

Customizing link previews in Hootsuite

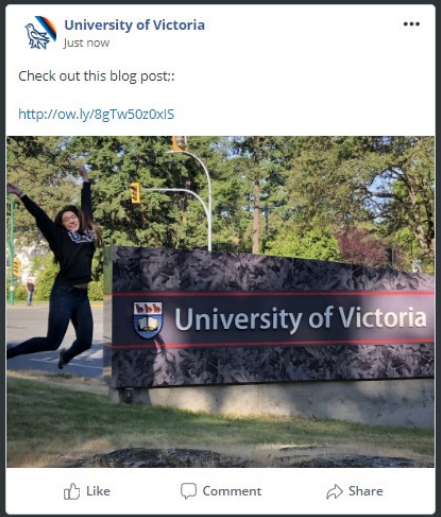


How your post is seen in a social media feed can be the difference maker in getting your audience to stop and look at it. Even better, the easier you make it for people to click and get to where they want to get – the better!

What is a link preview?

This is the snapshot of what people will see when they click on a link. This is usually a captivating/relevant photo + a title + a small line of text below. You can customize link previews in Hootsuite for **facebook and linked in only**. Therefore, you would have to enter your post in to Hootsuite separately for a twitter post (or you can create one and then [just duplicate it](#) for another platform and make adjustments as you need.)

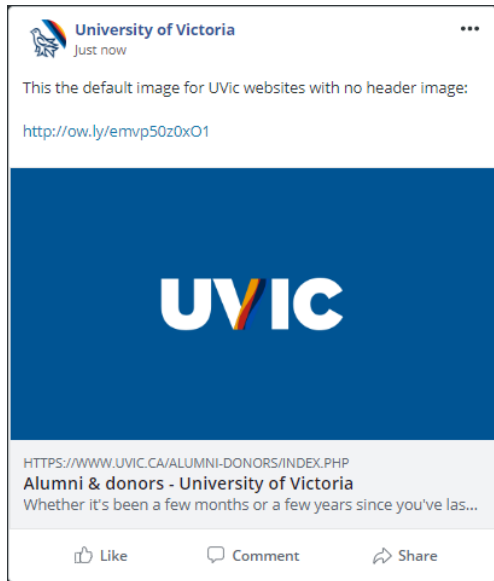
Let's compare the options

Which would you rather click on?

Link and photo uploaded separate	Automatic link preview	Customized link preview
<p>If you click the photo it would just take you to a bigger version of the photo. This is often what shows on Facebook if you add the same post for Facebook and Twitter at the same time. It's worth spending the time to do the below for twitter, but a link customization for facebook – if you can!</p> 	<p>The link is not very attractive and doesn't make you want to click on it and the subtext under the title gets cut off.</p> 	<p>A great photo that I can click on to read more and below the image is a nice title with a clean subtext line.</p> 



Note: you should only change the link preview from your own website or one of 'our' UVic websites. This is helpful if you don't want to always see this:



More here: <https://help.hootsuite.com/hc/en-us/articles/204586030-Shrink-links-and-customize-link-previews>

Why would you need to customize your link previews?

- People's attention is drawn to strong imagery. They are more likely to pause their scroll with a good image.
- People expect to click on an image and have it take them to where they want to go
- An image that links to a bigger version of the image (ie. An uploaded image to a post) is frustrating
- A great post has a short, engaging caption and a link preview with imagery and text that tells them where they are going to go and engages them to want to go there

Facebook debugger tool

First, you can always check how your post will turn out on Facebook here:

<https://developers.facebook.com/tools/debug/>


- You can see what the preview image looks like or for some pages there is no preview



How to customize a LinkedIn or Facebook Page link preview in the Composer
 After entering a link in to the 'text' field in composer, a link preview will automatically generate.

1. Click **Customize** below the link preview.

The screenshot shows the Facebook Composer interface. On the left, the 'Text' field contains the URL <https://www.uvic.ca/future-students/home/programs/index.php>. Below the text field, a media library preview shows a card for 'Our programs - University of Victoria' with a blue UVIC logo and a description: 'Uvic delivers a wide variety of academic programs ranging from law to nursing. Our students are ...'. A red circle highlights the 'Customize' button at the bottom right of this media preview. On the right, a larger preview of the link post is shown, featuring the UVIC logo and the same text and URL. At the bottom of the composer, there are buttons for 'Schedule for later', 'Post Now', and a dropdown arrow.

2. If more than one image was retrieved from the website, select an option, or click **Replace image**  to upload your own. Images can be a maximum of 5MB in .jpg, .jpeg, .gif or .png formats. Content library images cannot be used for link previews.

The 'Customize Link Preview' dialog box is shown. It has a title bar 'Customize Link Preview' and a 'Remove image' link. Under 'Link image', there is a blue square with the UVIC logo and a camera icon. A red circle highlights the UVIC logo. Below this are two text input fields: 'Link title' with the text 'Our programs - University of Victoria' and 'Link description' with the text 'Uvic delivers a wide variety of academic programs ranging from'. At the bottom, there are 'Cancel' and 'Save' buttons.

3. Click the title or description to edit its text.
 4. Click **Save**.



LinkedIn requires link previews to have a thumbnail image, title and description. Facebook requires at minimum the thumbnail image. If any of these elements are missing from your link preview when a post is published, the social network will fill in the missing data.

To replace a link preview entirely and upload an image instead, click the **X** in the top-right corner of the link preview card, and then upload your own media file or open the media library to select an image.

Notes:

- Try to use a relevant photo either from lower down the page or from elsewhere and stick to horizontal ones or it will auto-crop the middle.
- Keep in mind if there already is a photo (like a logo or something) you can change it or if there is no photo you can add one

Take a look at an example

This website uses a logo as its preview:

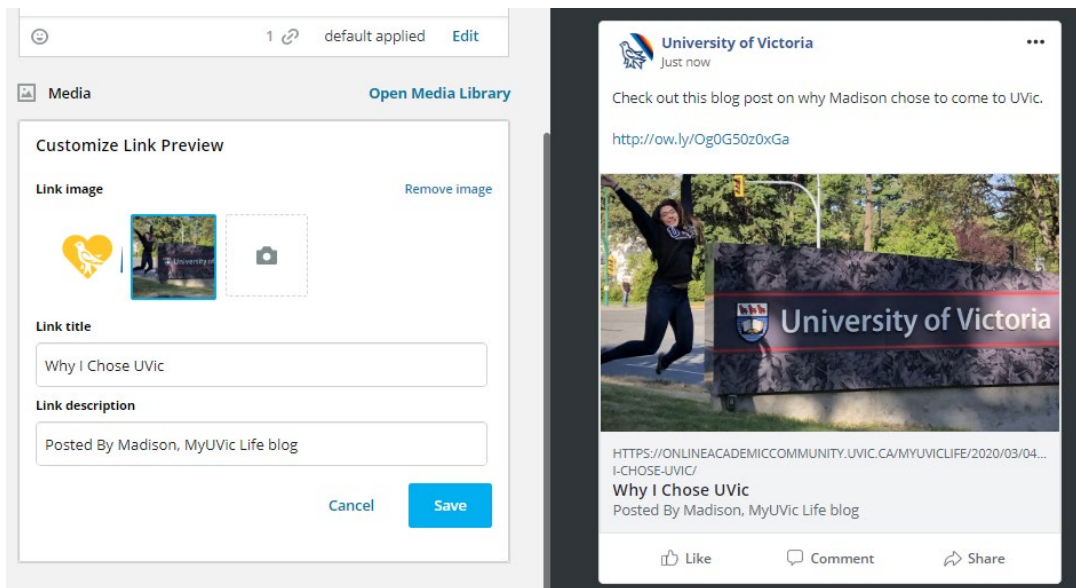
<https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/myuviclife/2020/03/04/why-i-chose-uvic/>

You can see the preview with the “MyUVic Life” logo is not that pretty.

The screenshot shows the Facebook post creation interface. On the left, the 'Text' field contains the URL <https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/myuviclife/2020/03/04/why-i-chose-uvic/>. Below the text field, a media preview card is visible, showing the 'MyUVic Life' logo and the title 'Why I Chose UVic | MyUVic Life'. The preview card also includes the text 'Posted By Madison on Mar 4, 2020 in Academics, Featured, Hands-on learning, Student life, Victoria 3+' and a short paragraph of text. The right side of the screenshot shows the final link preview as it will appear on the Facebook page, featuring the University of Victoria logo, the title 'Why I Chose UVic | MyUVic Life', and the text 'Posted By Madison on Mar 4, 2020 in Ac...'. At the bottom of the interface, there are buttons for 'Schedule for later' and 'Post Now'.



Instead, you can save a photo from the blog (or you could use an attributed stock photo or other photo) and customized the link preview and cleaned up the text too:



Advantages

- Nice looking post that is more engaging
- A photo that people can click on and that takes them where they want to go
- Cover up an auto-populated photo that doesn't look nice or is just a logo
- Don't have to give photo credit again in the post (if the photo is already on the webpage)

