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1 What is Social Media Marketing?

Social media marketing, or SMM, is a form of internet marketing that implements various social media networks in order to achieve marketing communication and branding goals. Social media marketing primarily covers activities involving social sharing of content, videos, and images for marketing purposes.

Social media marketing is the process of promoting a product or service through the various social media channels. Social media is the term we use to describe platforms that bring people together for the exchange of information. The most popular social media platforms are: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, Tumblr, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon and YouTube.

What are the advantages of using social media

1-It's a fast way to spread the word : If you have a big fan base, you can tweet or post on Facebook and your message can instantly go to thousands of users around the World.

2-It's good for SEO -

3-It's a trend - Social media is a trend you cannot ignore if you want to stay close to your customers and in synch with the latest developments in marketing.

4-It's one of the ways to interact with your customers and find out what they want

2 **8 Essential Elements of a Social Media Marketing Strategy**

1: Identify Business Goals

Look closely at your company's overall needs and decide how you want to use social media to contribute to reaching them.

2: Set Marketing Objectives

Make your objectives specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. ensure your objectives are relevant to the company's overall vision.

3: Identify Your Ideal Customers

If you have an ideal picture of your customer in mind...their hopes, dreams, interests, fears, habits, age, income, occupation, motivations, and even eye color...you'll be able to target them much easier. You'll also be able to use their lingo and connect with them easier by speaking directly to them, even though they will not be in front of your face.

4: Research Your Competition

Researching your competition is another important element when setting up your social media strategy. I like to peruse other profiles of competitors to get an idea of who is doing what, and more importantly who is doing what successfully.

5: Choose Channels and Tactics

Many businesses create accounts on every popular social network without researching which platform will bring the most return. You can avoid wasting your time in the wrong place by using the information from your buyer personas to determine which platform is best for you.

6: Create a Content Strategy

Without great content social media is meaningless and without social media nobody will know about your content. Use them together to reach and convert your prospects.

7: Allocate Budget and Resources

Many businesses establish their budget first, and then select which tactics fit that budget. I take the opposite approach. I establish a strategy first, and then determine the budget that fits that strategy.

8: Assign Roles

3 How To Use Social Media To Market your Business

Social media marketing is anything but quick and easy. Here's what it really takes to promote your business on social platforms.

Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram—they're all free platforms businesses can use to directly engage with their audiences. But the idea that engagement is easy, free, and quick is false, according to Amy Vernon, social marketing consultant and cofounder and CMO of Predictable.ly. "One of the biggest false assumptions about using social media for marketing is that it doesn't cost money and it's fast," says Vernon. "Like all good things, 'getting the word out' takes time." Luckily, she says there are things you can do to help speed up the process.

BUILD YOUR CHANNELS EARLY

"Don't wait for launch day to create your social media channels," says Vernon. She suggests you start building your social media accounts—and your presence—early. But what can you share before you even launch your business? "Share information relating to your industry," says Vernon. "Become a resource of information. Connect with others in your industry and talk to them."

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH INFLUENCERS

"Just like your social media channels, you need to build relationships before you 'need' them," says Vernon. She suggests starting out by looking for journalists and bloggers who write about your business topic. "Read, comment on, and share their posts, if appropriate." Connecting and developing relationships with influencers and experts in your field of business will help you down the road. "When you approach them later, they'll be more likely to recognize your name, or at least be receptive, because it's obvious you know what they cover," says Vernon.

FIND YOUR AUDIENCE

If you haven't taken the time to build your networks and develop relationships ahead of time, Vernon suggests figuring out which social platform is best to reach your target market. Then she says you should study those platforms and, when possible, take your targeted advertising to those platforms.

"Find out who's talking about what, where they're talking about it, and then start listening there," says Vernon. Figuring out where to find your target market on social media does take time, and involves searching for people who are talking about topics that are important to you. There are many social listening tools out there that can help. She suggests FollowerWonk and SpiderQube

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Vernon suggests just joining the conversation. "You can participate in Twitter chats and Google Hangouts that relate to your business," she says. Or you can join an ongoing conversation about a topic by using popular hashtags on any platform. "You can't just jump into the conversation with,

'Buy my stuff!', but if you join in the conversation, you'll raise awareness."

4 Reasons Social Media Marketing Should Top Your To-Do List

These days, it isn't enough to have a website for your business - your digital storefront extends to social media marketing sites like Facebook and Twitter, and it's time to start capitalizing on it. If your company still doesn't have a Twitter account or a Facebook fan page, it's time to get with the program and bring yourself up to speed (or risk falling behind your competition).

1.) You get to see your target market, up close and personal. Part of what makes marketing with Facebook and Twitter so cool is the interaction you get to have with your customer base - you can read their tweets and status updates to get insights into their daily lives (and maybe adjust your marketing strategy as a result).

2.) You can respond to problems immediately. If there's a problem with your product or service, you want to know about it immediately. With the feedback you get in the process of social media marketing, you'll be the first to know when there are issues - and you can take steps to resolve them right away. Study after study has shown that consumers appreciate companies that respond to customer complaints (and don't hesitate to rant online to anyone who will listen when companies don't take the time to make things right).

3.) Your competition is Tweeting and Facebooking like crazy. The early bird gets the worm, and the sooner you start up Facebook and Twitter pages, the sooner you can start amassing a ton of fans and followers. This isn't something you want to fall behind the competition on, because it's much harder (and more expensive) to play catch up than it is to get in on the game early. Truth be told, your competition is probably already marketing with Facebook, and maybe even Twitter and LinkedIn, too.

4.) People are receptive to your messages. People view Twitter and Facebook as social networks, not marketing machines. As a result, they're less likely to see what you post as an advertisement and will be more likely to hear what you have to say.

5.) It will get you more sales. Not surprisingly, when you stay in front of your customer base, they're more likely to buy from you when they need the products you sell. Social media marketing doesn't just keep your company's name in front of potential buyers, but it also gives you the opportunity to constantly give them incentives to buy. Try Tweeting or posting coupon codes, good only to those who are your Facebook fans or Twitter followers (around The Content Factory, we call them "Tweeps"). You'll be surprised at how many people make purchases using the code!

6.) You will find customers you didn't know existed. If you follow specific keywords in Twitter, you can find people who are looking for the products you sell (and then direct them to your site). Using Twitter for marketing is great that way - telling people who want your products how to get them from your company is just an @ sign away.

7.) Customers you didn't know existed will find (and buy from) you. In the process of marketing with Facebook, you'll probably join a ton of groups related to your products, industry and customer base. By posting links in these groups, you'll help influence customers to check out your site. Post a link today, and two weeks later you might see a sale from it.

5 What is Digital Marketing ?

Digital marketing is the promotion of products or brands via one or more forms of electronic media.

Internet Marketing - Web, SEM (search engine marketing - includes SEO and Pay per click advertising), smartphones, mobile markets (i.e. Google Play, Apple Store), email marketing, online banner advertising and Social Media.

Non-Internet digital channels - Television, Radio, SMS, digital billboards (indoor and outdoor)

Digital Marketing Strategies

1. Setting a Goal
2. Creating a Marketing Funnel:
3. Developing a call-to-action:
4. Creating an Effective Lead Magnet:
5. Driving Traffic

6 How to Create a Digital Marketing Plan for Your Business

Here's 6 steps to help you use digital marketing in your business to get results.

1. Think marketing system not website : The first step is to stop thinking as your site as an independent concept. A website is one part of a marketing system. Building a more effective website on its own will not make a big impact on your business. Building a more effective digital marketing system will.

2. Decide who your “best customers” are and target them with the right offer : No successful business targets everyone. You need to build a marketing system that focuses on a group or groups of people. This is the vital first step in developing your digital marketing plan. Your product or service should deliver more value than anyone else to these groups. Profitability is also a factor in choosing your target group.

There are a number of ways to think about your best customers.

Segments

You can segment using behavior, demographics, company-specific information, psychology, and geography. You want to find a group that is large, growing and with fewer competitors.

Personas

Personas let you dig a little deeper. They are fictional profiles of people that represent your target segments. You should identify how they act, goals, skills, attitudes, and environment. This creates a fictional picture of your target customer that feels real.

Here's a useful guide to personas.

Life cycle stage

Customer life cycle also helps with focus. A prospect making an initial contact is just starting to learn about you. A customer that has been with you over one year has different interests. Make sure that you are making the right offers at the right time.

Jobs to be done

Focusing on the jobs that a customer needs to be done is another way to group customers. There are two types of jobs to be done. The main job and the related jobs. There are functional (requirements / goals) and other needs (emotional, personal, social) with each job. The “job” focus allows you figure out which jobs are the most important and hardest. Then you can fix the problem with your product or service.

3. Make it easy for the right people to find you

Business growth via digital marketing is about converting web visitors to profitable customers. The website is a big factor in converting visitors. You need to create a traffic building system to grow the denominator.

To connect with your best prospects, you need to be part of their world.

Advertising

The fastest ways to reach your best prospects is paid advertising.

Retargeting

98% of visitors to most websites don't convert. Retargeting allows you to show ads to your visitors after they have left your site. Here's a great retargeting guide.

Social advertising

The free Facebook marketing opportunity is over, but there are opportunities with their paid advertising especially if you have a large Facebook community. LinkedIn advertising is a good option for business-focused organizations.

Adwords

Adwords is the driver behind Google success. You only pay if someone clicks on your ad. Set up an account and try Adwords.

Showing up on search results

Search marketing is in free though takes a lot of time to do well. It is not instant. You want to target keywords that are popular with your target group. You need to beat companies that are currently ranking for the keyword phrase. The measures to look at here are your domain and page authority. Check out this authority measurement extension by Moz.

Here's a great post on how to increase your domain authority.

Influencer marketing

Another way to reach your target market is to partner with other companies. Think about companies that are already working these customers and prospects. The relationship needs to be beneficial for both parties. An easy way to start is to offer to provide a guest blog.

Email

Email continues to have the best ROI though you need to build your list. Joining an email list is a low-risk option for website visitors.

Social

Social is useful from a trust building perspective. Visitors may want to check out that you have a community of interested people. Social channels need advertising support.

4. Keep it simple, use research and make it easy for people to act

The reality is that people do not read the website but scan them. They make a decision about whether they will take the next step in seconds. Focus on simple, clear language. Use authentic visuals where possible to communicate your value proposition and values. Don't try menus or other website features that are not normal. Give users what they expect. Make the next step obvious with only one next step per page.

Want to dig deeper. Find out about the principles of lean web design.

Very few businesses know how to use digital marketing well. You can be “inspired” by top digital marketers. Either competitors or good operators from other industries. Try to do some level of research with your target customers. Use surveys to test logo options, color palettes, image selections and other key elements. You can also test headline copy with some simple ads on Adwords.

Use personas, scenarios and user stories to help make the process fact based.

Here’s some great advice on how to encourage visitors to act or convert. Remember, increasing a conversion rate from 2% to 3% means a 50% increase in sales.

5. Use the right technology

The right technology depends on the focus of your business. The characteristics of your best customers and prospects should drive this. Also, look for technology that has the latest thinking built in. Rainmaker by web marketing experts Copyblogger is a good example. Using the platform means you are starting at a sophisticated level.

There are some considerations that you should consider when deciding how to use digital marketing for your business.

Accept good over great

Be mobile friendly

Make sure the technology fits your team and your budget

6. Get help

Digital marketing continues to mature. Businesses that use digital marketing effectively will win in their markets. Marketing consultants are no longer only for large companies. Revenizer offers plans starting at \$1,000 per month.

The important thing is to develop your marketing system with the right expectations. Don’t try to boil the oceans with an end-to-end rework. Start with a prioritized plan and focus on consistency and continual improvement to the marketing system. The improvement process is likely to include website improvements but only when your strategy work is complete.

7 Which is more important digital marketing or social media?

It depends on the type of brand, products or services you want to promote. There are cases where other forms of digital marketing will be more appropriate to build awareness than social media. Social media is a must of every product, brand or service that has a wide audience.

Difference between Digital Marketing and Social Media Marketing

Digital marketing is a marketing strategy.

Social media marketing is a part of the digital marketing strategy.

Digital marketing use various electronic channels of marketing.

Social media marketing uses various social media platforms.

Digital marketing includes online as well as offline channels.

Social media marketing is purely a part of online marketing.

Digital marketing is focused at all target audiences and they respond to digital marketing according to their level of interest.

Social media marketing is more focused and involves people who have common interests, and audiences are involved only through mutual consent.

8 What are the advantages of using social media in your marketing campaigns?

There are many advantages of utilizing social media for promoting both your online or offline products and services.

It's a fast way to spread the word - If you have a big fan base, you can tweet or post on Facebook and your message can instantly go to thousands of users around the World. In fact social media is the fastest way (even from TV and Radio) to make an announcement or spread a message.

It's good for SEO - There are more and more signs that social signals are used for ranking purposes by both Google and Bing. Properly defined social profiles can also boost SEO.

It's a trend - Social media is a trend you cannot ignore if you want to stay close to your customers and in synch with the latest developments in marketing.

It's one of the ways to interact with your customers and find out what they want - With social media your customers can show that they like a product or piece of content by voting (Like, Tweet, +1) , commenting and sharing. As a marketer you can analyze these statistics, talk with your customers and find out how to make your products, content or services better.

9 What is Email marketing ?

Email marketing is a form of direct marketing that uses electronic mail as a means of communicating commercial or fundraising messages to an audience. In its broadest sense, every email sent to a potential or current customer could be considered email marketing. However, the term is usually used to refer to:

- Sending emails with the purpose of enhancing the relationship of a merchant with its current or previous customers and to encourage customer loyalty and repeat business.
- Sending emails with the purpose of acquiring new customers or convincing current customers to purchase something immediately.
- Adding advertisements to emails sent by other companies to their customers.

10 How to increase brand awareness

Your company may offer the greatest product in the world, but unless any consumers are aware of it, you may not make a single sale.

1. Referral Programs

2. Impressive Guest Content

Another great way to get your brand known on the web is to deliver ultra valuable, gorgeous looking content to share on other blogs

3. Infographics

Infographics are a bright and colorful way to display interesting marketing data and statistics. These content powerhouses often get shared far and wide, making them a great tool for brand building and thought leadership.

4. Local Partnerships

Another great brand building strategy is to get involved with local partnerships (this is tremendously important for local-oriented businesses, but can be applied for other businesses as well). Partner with other local businesses to hold joint seminars or festivals. Sponsor local sports teams and donate to charity events. Getting your brand plastered around festivals and events will do big things for your brand.

5. Social Focus

With the number of social networks constantly increasing, trying to be forever active on all of them is a fool's errand.

6. LinkedIn Publishing

11 How to handle customer complaints

Opportunity for improvement

When your small business receives a complaint, the natural reaction is for you, as business owner, to feel defensive. Managing most complaints will be genuine issues from upset or disappointed customers. They aren't trying to make trouble for you - they're letting you know that your business has made a mistake.

Guy Letts, Managing Director of CustomerSure, says it's important you don't take offence when you receive a complaint. Instead, try to see the issue from the customer's point of view. It's not always easy, but if you can manage this then you'll learn about the areas of your business that can be improved or changed. And that in turn will win you more customers.

Why you should embrace complaints

The most successful, customer-focused companies embrace complaints - because complaints are unsolicited feedback. No surveys, no loaded questions, no focus groups required.

A complaint is raw, direct interaction from a customer and it should be treated as a valuable source of information about your business.

Customers don't complain just to be rude to you. They complain because they've experienced a problem with the way your business operates and they're trying to tell you about it.

If you can resolve their problem, you'll also be resolving the problem for other customers who have experienced it but didn't have the time or energy to complain.

Understand the customer's perspective

It's common for complaints to be made due to growing frustration. Customers don't usually complain aggressively about minor issues - it's when those issues aren't properly dealt with that problems start to occur.

This is the typical experience most complaining customers go through:

They approach you with a request.

They see no movement to resolve the issue.

They complain.

The majority of customers who complain are sensible, normal people who've taken steps to try to find a reasonable solution first. When their efforts are ignored or badly handled, they understandably become upset.

In general, customers complain because they feel they've been treated unfairly or had no response. Nobody likes being ignored, especially when they've paid money for a product or service.

Resolve the issue to the customer's satisfaction

You need to make sure a customer's issue is resolved properly. Here are six tips to help you do that:

Talk to the customer

Sending standard letters or emails might work in some cases. But often you can achieve more, faster, with a phone call. This will help you properly understand their complaint. It'll also feel more personal to the customer, and reduce the risk of them misunderstanding the tone of your response.

Find out what they want

You might have an idea of what it takes to resolve the complaint. Your customer's idea might be different. Ask them what they want and listen carefully to the response. You might not be able to grant every wish, but perhaps you can meet them halfway.

Ask about wider issues

Is the customer happy generally with your service or product? What other feedback can they give that might be useful? Asking them questions like this will help them feel engaged and valued.

Give something back

You might want to do more than just solve the customer's problem. You could go further - maybe offer them a discount on their next bill, or send them a voucher for your products or services. This small additional cost will help you retain them as a customer, and could pay for itself many times over.

Confirm your solution

Go through the details of your proposed solution on the phone, then follow up by email or letter. Make sure your agreement is fully understood on both sides. Your customer will feel engaged and it should reduce the risk of disputes and misunderstandings later.

Keep in touch

Get a member of your staff to follow up with the customer a week later, to check that all is well. If it is, you have a happy customer. If it's not, find out why and repeat the process. They'll appreciate your proactive behaviour.

Endnotes 2... (after index)

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