fynl.io

FREE GUIDE

AI social media scheduler for small business: Buffer, Later and Metricool, from each company's own pages

What Buffer, Later and Metricool show on their own pages for scheduling, what each costs, where the AI is (it is listed on all three), a prompt for writing a week of posts with ChatGPT or Claude, and the check to run before you schedule the first post. Free PDF, no sign-up.

WHAT THIS ADDS

Most lists of AI social media schedulers repeat marketing. This guide takes only what each company shows on its own pricing page, opened on November 4, 2026, notes that all three list an AI feature but none of them says how well it writes, and adds the part no tool does for you: reading every post on your phone before a customer sees it.

Why people are searching for this

On November 4, 2026, typing *ai social media scheduler* into Google autocomplete suggested *scheduler free*, *scheduling tool*, *planner*, *post scheduler* and *content scheduler*. Owners and creators want the posting to happen on its own, and they want it free.

Important: this guide was written from each company's own pricing pages, opened on November 4, 2026. None of the tools was tested on a live account for this guide, and plans, prices and limits change often.

Step 1: Buffer

Buffer's pricing page shows three plans. **Free** is called free forever and connects up to 3 channels. It lists 10 scheduled posts per channel (refill anytime), 100 ideas, 1 user account, an AI Assistant, Insights, API access and a community inbox.

Plan	Price shown (1 channel, yearly billing selected)	Also listed
Free	$0, up to 3 channels	10 scheduled posts per channel, AI Assistant
Essentials	$5 per month ($60 billed yearly)	Unlimited scheduled posts per channel, unlimited ideas, advanced analytics, hashtag manager, first comment scheduling
Team	$10 per month ($120 billed yearly)	Everything above plus unlimited team members, access levels, content approval workflows

Buffer prices are per channel, and both paid plans list a 14-day free trial. So the free plan is real, but the limit is 10 scheduled posts at a time on each channel, and the paid price grows with every channel you add.

Step 2: Later

Later's pricing page has no free plan. The headline says free for 14 days, which is a trial, and then it shows three plans, with the prices below billed yearly (the page says 3 months free, 25% off).

Plan	Price shown	Listed
Starter	$18.75 USD per month, billed yearly	1 social set (8 profiles), 1 user, up to 30 posts per profile per month, 5 AI credits a month
Growth	$37.50 USD per month, billed yearly	2 social sets (16 profiles), 2 users, up to 180 posts per profile, 50 AI credits, social inbox, collaboration and approvals
Scale	$82.50 USD per month, billed yearly	6 social sets (48 profiles), 4 users, unlimited posts, 100 AI credits

Later's page explains that 1 AI credit generates 3 ideas or 1 caption, so Starter's 5 credits is 5 captions. Extra AI credits are listed at $3.75 USD a month for 100 credits on Growth and Scale.

Step 3: Metricool

Metricool's pricing page, with the annual price selected, shows a **Free** plan at $0 per month that lists 1 brand, up to 20 posts per month, 5 competitor profiles, 30 days of analytics and an AI social media assistant.

Plan	Price shown	Listed
Free	$0 per month	1 brand, 20 posts per month, AI social media assistant
Starter	From $20 per month	Up to 10 brands, unlimited content publishing (marked with an asterisk), 100 competitors, LinkedIn connection
Advanced	From $53 per month	Up to 50 brands, team and client management, post approval system

Read the asterisk next to unlimited publishing before you rely on it.

So where is the AI?

This time I found AI listed on all three pricing pages: Buffer lists an AI Assistant (even on the free plan), Later lists AI content tools with monthly credits, and Metricool lists an AI social media assistant. What the pages do not say is how well any of them writes, or whether it sounds like you. Only a test on your own account can show that, and none was run for this guide, so none is rated here.

Step 4: write the week with ChatGPT or Claude (my suggestion)

This step is not a company's feature; it is a way to get a first draft of a week of posts. Paste this into ChatGPT or Claude:

```
Write seven social media posts for my business, one for each day of the week. My business is [what you do]. My customers are [who they are]. Mix three useful tips, two behind the scenes posts, one customer question, and one simple offer. Keep each post under fifty words. Do not invent prices, discounts, opening hours or customer names. If anything is missing, put it in [square brackets].
```

Two examples I wrote, not from any tool. A tip: *Most customers ask the same three questions before they book. Here are the answers, so you can skip the wait.* A question: *What is the one thing you wish we did differently? Reply and tell us. We read every message.*

Why the rules: an AI helper may invent a discount you never offered, make up opening hours, or sound like every other business. You are the one who has to stand behind what it posts.

Step 5: the check before you schedule the first post

1. Check every connected channel is the right account.
2. Open the preview on your phone and read it the way a customer would.
3. Click every link in every post.
4. Check the time zone, so 9 in the morning is 9 where your customers are.
5. Schedule only one week at first and watch what really goes out.
6. Read each post out loud.

Ten minutes, once. A wrong post that goes out at 9 in the morning is a post you cannot quietly take back.

What it costs

Option	List price on the page
Buffer Free (up to 3 channels, 10 scheduled posts per channel)	$0
Buffer Essentials (1 channel)	$5 per month, billed yearly
Later Starter	$18.75 per month, billed yearly
Metricool Free (up to 20 posts a month)	$0
Metricool Starter	From $20 per month

Prices are list prices before tax from each company's page on November 4, 2026, and can change.

Honest limits

- None of these tools was run on a live account for this guide.
- This guide cannot rate how well any AI feature writes, because none was tested.
- Plans and prices change often, so open the page before you decide.
- No tool knows which posts get a real reply. That part is yours.

DO THIS

Do not buy anything this week. Make a free account on Buffer or Metricool, connect one channel, and schedule your first week with the prompt above and the check. If you hit the 10 post limit, the 20 post limit, or you need a team to approve posts, then look at a paid plan. If a tool charges per channel, count your channels before you buy.

What Fynl.io is

One portal a small business runs itself on, instead of five subscriptions that do not talk to each other.

- A CRM and pipeline that shows every lead and where it stopped
- A calendar clients can book straight into
- Quotes, contracts and invoices, with deposits taken up front
- A website and form builder, so the enquiry lands in the same place
- Your Gmail connected, so the whole thread sits on the contact
- Automations for the follow-up you keep forgetting to send

The AI runs on **your own Claude or ChatGPT API key** — no markup on it. No SMS or phone calls yet. $49/month per business, $149 Agency, and we move your contacts over for you.

Fynl.io is for the business around the post: one portal for your contacts, calendar, quotes, invoices and email, with AI that runs on your own key. Fynl is not a replacement for the scheduling tools compared in this guide.

Sources

- Buffer pricing — https://buffer.com/pricing
- Later pricing — https://later.com/pricing
- Metricool pricing — https://metricool.com/pricing