I've got to plan for that. So I'm already having those conversations now in May.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, yeah. And like getting those dates, obviously, maybe not this early, but as early as you can. Having them, like, tied down and making sure that they know they can't change them, I think is pretty important when it comes to it.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah, and giving your clients the deadline. So it's okay for you, I've started the conversation now with him, but I will be saying to him early July, uh, this needs to be concrete now because I'll have probably by that point created a bit of content.



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I'll just need the dates. I'll need the, you know, and yeah, so yeah, so you just need to make sure that your client knows that [00:07:00] deadline and it's okay. Like it's okay to ask them, it's okay to say this is because I'm trying to get organised for the summer. You don't have to be embarrassed about wanting, or, or worried that it makes you look like a bad person, a bad business owner, if, if you're wanting to be organised.

It's, you know, you need to just own it. This is a good thing. We are human beings. Your clients will have had holidays. You are entitled to holidays. Many of your clients possibly have children. They get it. I know there are some dickheads out there. But on the whole, most clients shouldn't.

**Laura Moore:** But I think even the dickheads would be grateful that you're planning in advance. Do you know what I mean? That you're being organised and thinking of their business.

**Laura Davis:** Well, yeah. Yeah. You know. You'd hope so, which is why I don't think people need to hide behind that, that that's what they're doing. It's not like you're saying to a client, I'm just going to schedule off and I'm bugging off to, you know, out of Africa for six, well, maybe you are, but [00:08:00] we'll come on to that.

But, um, yeah, you just need to, it's okay to be organised. It's okay to have these conversations. It does not make you a bad person if you're planning ahead.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, definitely. And in next week's episode, we'll talk to you about like how to have these conversations and the things you should be talking to them about. So make sure you do tune in to that episode next time as well.

So going back to the content then, is there, and I think I know what you're going to say to this, but is there any specific types of content that you should or shouldn't be putting out? Like when you're going to have a break.

**Laura Davis:** Yes. So I would avoid if, if I could creating or scheduling any content that I know is going to be controversial or have a lot of engagement on it. Anything that, basically, I don't want to have to deal with.



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**Laura Moore:** Causes work.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah. Might be wrong way to think about it, but I said, like, I know for my client exactly which kind of [00:09:00] content causes a bit of a stir in a positive way. I know the ones that get thousands of questions, they end up going viral. I will not be posting any of those when I'm away.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Laura Davis:** So, anything like that, I would avoid.

**Laura Moore:** But I think it's important to like plan that in advance, but also when you then come to doing your like analytics after that break, remembering that you've done that. So that if the engagement is down, you remember that you specifically were aiming to get the engagement to come down, so you didn't have to do that work, because there's nothing, like in the summer, engagement is always down across platforms, because people are doing other things, but there's nothing worse than you coming back and being, well hang on a minute, I created a really great content, why is it down? When actually it's your fault it's down because you did it on purpose, you know?

**Laura Davis:** Yeah. No, I would be probably quite strategic about it. I'd make sure that I did a killer post like the week before I went away or something, or I'd get it [00:10:00] scheduled in for like the day after I land back in the country. So it still falls into that reporting month.

But yeah, try to, yeah, try to avoid anything that is going to, especially if you're pulling in help to help you or you're saying to your clients you're gonna have to keep on top of the engagement, like give, cut them some slack because the reality is they won't. So yeah, just be a bit strategic about the types of content you're putting out when you're having a down day, week, two weeks, whatever it is.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. And I think as well, like thinking about what messaging you're putting out for yourself like over that summer time. And like, there's the obvious of like, you know, not posting holiday photos when you're away and people knowing where you live, that's



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like a given, but there's also things that kind of can sometimes make people just to be a bit like, eh, not sure that they're the right one for me.

Yeah. Because if you're like, oh, you know, I'm finding it so stressful because it's [00:11:00] school holidays and I've got to do all this work and that doesn't make you look great. You know, you don't want to put people off.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah. And it's, It's frightening how much of us do this and I see it all the time and it will put people off when you're there going, Oh God, it's so hard.

It's such a juggle. Like I'm so busy. I can't cope. All that kind of, like, I get it, I hear you, come and tell us, come and let's all have a moan in the, in our Facebook group. It's not for public consumption when you're trying to appeal to a client, or if your client sees that, because if we hired a social media manager and I saw that social media manager going, God, it's really tough at the moment.

I would not have sympathy. I would just be thinking, Oh my God, she's going to be, he, it is going to be rushing that content. They're not concentrating. They're not having, you know, it's those, those are the feelings that I will, I would react with.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. And I think there seems to be said, like, I know that [00:12:00] people want to put out content that makes them relatable and resonates with their audience.

And if your audience are like busy parents talking about how busy and stressful your life is, would resonate, but there's a way to do that. You flip it and you're like, look, I'm struggling, it's really busy, my summer's been crazy, but here's what I did in advance to make sure that my content was still amazing. Here's what you can do as well. So you flip it.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah.

**Laura Moore:** And I think people forget that flip.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah.

**Laura Moore:** Which I think is the important piece.



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**Laura Davis:** Like, don't do, and this is just personal opinion, you feel free to ignore.

**Laura Moore:** Rant incoming!

**Laura Davis:** But I cannot bear, I cannot bear people who market themselves trying to do it via getting a sympathy vote. Like, oh, this is so hard for me, this is so hard for me, this is. Like, we're all, we've all got our challenges in life, some people share it, some people don't, but don't try and, Oh, maybe someone will book a power hour with me, because I'm,

**Laura Moore:** This isn't the X Factor.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah, maybe [00:13:00] someone will book a power hour with me, because they feel sorry for me, let's not go down that route.

**Laura Moore:** No.

**Laura Davis:** People do it and it drives me up the wall, like, come on, we're better than that.

**Laura Moore:** And here ends the rant.

**Laura Davis:** Slight, slight, side note.

**Laura Moore:** Okay, let's move on then to how we can actually get this done, how we can use the time that we've got now to get organised and get that content ready so we can lay in the sun, if it is sunny.

**Laura Davis:** Yes. So the thing I always do, always have done, for years and years and years and years and years now, and will continue to do forever more, From about now, I will be thinking every time I create sit down and create my content, so I would generally do work week on week, I would think, instead of creating, say, five pieces of content for next week, I'll create six or seven.

And two of those are kind of evergreen type content, so in theory they could go anywhere in the year and I'll just pop, start popping them into the scheduler for the week that I'm away. [00:14:00] So if you did two pieces of content, so we've got, I've just been counting this with my child and this is obviously very much related to school holidays but





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**Laura Moore:** And based on when we're recording now or based on?

**Laura Davis:** Based on when we're recording now.

**Laura Moore:** Okay.

**Laura Davis:** Which is middle of May. God, I couldn't even remember what month it is now. We're like 8, say 8 or 9 weeks out from the summer holidays. So if you create, if you added 2 pieces of content extra each week, that's 18, 16, 18, 17, something around there, pieces of content extra.

That's a lot. So therefore, that's 3 pieces of content per week for the school holidays. Done. Nice. Before the school holidays have even started. And obviously if you've got clients that don't post five times a week, like one of my clients does, the other client doesn't, then obviously you can, in theory, cover more and get more done.

So I, and I know it's like, Oh God, I've got to think of two more pieces of content. And it is difficult, especially if [00:15:00] you've got clients where you don't, which is why it's important to be having the conversations now, about what's happening in the summer, it can be difficult, but there will always be evergreen type of content about the business, about the product that you can probably create content for or repurpose old content and get those schedules.

So then what I'll do is I'll get to, I get closer to the school holiday starting, and then I look at where the gaps are in the schedule. What do I need to put in the, which is very time specific. Any of those launches that I've mentioned or any events that are taking place or any key dates that I want to cover.

Sometimes with my client, I can't post everything in advance. Sometimes I do have to post on the fly. So I've always got gaps in the schedule to be able to do that. But, and I've always done that. It works now for my clients. Now it's worked, you know, eight years ago for previous clients and businesses, so it's definitely, it definitely [00:16:00] works.

**Laura Moore:** And going back to what you just said about repurposing old content, I think there's something to be said for looking back at what was, what went out last summer and



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did it work? Is it still relevant? Is it something that you can tweak or even just reuse as it is? If it worked last summer and it's evergreen, the chances are it'll probably work again this summer.

So just, and you know, even the summer before, depending on how long you've got, can go back depending on how long you've kept your content. I think there's definitely something in that as well. And even not just the summer, but like, is there any other times of year that's relevant? Like any other holidays that have happened or any other times where, like if your client is like, you know, weather related, you know, because they sell like garden furniture, for example.

Maybe last Easter was really, really hot and you can go see what content worked then, you know. All of those sorts of things are definitely worth looking at.

**Laura Davis:** And I, like, with my client, I can go back and it is, they use a lot of photography, so you, and it is outdoorsy, so you can kind of get a vibe of what time of year it is.

So, but I [00:17:00] could go back and look at December and think that content did really well, but it's an icy picture and I could just repurpose that, but find a better, more summer appropriate photo. And I'm always doing that, especially the evergreen kind of content. I'm forever doing that all year round, regardless of the holidays, to be honest.

So there will always be things you'll want, messages you'll want to get across about the business, about how customers can work with that business, or the processes in buying, or the, you know, more behind the scenes stuff, or about the brand values that you want to try. There's all those kind of messages that you want to try and weave into your content kind of all year round really, that are, make good evergreen content.

And that's perfect. They're the perfect kind of things to be able to start scattering into your schedule and now to get you through those summer months.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. And I think in terms of like your own content, One thing to think about is, for example, if you're going to take the summer off for the kids and you're coming back in September, what do you want to happen in [00:18:00] September?



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Is it that you, you know, you're happy with your clients, you're at capacity, but in September maybe you want to sell more power hours or more strategies, for example, or you want to launch a masterclass? Content people need to see before you can sell those things. So is there like educational content that you could be putting out in, you know, August that is priming people ready for you to do a launch for those things in September.

So just trying to think ahead of what's coming and what you can put in place before that, that will either help you to reach more people, you know, maybe it's shareable content or we'll help them to understand why they need those things or can, you know, get on your email list, for example, what are those sorts of things that you can put in?

**Laura Davis:** Yeah. And yeah, 100 percent think about, cause you don't want to get to September and you go, right, now I want to sell more power hours or what have you, because it just doesn't work like that. You need to build up to that. So the perfect time to be building up to that is when you're lying on a beach.

**Laura Moore:** Daiquiri in your [00:19:00] hand, content going out, can't think of anything better.

**Laura Davis:** Pina colada. So yeah, and then I, so that's more for organic. And then I would also be thinking about the same now, and I already am for ads. So I'd be thinking about what changes to the creatives that I might need to be doing. Will I need to build any brand new campaigns?

I would never take on a new client anywhere near the summer holidays, but I would certainly be thinking, hang on, if they need a whole new campaign, I'd be building it now, even if it's not gonna be turned on till August, I'd just get it built and in draft, I'd make sure that when I'm creating any creative, I'm kind of creating probably a bit more than I would normally, so I've just got them there, so if suddenly something went wrong, or I needed to do something different, or, I just wanted to put in fresh, creative, I've got that ready.

Yeah. I'm not going, Oh my God, I've got to go and find this or I've got to go [00:20:00] and do this or, or that. And so again, I've been having those same conversations with clients saying, what campaigns will we be running? What do I need to have? I've told him he needs to get the videographer out to do some content creation.



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So he's organised that. And if I hadn't done that, knowing him, he would have got me the content when I'm sat on the beach with my pina colada.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah. Send it to you in your WhatsApp. Yeah. Nice.

**Laura Davis:** Yeah. Exactly, and would expect it to be on the ads by the end of the day. So really it's trying to do as much now. As you can, and you could be like, Oh, you know what?

I'm going to wait. I get what you're saying, Laura, but I'm going to wait. Maybe I'll do this a bit more in July. Now, if you are a parent, July is horrific. It's end of school parties, sports day, another sports day and another sports day, if you've got multiple kids, it's, you know, [00:21:00] there's all sorts of clubs.

There's, everything goes horribly wrong, I think, in July. Because there's all these, like, my son's going bell boating, and there's all these random residentials. It just throws you. So just remember that. If you're, maybe everyone else just, is like a, just copes, well, maybe it's just me who struggles with July.

But if, if you're like me and struggle with July, Don't leave everything for July because July can be pretty challenging as it is. So, yeah, just try and get as much done now as you can.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, and I think, like, all of, you might be thinking, Yeah, but I don't have time to create all of that content. It's just so much.

I don't want to spend my life in Canva. Outsource it. Yeah, all of that stuff that you need help with, outsource it. Now is the perfect time to do that. You don't have to spend your life in Canva.

**Laura Davis:** But that's exactly why I'd, and yes, I agree, like if you don't want to do it, outsource it 100%, and I wish probably I'd have done that in years gone by, but I, that's [00:22:00] why I don't sit there and go, right, shit, I've got six weeks of content I need to create, that's, that's a lot of content.

I will go, right, I've just got to do one or two extra things this week. It's so much more manageable. It's less overwhelming. And actually, once you renew a bit of a flow with your



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content creation and you're planning actually to quickly do a couple more, it isn't always that difficult, especially if you're looking at repurposing content as well.

So. It makes it so much more manageable when you kind of break it down into little chunks.

**Laura Moore:** Yeah, and like use templates and things like that. What we'll do is we'll drop some links in the show notes to our favourite templates. They'll make your life much easier. But yeah, anything you can do to make it easier. I am all for it.

**Laura Davis:** Mm, 100%.

**Laura Moore:** There we go.

**Laura Davis:** We'd love to hear if you're enjoying the podcast so if you can take two minutes to rate and review the show wherever you're listening we'd be ever so grateful. Those reviews really help us as they signal to the podcast platforms [00:23:00] that people are actually listening to the show, which means we can reach more people. So we're always grateful when you take just a quick minute to leave us a review.

**Laura Moore:** So that's it for this episode. And in the next episode, we're diving into those awkward conversations that you need to start having really soon with those clients. So you can take your summer break and we're going to share how you can make sure that you can have a break without your clients being on your case, where you're on the sun lounger, so we will see you same time, same place next week. And yeah, see you soon. Ta ra!

**Laura Davis:** Au revoir!

