

The Social Side of Business



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The Social Side of Business

When you think about social media you probably already picture Facebook, Twitter and maybe even Pinterest in your mind. But, the truth is, social media is much more than these networks. It's what you do with any platform that makes it "social media". It's another way for you to distribute your information and communications to a wider audience. But it's also a way for you to communicate with your current customers. Even your blog is social media when you open it up for comments and create interactive dialog.

Social media networks, individually, are a collection of users with their own demographic data. This knowledge can be a very powerful positive force for your business growth. Social media networks allow a user to interact with persons, corporations, small business, and even for the user to create a band of followers, fans, cheerleaders (pick your term) that can become evangelistic about your products and services. This creates tremendous opportunity for you as a business owner to interact with your customers, potential customers and the public at large regarding your brand, products and / or services.

Why Use Social Media?

While social media, in and of itself, will not generate income immediately, it will give you a new way to reach your audience. It's modern day, "word of mouth" marketing and it

will help you expand your business reach exponentially. You can make contact with your audience where they enjoy congregating and expressing themselves. In other words, it's almost as good as going into their home to talk about your offerings.

Never before in history has technology allowed such real-time access to customers. The only thing that comes close is the telephone, but phone calls are often seen as intrusive and unwelcomed whereas social media encompasses the best of permission marketing while giving you one-on-one access to your customers. In other words, they invite you in and can stop following you anytime they choose.

If you want to be close to your market, social media is the way to do it. What's more your customers are likely using the networks on their mobile devices, which means you have very close access to your customers anytime of the day or night. What could be better than that?

What Makes Word of Mouth Marketing so Powerful?

Often called the single most powerful tool a business owner has, word-of-mouth can make or break a business. Word-of-mouth marketing is free. It is simply a person talking about your company to another person. Hopefully, what they are saying is good, because people take the advice of those whom they're close to. If their best friend says "use this business" they will. Not only that, they'll usually like it or hate it the same as their friend.

Word-of-mouth marketing is considered to be more trustworthy than other forms of marketing because advice from people you know, or feel that you know, is taken over advice from a known paid advertisement, or someone you don't feel that you know. It's one reason why companies love to get actors to promote their products and services. People erroneously believe that they know the actor and take his or her word for the product or service being top notch. In fact, word-of-mouth recommendations make up over 50 percent of any one person's decision to buy, or not buy, for most of the population.

What's great about word-of-mouth marketing is that with social media, you can have more control over the buzz. If you do it right, you'll have an army of fans / marketers / cheerleaders / evangelists doing the marketing for you. What's more, it's free. You don't have to pay them. They'll do it willingly. Social media will help you build up loyalty of

your current customers to the point that they will willingly, and for free, tell others about you.

If you have a long-term plan in place you'll build a loyal following, create evangelistic fans, and strengthen your brand in the process. But, there is a process to use that will ensure that you are not annoying your market but instead are creating those loyal followers you need for word-of-mouth marketing.

Ways To Use Social Media

Social media can be used in many ways individually and simultaneously. How you use social media will depend on your particular needs and focus, but there are five ways in which you can use social media for your business.

1. **Connect to new customers** -- You'll have access to a lot more people via various social media networks, this means that you'll have the opportunity to connect with that many more people. Once you create your strategy you'll know how you'll connect to new people and what your purpose will be. It could be just to expand brand awareness, or it could be to infiltrate new markets.
2. **Relate to current customers** -- One of the best functions of social media is to connect with your current customers. After all, your best source of business is the customers you've already got. It costs a lot less to keep a customer than to get a new one. Plus, they can become some of your biggest cheerleaders, essentially marketing your company for you -- again -- for free.
3. **Build your brand** -- Sometimes social media is used to expand and build brand recognition. You'll create multiple communities on various networks, ensuring that your logos and tag line are apparent, then you'll formulate a strategy to increase brand awareness via advertising, giving away something free or having a contest.
4. **Observe your competition** -- One of the unsung benefits of using social media is the ability to see what your competition is up to. You can emulate them and do them one better if you're paying attention. For instance, if your competition is trying to handle buzz about something they did wrong, you can come out with a campaign about how you've always done xyz right. You never need bring up their name.
5. **Manage the buzz** -- Even if you're not using social media right now, there is buzz about you and your business (if only the generic version of it) somewhere out there. If you have a social media presence you can have more control over what

is being said and even direct the entire conversation. You can incorporate various social media monitoring tools and find out what your market wants faster.

A quick note to the wise -- Social media cannot replace your website. You need a great website that is full of important, useful and relevant content as well as descriptions of your products and services. Your website needs several factors to be ready for the onslaught of social media activity:

- ✓ **Interactive** -- Open those comments. Don't be afraid to have comments on your blog and website, this is the best way you have to engage directly with your customers.
- ✓ **Mobile Friendly** -- That's right, today most people are using social media via mobile devices, imagine how disappointed they will be if they can't read your website.
- ✓ **User-Friendly Navigation** -- If your visitors can't get around your site, then they're not going to stay long.
- ✓ **Targeted Message** -- Your website's message needs to be targeted toward your ideal customer and no one else. It's a mistake to try to be all things to all people. You must know your purpose and reason for being and express it.
- ✓ **CTA** -- All sites, like all blog posts, messages, and content needs a call to action. If you don't have a call to action no one is going to buy stuff, join your list, "like" you, or donate to your cause. You have to ask them.
- ✓ **Great Content** -- Your site must have great content that is engaging, useful, targeted and keyword rich written for human readers. Don't patronize your visitors by feeding them fluff that is only meat for a search engine.
- ✓ **Share Buttons** -- Make it easy for your visitors to share your website with friends via a variety of share buttons for all the social media networks that you use.
- ✓ **Contact Us** -- Always have a way, that is very clear, that your visitors can contact you. People trust you more if they feel that they have easy access to you.

Finally, be useful to others on your website. Make your website about them, and about how you can solve their problems within your niche. Your site is not about you. People want to know what's in it for them, not what's in it for you.

Getting Started Using Social Media for Marketing

It's important to get started on the right foot when it comes to social media marketing. Even though the barriers to entry are low, it still takes a lot of time and effort to embark

on a successful social media marketing campaign -- if you expect it to work. Let's go over ten tips for the successful implementation of social media marketing.

1. **One thing at a time** -- Don't try to join all social media networks at once. Do one network at a time. Figure out through study which one will be most effective to get started with. Most of the time it's going to be Twitter or Facebook. But, if you have a super visual business consider starting with Pinterest. Once you have one social network running and are comfortable with how it looks, and how you're running it, then and only then add another network.
2. **Define your goals** -- It's essential to decide what your goal is for each type of campaign you run on each social media networks. You may have several goals, increase traffic to your website, get more signups for your newsletter, etc... but each goal has its own path to success and are separate campaigns.
3. **Develop your tactics** -- Once you've identified your goals, now you can decide what tactics you'll use to reach those goals. You want more newsletter sign ups? Are you going to give away something free for each sign up? Have a contest? What are you going to do to reach the goal? Be very specific. *"I'm going to post three times a day specific messages to encourage participation in my contest."*
4. **Take the time** -- Social media marketing strategy is not something that you'll see results from over night. It will take time and you will need to persevere and demonstrate great patience. However, if you have a plan and you implement the plan, "it" (whatever your goals were) will happen.
5. **Test it out** -- Everything you try won't work, it's the nature of the ever-changing social media landscape. What worked yesterday may not work today. It's important to experiment and test new ideas to see what works and what doesn't work. You can always adjust as you learn more.
6. **Provide value** -- Probably one of the most important tips of all, your content should be valuable to the readers. It should be interesting, targeted, and what your audience craves. Otherwise, they'll not read and they will stop following you.
7. **Keep up the Conversation** -- Without interactive conversations social media is no longer "social". It's important to respond to people who make comments, and truly interact with your audience. Engaging with your followers is an essential element of using social media for marketing.
8. **Reward your followers**-- To keep people interested in following you and interacting with you, have contests and games with rewards for those who are active participants. If a special is only offered on xyz social media network to only those who follow you, they'll feel special and exclusive.
9. **Measure your results** -- It's not only important to keep measuring results, so that you can toss what is not working and keep what is, it's important to make

sure that you are measuring the right things. If your goal was to get more newsletter sign ups, did you succeed in reaching that goal with the methods you used? You can have 1 million followers on any given social media network, but if they're not actively engaged and acting in a manner that you'd hoped with your various campaigns, then you'll need to figure out why.

10. **Automate responsibly** -- We all like a good plugin or app to help make our lives a little easier. That is especially true when it comes to social media marketing automations. But, the problem is, you can use too much automation, and not get involved personally replying to comments and that is a mistake. Automate such things as posting blog posts to your social media, but reconsider that auto gift PDF file on Twitter as a "thank you" for following.

By following and considering these ten tips you'll make a bigger impact in your social media marketing efforts regardless of which channels you choose to engage. Now let's take a look at various social media networks and discuss the ins and outs of each.

Facebook-- Liking Your Way to the Top

Facebook is a very powerful social media network that has over a billion users. You'll only want to market to a small portion of these 1 billion users, but knowing that the reach spans every country and continent is an important component in using Facebook as a channel in your social media marketing campaigns.

It's important that you are where your customers are, and your customers are on Facebook. They spend several hours on social media networks like Facebook. In fact, they're often using Facebook right alongside doing other activities such as watching TV or attending the movies. People literally have Facebook at their fingertips with their mobile devices active and available to share anything that they feel like sharing at any given time, day or night.

The important thing to remember with Facebook, like with other social media, it's all about the conversations you can have with your customers and future customers. It's not about shouting from the roof tops about your sales, or your products, or yourself. It's about freely giving of yourself to your community, and in return, your community will come to love you and buy what you're offering because they trust you. The marketing aspects are almost an aside but they are there. They're just not overt market square screaming "Peaches, Oranges, Apples" at the top of your lungs.

Instead, you will create a sense of community and belonging and a desire among your followers and "likes" to emulate you and do what you do, buy what you buy, and be more like you. You want to attract people to you and your content without shoving it down their throats. You will simply be inviting people to consume your content, share with their friends, and the cycle will continue.

You won't send people directly to a sales page from Facebook like you would if you posted an advertisement. No, you'll send them to some valuable content. That content could be in the form of an article, a blog post, a video, a slide share, a webinar, an image, a free eBook, and the list goes on and on. But, it won't be a sales page. The wonderful Facebook platform allows you to do this without much in the way of learning. Facebook is very intuitive.

It's all about the content. As you know everything online is about content. Content is what makes the Internet work. You share some valuable content, your reader then shares it with someone else, and that person shares it, and so on. It's word-of-mouth marketing again. Buying decisions today are based on how a person feels about the company or person selling the item rather than just the item itself. That doesn't mean you should not provide topnotch products and services -- no -- **It means that not only do you have to provide absolutely top of the line products and services, but your audience needs to like you too.**

So you need great content, but you also need the social proof to back it up. You need to have a great reputation among your target audience. Social media like Facebook is a way to attract new customers, but also a way to communicate with current customers to keep them happy and retain them.

On Facebook you should create the following:

- ✓ **A Personal Profile** -- Everyone has to start here, you can't have any of the others without creating a personal profile. The benefits of having a personal profile are that you will be showing the face behind the business. You can then become a public figure, build trust or network with others like you while enjoying the ability to create and share interests.
- ✓ **A Business Page** -- Your business page will allow you to brand your business, create ads, promote your blog posts, build landing tabs, advertise those tabs, determine and identify with your audience, build followers (likes), communicate

with customers and prospects, create offers and discounts, connect with your audience, have an e-commerce tab, share pinned posts, and more.

- ✓ **One or More Facebook Groups** -- Facebook groups allow you to build a community, however, you will be limited to how many people can join your group. Look to Facebook for guidance on that as these numbers change. A group allows you to build a community, offer support, create a network, build a customer database, and increase engagement and conversation. Facebook groups can be open, closed and even secret.

Once you have created the above then you can move on to learn more about landing tabs, Facebook ads, and promoted posts.

- **Landing Tabs** -- An important part of a well designed Facebook Page, landing tabs give you a chance to make a good impression on the Facebook users who look at your page. You can use a landing tab to customize what your viewers see when they first come to your Facebook Page. Instead of them going to the wall, they can be directed to a Facebook tab which can function as a landing page that collects an email address for a newsletter, offers a discount, gives access to a catalog, or offers pretty much whatever you want to offer.
- **Facebook Ads** -- With Facebook Ads its super simple to create an advertisement that is targeted to your specific audience. There are so many different ways to set up ads. You can use news feed ads, side margin ads, and even use ads to get leads by offering something to your readers for free that they perceive as valuable. What's more, you can totally customize the audience who sees your advertising down to exactly who you choose by uploading an email address list. Even if you don't have a list to use, you can still target your advertising like never before by narrowing down the demographic who will see your ads.
- **Promoted Posts** -- This is an excellent way to get more new people to see your posts and updates on Facebook. It doesn't matter what your goal is, though you should specify what it is: More "likes", more engagement, more sales. By creating promoted posts your fans will be more likely to see what you have to say and this can be very important. It might seem odd to target your own fans but this is the best way to use promoted posts. Target your "likes" or fans and you'll create real action.

The take away with Facebook is that it's a very powerful social network that you cannot miss out on when using social media to promote your business. The Facebook platform is very versatile and for many marketers works a lot better than the others combined.

But, you'll need to set goals, test out your ideas, and measure the results to see what works for you and your audience.

Twitter -- Marketing in 140 Characters or Less

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform where you share or "tweet" short messages to your followers. The messages are limited to 140 characters or less. It can be challenging coming up with something clever to say that engages readers to act in that small amount of space but creative people are seeing great results by adding Twitter to their online social media marketing efforts.

Twitter allows you to follow anyone you want to follow, and they can choose to follow you back or not. Twitter does frown on pages that don't follow people back. That's not to say you must follow everyone back, but as long as they're not spammers it is advisable to do so. Twitter allows you to build relationships with people whom you've never met and can create connections you never dreamed possible.

Twitter is a great place to conduct market research. After you've created an account you can conduct a Twitter Search to see if anyone's talking about your business, your name, or even your product or a generic product. In marketing circles this is called: Listening. Listening is an important aspect of marketing with social media that is often over looked. Never underestimate the power of listening to your market and your competition.

On Twitter, like all other social media, it's important to create a solid profile with your picture. People on Twitter prefer to see people, than things, so keep that in mind. Then when deciding what to post on Twitter, remember that it's not really about you, it's about what your market wants to hear. What is interesting to them? What can you share with your audience that they would like? You can share ideas about your topic, point out interesting things related to your audience and niche, and help those who are throwing out questions with answers if you have them.

It's important to have a good mix of non business ideas in your Tweets too, as long as they're related to your audience. That will take a lot of study to get it right, but you'll know when you've done something wrong on Twitter. People will un-follow you. It can be confusing to figure out what to Tweet about but if you concentrate on adding value, communicating and sharing freely you can't go wrong.

Twitter is as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. **Ask Questions** -- Starting a conversation with other Twitters via a question is a great way to engage as many people as possible. People love giving their thoughts and opinions, just make sure your question is relatable to your target audience.
2. **Contribute Value** -- Share your blog posts, give good advice, post interesting pictures, and informative infographics. Any content that you share should be valuable, appropriate and targeted to your audience.
3. **Share Other People's Stuff** -- While this may seem counterproductive if someone shares something, or you find something online that your target audience would enjoy, share it on Twitter. It helps endear you to others, and makes you seem less "all about you."

Twitter is a very fast paced moving conversation. You're not going to be able to answer every last Tweet or acknowledge every last @yourname, but you can use some automation techniques and even outsource some of your Twitter activity to a Virtual Assistant to help you do it right, but for the most part it's okay if you can't do everything as long as you are active and try to be polite and reciprocate.

It's important before you start to understand how you're going to use Twitter and what your Twitter strategy is and what your tactics will be to help you implement your strategy. Without knowing where you're going you're going to get lost. Create a strategy to reach all of your online marketing goals no matter which social media channels you use. Your Twitter strategy will be different from your Facebook strategy. While both are huge, they are very different in the way you use them and how the users feel about how others use it.

Create a cohesive brand that you use on all your social media channels. You should have the same logo, same colors, same fonts, same graphics and tag lines across all channels, where the difference will be is in what and how you choose to share information. By adding a Twitter button to your blog, and other online collateral you'll make it easy for your audience to share your work too.

Create a professional profile and a nice Twitter background to help you stand out from the crowd. Use keywords within your profile and make it look really professional. If you aren't sure how to go about doing this there are plenty of professionals who design and set up Twitter for businesses for less than 50 dollars.

Use a tool like TweetDeck.com to help you arrange your feeds, focus your efforts, schedule tweets while you're on vacation, monitor and manage all your accounts, and stay up to date with the Tweets of others via alerts. Finally, ensure that every Tweet you send out has a reason behind it and is not just adding garbage to the interwebs. There is enough garbage on Twitter, and for the most part, it's ignored. Stand out, be different, be unique and most importantly -- be relevant.

LinkedIn -- Where the Professionals Meet

LinkedIn.com is a social professional network that allows individuals and companies to network via groups, job postings, discussions and more. LinkedIn.com is a lot more serious and buttoned up than Facebook or other social media networks. It's a place to share the serious side of business. You won't be sharing funny family stories on LinkedIn.com, but you will be sharing that 30 page whitepaper you wrote.

Like many social media networks the profile is very important. But, on LinkedIn.com it becomes central to your success when using LinkedIn.com as a marketing channel. To create a stand-out profile fill out the profile completely as you're prompted to do as you move through creating your LinkedIn.com account. Include your full name, and a professional headshot. Ensure that you show both your first and last name. You're not going to be anonymous on LinkedIn.com. In fact, you really shouldn't be anonymous anyplace on the net today.

Once you get your name and picture up, you'll need to focus on personating your headline. This is the part that people see under your picture and name when they view your profile. It's best not to have your job part of your headline, but instead, what you do as your headline.

If you work for xyz company just don't include that company here, instead include your job duties such as: Marketing Strategist, Inbound Marketing Expert, English Teacher, Content Writer, Virtual Assistant, and so forth. If you have more than one thing that you want to highlight in your headline use the " | " symbol called a pipe. Using the pipe symbol you can separate your headline descriptions better and make it look more organized than commas. It will look like this:

Marketing Expert | Social Media Expert | Facebook Expert

This looks better than using commas or colons and works for separation of the words for search engines too. Plus, it lets you keep it simple without using long, overpowering sentences which may not show up properly on a profile search.

Next, add all your work history. This is just like a resume, so don't put the club positions, or things like that here. Put only work history. There is more space to put involvement in social clubs and school activities. The work history area is only for work history. Just follow the prompts after you click "add a position" and go from there. It's not difficult, you should probably have your resume nearby for reference.

Don't forget to customize your LinkedIn.com URL. This will link directly to your profile and you can include it on your business cards and in your email signatures. Just click the edit link beside your public profile page and easily add in the customization for the URL. Don't try to be clever, if possible use your own name or a variation on your name it is taken. If you use something like xyzcompanymarkeing you may not be with that company one day, or your business might change focus. If you use your name, you'll always be your name.

Enter in your business website URLs next to Additional Information. This is where you'll include all that extra stuff about things you did outside of school, and any volunteer work you are doing. But, you'll also put your websites there and you can indentify if they're personal websites, blogs, or company websites. You can also choose "other" and put in your own title which is a great time to use keywords.

When you're done creating your profile and it looks how you want it to look, now you should ask people that you know for recommendations and referrals. Ensure that you edit the language that LinkedIn.com's message is so that you can remind the person of what you've done for or with them. This will help the person writing the recommendation know what to say as well. The more specific you can be, the better.

Join groups, and connect with people that you know, share information that is relevant and important to your target audience and colleagues. This is the best way to grow your connections. You can do all this with the free LinkedIn.com account. There are more features with the paid account, but start with the free account and wait to decide if you want to upgrade after you've been using it for a while. Don't try to add new people all at once, give it time because you want to be taken seriously on LinkedIn.com.

Google+ -- Creative Ways to Use Hangouts

Google+ Hangouts is a place where you and like minded-individuals can broadcast, video conference, record the event, and if you don't have a computer handy you can dial in with your mobile device to connect with others. There are endless possibilities with Google+ Hangouts for your business.

- **Teach Something** -- You can host a Google Hangout to teach a lesson about something. By choosing the Hangout On Air option while only 15 people can take part, the public can watch it, many businesses have over 100 people viewing the Hangout.
- **Present Something** -- Want to present something to others you can use a Google On Air Hangout to present, and let others present too. Simply invite them into the Hangout before clicking "start broadcast". You can have up to 15 people "presenting". This can be exciting because you can record the event, edit it later, and use it in other venues.
- **Have a Team Meeting** -- Do you outsource work to contractors or have employees? If you want to do a brainstorming session that you can record and provide each attendee with a copy of the recording Google Hangouts is the perfect place to do it. Just make it private via the "Restrict Hangouts" link.
- **Have a Webinar** -- That's right, you don't need to invest in expensive webinar software to have a free webinar on Google+ Hangouts. You can share your expertise with many people using Google Hangouts On Air, allowing you to broadcast the webinar to many. What's more is that it's recorded and ready for you to edit immediately after your webinar is over.
- **Coach Privately** -- You can run a restricted Google+ Hangout for one to 15 people enabling you to host a private coaching session for only those who are invited. This can be something you've charged for in advance as part of a coaching package. Sessions can be recorded and shared with the client for them to refer back to.
- **Give a Press Conference** -- That's right, you can use Google+ Hangout to announce new events and products as well as answer questions. This can be a great way to get out any news that your company has.
- **Create Recorded Video Interviews** -- The technology easily enables you to create recordings of video interviews. You can then upload the video to your page, as well as to YouTube.com seamlessly. This can be content for a blog, a book, or to use in a private membership site. It's up to you.

- **Talk to Your Clients** -- Many people are used to using Skype to chat with clients or would-be clients, but sometimes Skype doesn't work well, but Google+ Hangouts work well and is another place you can talk to clients before you start working for them or as a way to provide client support as you complete their project.

There are many ways to use Google+ Hangouts for business. It's important to go try out the technology. If you're already using service such as Skype, GoToWebinar, and others you might be surprised to learn what Google+ has in store for your business needs.

Pinterest -- Pinning Your Way to More Sales

Pinterest is a graphic centric bookmarking website that allows users to "pin" images and videos to virtual pinboards. Others can follow you, or your particular pinboards and re-pin the content to their own pinboards that you share. Because Pinterest is very visual in nature not all businesses need to use Pinterest. However, if you can find a way to visually create content that is worth sharing with your target audience then Pinterest could become your new best friend.

Before you decide to use Pinterest in your business you must work out the following:

- **Determine Your Strategy** -- If you have the steps you're going to take planned out before you start you're likely to experience more success. What kind of boards are you going to create? What kind of content do you want to put in each board? Try to think of at least five different boards that you can create and know the content you'll put in it before you start.
- **Create a Great Pinterest Profile** -- Don't hide your profile from search engines, and ensure that you use keywords where you can inside your profile where possible. Remember keywords and #hashtags are very important on Pinterest so that people can find your profile and / or pins when they do a search.
- **Create Pinable Content** -- Remember the content should be a graphic, or a video. If it's not a beautiful graphic no one is going to look at it, much less re-pin it. If your business is word centric you will need to think outside the box. Can you make an awesome infographic from a blog post? Can you post some beautiful videos? And, remember -- All the content you post needs to be engaging, relevant to your business, and focused on your target audience.

- **Interact With Others** -- Like with all social media, interaction is key. Always re-pin, "like", and comment on pins that you enjoy. You can also have contests where you pin a picture of participants and winners to a board. Whatever you can do to increase the interaction on social media it's always a good thing.

You have a lot to think about when it comes to Pinterest and whether it's the right place for your business to be. It's not right for everyone, just like all social media sites aren't right for everyone either. Be honest with yourself and your ability to either hire someone to create wonderful graphics for your Pinterest boards and then create a plan and just do it. You'll be surprised at how much you get in return when it's right.

Instagram -- Picture Perfect Marketing

Instagram has been around since 2010, and is one of the fastest growing social media tools. It was first introduced as a way to add interesting filters to your images taken through your mobile phone. Soon after it was released, millions of people jumped on board, and businesses realized the marketing potential. Each month, there are approximately 100 million users of Instagram, so it is no surprise that small and large businesses are utilizing the many benefits.

Here are some ways to use it for picture perfect marketing.

- **Learn How to Use Hashtags** -- Similar to using Twitter, hashtags (#phrase) are used to help people find your pictures. When using Instagram, you can use hashtags in the picture's description. So if you type #beach into the description of your picture and someone is searching for an image of a beach, yours pops up.

This works great for marketing, as someone may be looking for a product or service, to which your image and website link comes up. If you are avid Twitter (and now Facebook) user, you already understand the basic fundamentals of hashtags. Begin using them on your Instagram descriptions. The same goes for your Instagram profile.

- **Engage With Others** -- Like other social media networks, marketing on Instagram is only successful if you engage with others. In order to get consumers to follow you on Instagram, you need to follow them. Start by finding Instagram accounts of people in your niche market.

Whether that is single moms 25-40 or teenage boys 13-15, you have a market of people on Instagram. By following them and interacting with them on a regular basis, they start taking notice to you. Comment on their pictures, and engage in the discussions relevant to your niche, or what you are an expert in. By continuing to engage on a daily basis, you grow your followers and marketing potential.

- **Share Images of Products** -- If your business is in selling products online or physical products, Instagram is perfect for you. Get some interesting pictures of new products like shoes, clothing lines, jewelry or sporting equipment, and post on Instagram with relevant hashtags. This is going to announce to your followers and other Instagram users what products you are currently promoting. It is a fast way to get these newest products seen by the masses.
- **Hold Contests** -- Another way to use Instagram for marketing is by having a contest. People love winning free stuff, and contests can be a lot fun. They also have the benefit of getting everyone engaged, having users announce your Instagram account to others, and gaining a huge following with one simple contest.

For example, you can create a hashtag for the contest, and ask your users to post a certain picture (you choose the subject) with that hashtag you chose. At the end of the contest, look up all images with the hashtag you created, and use an online random generator, like random.org to choose a winner. The winner can win a free product, or whatever else you decided on.

There are dozens of ways to use Instagram to your benefit. Since online users love interacting with others and looking at interesting images, it is a great step toward increasing your fans, followers and potential customers.

Vine.co -- Get Creative with Micro-videos

Vine.co is a fairly new social media tool, but one that is inspiring to rise quickly. It was released by Twitter, the micro-blogging platform. Vine.co is Twitter's micro-video platform, allowing for mini videos to share with friends and followers. Users everywhere have been having fun with Vine, sharing funny, interesting, creative and educational videos with their friends. You can find benefits to Vine as a consumer or a business.

- **Vine is Easy to Use** -- The first thing to know about Vine is that it is very easy to use. Using your mobile phone, go to your app store and search for the Vine app. Once it has downloaded and installed (it's free), launch the app and sign in using your Twitter ID. Then all you have to do is press the video camera button, record your video, click to save and preview, and upload it once it's complete. Vine is currently available for iOS and Android operating systems.
- **Advertisements** -- One of the ways a business can utilize Vine is by creating short video advertisements. These short form ads are great because most people are willing to watch a 20-30 second video advertising your product. Not much time is invested, they're easy to view in Twitter and you can add hashtags to allow people to search for what they're looking for. Recording and uploading a short ad for your business has never been easier.
- **Behind-the-Scenes** -- You can also use Vine's interface to have a short behind-the-scenes video. Take your phone behind the scenes of a new photo shoot, to shoot your warehouse or showroom, or show your offices, employees and special events. This is another popular way to give consumers an inside look into your business and what you do.
- **Series Videos** -- Need to offer your followers longer videos? You can still use Vine by splitting them up into several, shorter-length videos. This is easy to do and is actually more enticing to others than a long video. Create videos about 30 seconds long in a series. So instead of a 5 minute video, you have 10 videos in a series, with just 30 seconds each. Chances are, people will view all 10 of them and not get bored or lose interest like they would watching a video that was 5 minutes long.
- **Live Coverage** -- Are you having a special event? Show people what they're missing by shooting different short videos, allowing for live coverage. Use the Vine app to create a few videos of the more entertaining parts of the event, and add them to Twitter. Followers who couldn't be at your event still get to watch these little glimpses into the occasion, party or meeting.

There are many uses to using Vine for personal and business use. It works much the same way as Twitter, except it is using video. These aren't meant to be professionally edited videos, but fun little clips to tease your viewers, show glimpses into your daily life, or behind the scenes in your office.

SlideShare -- Presenting Your Ideas Clearly

SlideShare is a place that you can share documents, videos, webinars, PDFs or presentations. SlideShare has been around since 2006 and is often compared to

YouTube, except meant for slide presentations. SlideShare presentations are often created with PowerPoint, Google Doc Presentations, SlideRocket, Prezi, or OpenOffice.org.

Anyone can sign up for a free account and add their slideshows of presentations or documents to the site. Currently, it is the largest presentation sharing site with 130 million views and 60 million visitors to the site every month.

Here are some tips for using SlideShare to your advantage and presenting your ideas clearly.

- **Avoid Being Text-Heavy** -- If all you wanted to present was long text, you could upload an article to your website. SlideShare should have a combination of text and imagery, preferably visual metaphors. Let your visitors see what you're presenting, rather than having to read it. You need to capture the reader's attention and keep it, so too much text is going to have the opposite effect. Find creative images to post on your presentation slideshows through SlideShare to keep them interested.
- **Use Keywords** -- Just like any other online content, you need to use the right keywords. Each description and slide in the presentation should have plenty of keywords for the niche market you're trying to attract. It is helpful to do your research beforehand on proper keywords to use, being careful not to keyword stuff and get slapped by Google. A 2 percent keyword density is a good place to start.
- **Have Short Presentations** -- Nobody wants to sit through a presentation that is 40 slides. Keep it short, usually between 5 and 15 slides. After about 10 or 15, people start getting bored and no longer want to keep viewing the presentation. Get your most important facts in the first few slides, but don't give everything away too soon. This way, you're giving them a reason to finish the presentation but just in case they need to leave before it's complete, they got some valuable information.
- **Write it on Paper First** -- Save yourself some time and create your presentation on paper first. Write down notes for what you want to put on each slide, including what images to use. This lets you get everything organized and ready to go before you actually need to create it digitally. This saves a lot of time and having to go back and forth, making sure you got everything.
- **Include a Call-to-Action** -- This is a step many new users of SlideShare forget to do. On your very last slide of the presentation, always include a call-to-action.

This can be asking them to visit your website, include a link to your site, blog or social media networks, or have a button you created with html in order to then perform something further. The point of SlideShare is to provide valuable information, but also to give them a reason to learn more from you. For businesses or website owners, SlideShare presentations should end with you instructing the reader on what to do next.

SlideShare is a great way to provide information to your readers. You will be able to further establish your expertise on any subject with a well-made, clear and well-marketed SlideShare.

Youtube.com -- Tips for Making Viral Videos

It's the dream of most entrepreneurs to have a video go viral. But, what if I told you that usually it's not an accident that a video went viral that instead, it was part of a well crafted plan? You might not believe me, but you're going to have to accept that a video going viral is by design most of the time with few exceptions. Once you accept this, you'll realize that you too can have a viral video.

Since more than 80 percent of online marketers use video as part of their arsenal of content, if you're not doing it, you need to start. It's an excellent way to get to new audiences, as well as create new content out of old content.

1. **Create High Quality Videos** -- If you do your research you'll discover that most viral videos were created professionally and are less than 90 seconds long. This doesn't mean you have to have a professional studio, but you do need to keep in mind that quality does matter. Thankfully, there is inexpensive video equipment you can purchase, as well as free editing software. (**Hint:** You can also outsource it!)
2. **Keep the Product in the Background** -- Don't make the video centered on the product, it won't go viral. It needs to be centered on the needs the products solve, rather than the product itself. This can be difficult to do but if you're a little creative you can do it.
3. **Surprise or Shock the Viewer** -- If something is shocking, funny, or surprising it's more likely to get shared which is essential to a video going viral. It's okay to be different, and in fact preferable to just doing the same-old-same-old thing all the time. Humans are special and funny and different and that's all good. It's okay to show your wacky side and be different.

4. **Promote it** -- Yes, after you've come up with the idea, crafted it, and it's perfect, after you put it up, that's not all there is to it. You must promote it. Send it to all your friends, your current customers, and all your social media accounts and ask people to share it. Draft and send a press release too. Blog about it and ask your connections to blog about it. (Provide the words for them!) Submit your video as an answer to someone's popular video. If you don't do it, no one will.

Consider using a service such as Oneload.com to simplify uploading your video to many different networks. People have seen success with the free choice. It will help you go viral by getting your video up on many different networks at once. As you see, there is more to creating a viral video than just the process of making the video. It's also important to make a great video that you're proud of, and promote the heck out of it.

Tips to Spark Engagement on Social Media

No matter which social media networks you choose to use, it's important to engage with your community. Without a back and forth effort the network is not social. Without the social activity no one is paying attention. Therefore, it's up to you to find ways to truly engage the community on whatever social media you're using.

- ✓ **Ask Questions** -- Using social media to ask questions of your audience is a great way to encourage engagement. If you promise to randomly select a winner, or give a prize to the best answer you'll get even more answers to your questions.
- ✓ **Use Keywords & #Hashtags** -- Even Facebook has rolled out the use of #hashtags so use them to attract new audiences and encourage engagement with your current audience. Some ideas are to ask users to share during events using a special #hashtag so that you can find their comments, then award one of them a prize.
- ✓ **Never Forget the CTA** -- It's been mentioned before but bears repeating: Always have a **call to action** in every single share, blog post, or piece of content. If you don't ask people to share, comment, or "do something" then they likely won't.
- ✓ **Use Good Headlines** -- A good headline means that your headline catches the eye, is relevant to what you're talking about, and has keywords in it. It may mean you have to take a moment to think about it, but the time will be well spent in terms of engagement.
- ✓ **Always Answer Questions** -- If someone asks you a question it's important to answer them. You can either respond in print right there, or you can make it an

entire blog post. Alternatively, you can create videos for Youtube.com with the answer and share it via all your marketing channels.

- ✓ **Be Controversial** -- This can be a tricky pursuit but being controversial can cause people to talk and encourage engagement on a whole new level. Be ready for some backlash, and be sure you really want to do it.

There are many other ways to encourage social engagement like contests, for instance. But the most important tip to remember is to remember the CTA because you can do every one of these ideas without the CTA and it just won't work as well. Ask for engagement and interaction and you will get it.

The Best Way To Handle Negative Comments on Social Media

Whenever you get very interactive on social media you'll need to learn to expect some negativity. This is a given and in fact if you start getting a couple of negative comments here and there you can probably feel extra special and like you've finally arrived. Everything is not always going to be peaches and cream on the Internet. If it is, then you're not trying hard enough. But, there are ways to handle negative comments that will make you look more important than ever. You'll come off as the expert that you are, and make new friends in the process.

First, it's important to take the feeling out of the negative comment. Determine as unemotionally as possible whether the comment is true spam, or if they are saying something worth listening to and commenting on. If the comment has curse words or name calling see if you can cut it and paste it into a word-processing program and remove those parts. Read what's left. Is the criticism genuine, do they have a valid point, and can you answer that part without attacking?

If you can, then plan your answer carefully. You can answer in text in response to the comment or you can make a video for YouTube.com and post it as a response. It's up to you. But, do find a way to answer the negative comment in a way that makes you look better. If you can fix the problem, in a kind way, you'll endear yourself to others. You will have no need to attack the person back because your fans will do that for you while you appear above it all with your right-headed and rational response.

If you do determine that the comment is spam, and you can delete it, just delete it. No need to announce that you deleted it, just do it quietly without fanfare. You may have to also delete replies to the negative comment too, so be sure to look through them so that all comments associated with the spam are deleted too. Don't let yourself react

emotionally to this kind of negativity. While it will feel personal, it's not. It's just SPAM and some people love stirring up things to bring themselves attention. Don't give it to them.

Tools to Streamline Your Social Media Marketing Efforts

There are a lot of social media tools that can make your foray into the world of social media a little easier to take on. But remember, while automation can be a terrific time saver it can also mute the social factor in social media. Choose tools that make it easier for you to invest socially into social media.

- **Tweetdeck.com** -- This is an app that makes it easier to use Twitter as well as to gain insight into how well Twitter is working for your business. With features such as filters, scheduled Tweets, monitoring, and alerts you can do more in less time.
- **PostPlanner.com** -- This is a handy app that allows you to schedule your Facebook posts up to 6 months in advance. You can sign up and use it for free but you'll need to upgrade to one of the paid plans to get the most use out of it. This can be very useful to the person who wants to use Facebook to build their business.
- **Wildfireapp.com** -- This is an app that helps you deliver contests and manage contests for Facebook as well as other Facebook management tools such as Page Manager Plus, Messenger, Promotion Builder and Bedfellows.
- **Disqus.com** -- This is a plugin for your blog or website that enables discussions to take place that allow you to build a community right on your website or blog. You'll be able to monitor and comment on discussions easier than ever before.
- **Creative Live! Cam In Person HD Web Camera** -- (Amazon.com: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0040X3EG0>) . This is a great web cam if you plan to use your web cam in Google+ Hangout sessions or on Youtube.com. You can create movies, add special effects and more with this great web cam.
- **DSLR Camera** -- If you want to make professional looking (and sounding) videos for YouTube.com then you need a great camera. Buy the best DSLR Camera with interchangeable lenses, the ability to plug in an external microphone to record sound, as well as image stability, that you can afford.
- **SocialMention.com** -- You can use this social media search tool to find mentions of your company or a generic term for your product in all or selected social media types. You can also set up alerts via Social Media Alerts.

- **Virtual Assistants** -- I hate listing a VA as a "tool" but, honestly it's important to realize that a VA is another tool that you can use in your business although they are a human tool. Without realizing the benefits of hiring a VA or other type of outsourcer you could miss out on the success you seek.

Remember, if something costs you less to outsource or a plugin or app can do a time sucking task, giving you more time to do your money making activities, you're ahead of the game by outsourcing whether it's to a machine or a human. Also, you can't do everything. All CEOs have a staff, and help, you should too.

Finally, remember what's important about social media. Being social. Social media is nothing if it's not a conversation between users. It's your job to keep that conversation going. You can get far with social media marketing if you remember a few major points that is true of any social media you decide to use.

1. **Complete Your Profile** -- This is very important because without a profile that is a true depiction of yourself and your company you won't get very far. People don't like doing business with people they can't see and they'll view you as dishonest if your profile is incomplete.
2. **Know Your Target Audience** -- If your target audience is not using a particular social media then you don't need to use it for business either. It would be a waste of time. But remember that what is true today may not be true tomorrow. It's important to keep your eyes open and continually research your market.
3. **Create a Strategy** -- Don't rush into creating profiles on various social media accounts until you have created your over all social media strategy. This will entail setting goals, discovering your audience, and knowing what your message will be and which social media networks you will be involved in.
4. **Set Goals** -- Each social media you use may have many of the same goals, but each campaign you conduct should have its own goal be it to increase newsletter sign ups, sell more xyz product or service, expand brand awareness or something else entirely. Each campaign will be driven based on the goals and the knowledge you have of your target audience.
5. **Create Actionable Steps** -- From your strategy and your goals you'll need to create actionable steps that you can take each day of the year to reach your goals. Who will do it, when will they do it, and how will they do it, and what will they do? If you can't answer that you're not ready to continue.
6. **Automate** -- Whether this means outsourcing to a service provider (VA) or by using applications and plugins then do so. Just remember that using technology

or help does not release you from the important component of socialization on social media. Look at the time savings as more time to spend being social.

7. **Listen & Learn** -- Never stop listening to your audience or learning from your mentors about how to implement social media correctly into your business. You'll never regret taking the time to learn something new.
8. **Do It** -- After you've set your goals and created the steps necessary to reach your social media goals then it's important to actually carry out the steps. Stick to your plan and you'll see definite action which will eventually lead to massive action.
9. **Follow Up** -- It's important that for every action you take on social media that you follow it up with studying the metrics to see if your plan is working. It's working if it's reaching or succeeding your goals. If it's not doing that, you may need to retool your plans.
10. **Do it Again** -- Don't give up, keep going. You'll see the most results from multiple efforts and multiple goals for each social media account that you decide to use. Keep at it, perseverance is key when it comes to the social side of business and social media marketing.

Today social media is a vital business tool that you need to use to ramp up all your marketing efforts. Social media can give you a boost as well as make you feel more connected to your audience. You'll discover more about your audience than you ever thought possible creating a massive wave of new ideas that you never thought were achievable.

Internet Marketing Info Products

[Kindle Money Mastery](#) - Amazon Kindle Program

[Amazon Treasure Chest](#) - Over 3 Million Amazon Keywords Plus Amazon Site Setup Tutorials For Amazon Affiliates. This Is The Proven Step By Step System To Build Profitable Amazon Affiliate Sites.

[Brad Callen's New Ak Elite Ranking Software](#) - Get #1 Amazon Kindle Store Rankings For Your Kindle Books. Ak Elite Is The Ultimate Kindle Book Money Maker.

[Free Lifetime PLR Membership in Resell Rights Weekly](#) – Top Resell Rights Membership. Once You look over the value provided you'll know why.