Social media: 9 easy tools to create highly engaging designs

Here's a selection of apps, software and tools, curated by Maddyness to help you improve your social media strategy. You'll be creating engaging designs, videos and podcasts in no time.

Since its launch in 2013, Canva has changed the way people design. To date, it has attracted over 15M happy users across 190 countries, who have collectively created more than 1B graphics. How does it work? Its integrated marketplace provides both free and paid stock photography, fonts, illustrations, and templates. A paid subscription offers the ability to set up a brand kit so users can save their brand colours, fonts and assets, and ensure consistency across their designs. The print service gives Canva's users the ability to produce professional prints in a variety of formats and sizes, and have them delivered to their doorstep.

Adobe Creative Cloud Express – is a mobile-friendly formulation of Adobe's powerful editing and creation software. While Spark remains free to use, Adobe is adding a new paid feature to help SMEs create branded media content. The feature, called *Branded Stories*, lets users design graphics, web pages, and video stories. They are able to select one consistent template or theme to be present across every piece of media.

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Founded in 2012, PicMonkey assists people in creating standout visuals that express a view and leave a lasting impression. Whether you're making Insta

posts, Facebook covers, YouTube thumbnails, web pages, holiday cards, posters or just about anything visual, PicMonkey will help you out. With thousands of graphics and templates, unlimited stock photos and some very cool features, the creative process becomes enjoyable, inspiring and productive.

Try PicMonkey

Developed by Kaleido, an Austria-based AI startup, remove.bg was built to make workflows simpler and faster – to foster creativity and enable everyone to participate in the AI Century. By simplifying complex tech, the remove.bg team have made Visual AI very accessible indeed.

Watch the short YouTube tutorial below to see how the tool works.

Try Remove.bg

Headquartered in Vancouver, Lumen5 uses machine learning and AI to help create impactful, engaging videos from existing content – enabling organisations to make video a regular part of their marketing strategy. The Lumen5 media library provides easy access to millions of photos, video clips, and audio files. With this, users have the elements that constitute a perfect video right at their fingertips.

Try Lumen5

Multi-award-winning Piktochart is an easy-to-use visual communication tool that helps you tell your story – whether it's in the format of a presentation, a report, a banner, or an infographic. Piktochart is passionate about delivering stories that are powerful, engaging and enjoyable; the team's aim is to pioneer the future of visual storytelling for everyone.

Try Piktochart

Animoto is an expert online video maker, which allows anyone to drag and drop their way to powerful and professional marketing videos. The company's certified partnerships with Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and the Small Business Administration give it unique insight into the changing social media and business landscape. Maybe that's why more than 1M businesses around the world have used Animoto to create marketing videos that stand out on social media and beyond.

Try Animoto

You don't need video skills to create a professional-quality video presentation with BIGVU – whether it's for marketing, social media, training, news, sales pitches or corporate communications. BIGVU is a TV studio and a teleprompter app that helps people remember lines while recording a video. Thanks to its artificial intelligence engine, users can break up their narration into a simple

storyboard composed of scene cards.

Founded in 2015, Anchor makes it easy for pretty much anyone to start a podcast. Its award-winning iOS, Android and web apps provide easy-to-use tools, straightforward analytics, one-touch distribution, and unlimited podcast hosting. It's 100% free, and a great way to get your voice heard.

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