

## 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?

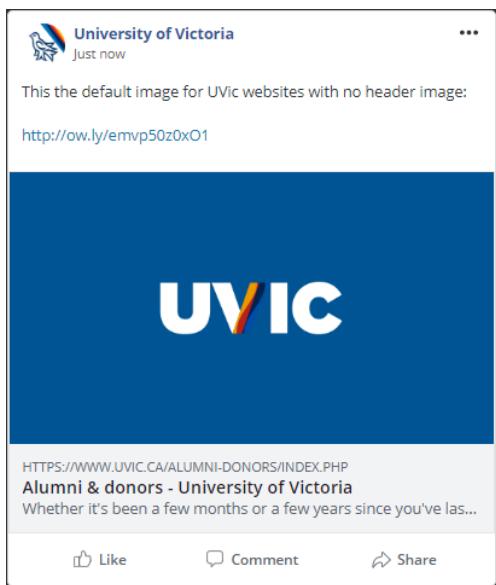
This is the snapshot of what people will see when they click on a link. This is usually a captivating/relevant photo + a title + a small line of text below. You can customize link previews in Hootsuite for **facebook and linked in only**. Therefore, you would have to enter your post in to Hootsuite separately 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> 
<p>Check out this blog post: <a href="http://ow.ly/BgTw50z0xIS">http://ow.ly/BgTw50z0xIS</a></p>	<p>Check out this blog post: <a href="http://ow.ly/KeX850z0xK1">http://ow.ly/KeX850z0xK1</a></p>	<p>Check out this blog post: <a href="https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/i-choose-uvic/why-i-chose-uvic-myuvic-life">https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/i-choose-uvic/why-i-chose-uvic-myuvic-life</a> Posted By Madison on Mar 4, 2020 in Ac...</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 LinkedIn 'New Post' interface. On the left, under 'Text', there is a box containing the URL <https://www.uvic.ca/future-students/home/programs/index.php>. On the right, a preview window titled 'Facebook Page' shows the UVIC logo and the URL. A red circle highlights the 'Customize' button at the bottom left of the preview window.

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 dialog box has a red circle around the 'Link image' section. It contains a thumbnail of the UVIC logo and a camera icon for uploading a new image. Below are fields for 'Link title' (Our programs - University of Victoria) and 'Link description' (UVic delivers a wide variety of academic programs ranging from law to nursing. Our students are...). At the bottom 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.

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#### 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

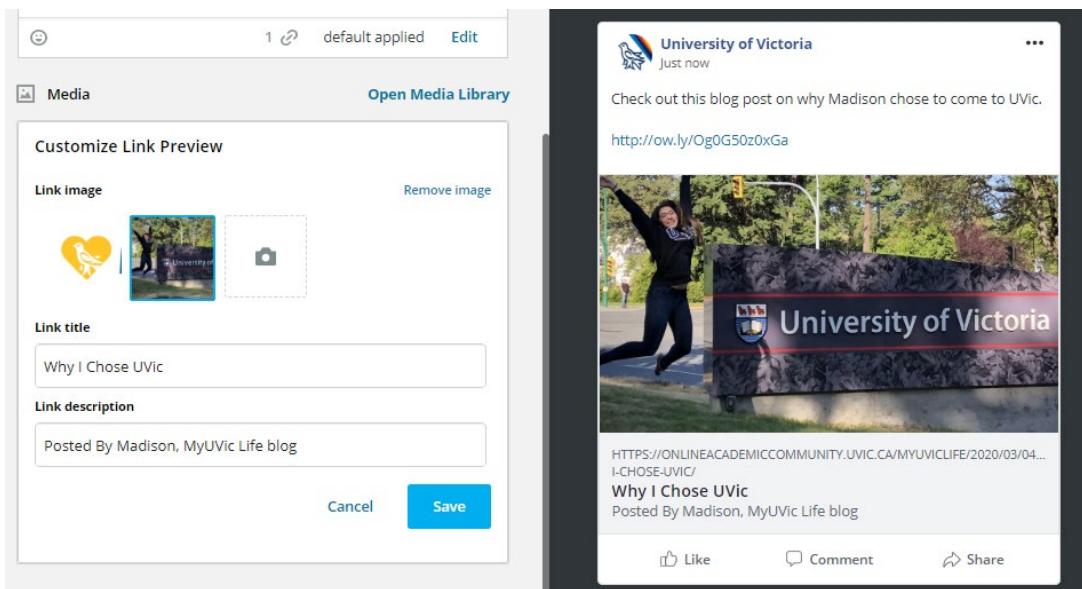
This website uses a logo as its preview:

<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 to' interface. On the left, the 'Text' tab is selected, displaying a blog post about why Madison chose UVic. On the right, the 'Facebook Page' tab is selected, showing the same post as it would appear on the University of Victoria's Facebook page. The difference is in the thumbnail image used for the link preview: the original link uses the MyUVic Life logo, while the Facebook page version uses the University of Victoria logo.

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)