



SOCIAL MEDIA
TOP 7 SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

generate^{UK}
digital marketing agency



Introduction

Thank you for downloading our **Top 7 Social Media Tips** article. This document is aimed at businesses that are beginning to explore Social Media and wanting to understand more about the opportunities available.

Social Media can be an overwhelming topic, this document cuts straight to the point and asks (and answers) seven key questions. It is our hope that once you have read through each question you will have a greater understanding of how Social Media can assist your business.

If you would like to speak to us about a Social Media Marketing Strategy, or indeed work with us to manage your campaigns; please do not hesitate to contact us. We are a friendly team and always happy to have an informal chat with you about your options.

Happy Reading!

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1) Where should we participate?

There are a large amount of different social media platforms out there and the number continues to rapidly grow. But how do you know which platforms are right for your company? First of all you need to outline clear objectives of what you want to achieve from your Social Media campaign. Each Social Media platform has a primary function, for example Youtube is primarily video sharing where as twitter is live interaction, choose a platform that meets your objectives technically. Another point to remember is that each platform has a different demographic of users.

Clearly define what target audience you are trying to reach then research each platforms' demographic, for example twitter has a higher average age of user than Facebook. If your target audience is B2B, Social Media can still be used as an effective marketing tool. You will find around 70% of all businesses have either a Twitter or Facebook account and do use Social Media to find new suppliers or even new partners. Don't feel that as a business you should have an account on every

Social Media platform, there is no need to spread your time and resources thinly, focus on two of three platforms to begin with and then you can consider more in the future.

2) How do I find and focus on my target audience?

There is no point applying resources to Social Media if you are not going to reach your target audience. In your Social Media plan define an example profile of your target consumer, include age, gender, likes, dislikes and attitude. Finding your target audience is relatively easy on most Social Media platforms. Not only do people publish likes, dislikes and other personal information they actually gather together united by common interests like shopping, sport or even location. This makes it easy to approach and engage with people who you know are interested in the products or services that you have to offer. It is vital that you define your target audience early on in the campaign, otherwise although you can appear to be doing well by having a large number of followers, you may not be fully engaging with them. You want to get to a stage where not only are you engaging with your consumers but where they are interacting back with you.

3) How do you monitor what people say about you?

Some companies are worried that Social Media can leave them vulnerable to bad publicity especially when you are openly allowing people to express their opinion of you in front of an online audience. However there are 3 key things you could do to prevent this from happening. Firstly and probably most obviously is maximising your privacy settings. Most platforms now have settings where you can gain complete control of what is displayed for the public to view. Secondly overwhelm small negative comments with an abundance of positive ones. If you regularly update your profile and engage with your users then small negative remarks will be overrun by all the other activity. Social Media is a two way interaction, if someone has a problem with your products or services why not treat Social Media as a customer service tool. Offer them help support and advice and see if you can change their negative experience into a positive one.

4) How do I measure results?

Many people want to see an ROI in Social Media in quite a short time space. Although you don't necessarily have to invest any money into Social Media, you do need to invest your time and as they say time is money! As per any campaign the best way to measure results is to set yourself clear objectives for what you want to achieve before you start out on your Social Media venture. In your objectives try and outline who your target audience are, what your main aim is (i.e. driving traffic to your website, spreading awareness, event promotion), what your online personality is going to be (i.e. funny, informative, talkative, authoritative) and what your split of post types are going to be (i.e. industry relevant links, internal news, customer relations). A quick tip to help measure results is to use a websites such as bit.ly or Hootsuite to shorten your links and then track the statistics of clicks. This will help you see how interactive your account is as well as seeing how popular the links you post are. This can help shape the future content of your posts. Once you have set your Social Media campaign objective you can embark on your voyage. To deliver accurate results from your Social Media you must use analytics to track your progress. Keep note of how many followers or fans you are getting a week, use Google analytics on your website and see how much traffic is coming from Social Media websites. It's really important to keep track of your followers/fans interaction with your company. You can do these by measuring the amount of messages, mentions, retweets, enquiries and clicks on links you get. The more time you spend on Social Media, measuring your results and growing your presence, the more likely you are to achieve your objectives, whether that is an increase in sales, lead generation or building customer relationships.

5) How much time should I spend on Social Media?

In this fast paced world time is money and it is the one thing people don't have much of. Social Media is a marketing tool in which you get out what you put in. On average users spend more time on Facebook than they do on Google. This is a great indication on arguing how much time you should spend on Social Media, if that's where your target audience are spending most of their time, than that's where you should be as well. Smaller Social Media accounts are easier to manage and therefore take less time out of your day. However if your brand or company is

fairly large with a decent following then more time will need to be spent interacting with you consumers. There are a few ways to cut down the amount of time you spend on your Social Media platforms. Hootsuite is a site initially set up to help people tweet. It has now spread across number of Social Media platforms. It is a place where you can update all your accounts without having to log into them all separately, you can message your users directly as well as find out where your name has been mentioned. The best time saving feature is pre-posting. You can set dates and times for particular posts to go out, this means you can set up your whole day's activity within half an hour in the morning. However the drawback of this is that you do lose the personal element that Social Media provides. It is good for a company to react when something happens online instead of just contributing news and updates.

6) How do I integrate my Social Media efforts?

Social Media can and should be integrated within a larger marketing campaign. Social Media sites are only a platform and without a campaign that is all they will ever be. It is quite simple to integrate Social Media into any campaign, for example it can help promote events, raise awareness, drive re-branding, offer promotions and launch competitions. By using these campaign tools you are giving your consumers a reason to be interested in your business as well as making you Social Media more interactive. To help increase your following on Social Media platforms you can add Social icons onto your website, emails and your business cards. This helps drive the awareness of your Social Media campaign and makes it easier for your consumers to find you! Social Media can also be integrated with SEO and Link building. Social Media websites provide great links to your main site and can drive a lot of traffic your way. Many business profiles on Twitter and Facebook currently rank high on Search Engines, this optimises your chances of being found on Google or Yahoo.

7) Where is the Future in Social Media?

Social Media has been around for almost 6 years now but only came into its stride in the past 2 years. In the last year it has become almost a necessity for companies to have a Social Media campaign and large brands are constantly competing to have

the latest innovative Social Media ideas. In 2010 I predict that Social media will become the norm for real time search. This is already becoming apparent as platforms like Twitter have a search bar built in to it so that users can search for hot news topics and the latest updates. It has already been seen that news stories have been posted on Twitter before reaching trusted news sources such as the BBC. As a business this means that you can get news and updates directly to your target audience faster than any other form of media. Instead of waiting for designs, copy approval, 3rd party agencies or any other delay you may face, you will be able to spread your message at the click of a button.

Although Social Media was designed with the intention of connecting people across the globe, it is now becoming more popular amongst local communities. If you are a SME than this could be a vital field for you to enter. Most towns will have a community of businesses on a Social Media platform. By interacting within these niche location groups, you can generate awareness of your services as well as networking with potential suppliers or partners. It has been know for a few small companies to ditch email and only use Social Media direct messaging. These are just a few examples of what Social Media can do for your business and why you should seriously consider using it.

CONCLUSION

If you have any further questions regarding social media or would like any help implementing your campaign please feel free to get in contact with us.

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