

Social Media Subject Matter Expert



Dave Olson,
Community Director
HootSuite

Website: <http://hootsuite.com/>
Twitter: @daveohoots
Email: dave.olson@hootsuite.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/hootsuite

Featured Entrepreneurs



Zaheer Molu
Photographer
Z Molu Photography

Website: www.zmolu.com
Email: info@zmolu.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Z-Molu-Photography



Chioma
Publisher & Founder
AMOI Magazine

Website: www.amoimag.com
Twitter: @AMOIMag
Email: chioma@amoimag.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/AMOI-Magazine

Online Tools to help you get started

- HootSuite – www.hootsuite.com
- Mashable – www.mashable.com
- Google - <http://google.com/news>
- www.google.com/webmasters/tools

Top Social Media Sites - Engage and interact with your customers using these social media platforms:



TD Contact Information

Locate a TD Canada Trust Small Business Advisor

www.tdcanadatrust.com/smallbusiness/advisor/index.jsp

Call 1.866.222.3456 (EasyLine)

Locate a TD Commercial Banking Centre

www.tdcommercialbanking.com/cbc_dir.jsp

TD Website Links

Upcoming and Previous Webinar Workshops

<http://www.tdcanadatrust.com/smallbusiness/webinars.jsp>

TD Canada Trust Small Business Banking Channel

Visit www.youtube.com/user/TDSmallBusiness to watch video clips from our Webinar Workshop Series

Follow TD Canada on Twitter @TD_Canada

Building Your Online Strategy

Developing a social media strategy can be a low cost, high impact way to promote your business to new prospects and deepen the relationship you have with your customers. However, implementing it well requires a sound strategy that is rooted in clear objectives and includes a plan for managing engagement across all channels.

Engage > Manage > Measure > Monetize

Top Ten Tips:

1. Define your Online Strategy

This is a critical first step to ensuring you are going to succeed. Assemble a team of your employees spanning different groups, or trusted advisors if you are a sole proprietor and brainstorm. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

- What are you hoping to accomplish?
 - Brand awareness?
 - Find other businesses to partner with?
 - Recruit staff?
 - Develop customer relationships?
 - Prospecting?
- What is your vision for your company three to five years from now? Can social media help you get there?

2. Identify your benchmarks for measuring success, determine your ROI

Before you start, it is important to start logging your current situation, so you can set realistic goals and easily track your progress. Tie your ROI to what matters to you, and think outside of immediate dollars and cents by setting goals for:

- Twitter Followers
- Facebook Fans
- Web Traffic
- Conversion rates

3. Start listening to those already talking about your brand

People are talking about your brand, so start listening! Think of it as a massive, free instant focus group about your business. Look for your company name, misspellings of your company's name as well as the names (and misspellings!) of you and your key people. Also, look at what is being said about your competitors.

4. Engage in online conversations about your brand/industry

Once you have listened and identified your objectives start engaging! Your objectives will drive the tone of the conversations you are going to have, and time should be spent up front establishing key talking points, as well as guidelines for responding. This will help to ensure a consistent voice for your company, even if multiple people are involved.

5. Build Community

Building a following outside of your core customers requires dedication as well. Seek out influencers in your industry and engage them in conversation. Build lists that encompass the following groups:

- Industry Influencers – start to engage them in conversation – this will increase your credibility when others see you have intelligent dialogue with them
- Your Teams – everyone you work with should be on-board with this initiative and reaching out to their networks
- Your Customers – Keep customers engaged and this will keep your brand top of mind for them. Also seek out and engage potential customers to get on their radar.

6. Build a Hang Out

Create a facebook page for your brand and provide valuable resources that keep people coming back. You need to tread lightly here though so as not to be overtly-sales focused.

"Think of it as hosting a party. You need to make sure that everyone is having a good time, getting along, and has access to everything they need."

~ Dave Olson, HootSuite

7. Track Results

Refer back to the goals you set up front and set up a process for tracking the results. There are many online tools that can cheaply and easily help you do this (e.g. Google Analytics, HootSuite, Facebook Ads). The more specific you can be with what you track, the faster you'll be able to modify and focus on what's working best.

8. Be Alerted

There is so much chatter happening all the time online, and customers and followers are coming to expect almost instantaneous answers to their inquiries. This can be overwhelming to monitor, but getting ahead of any potential issues can help save a lot of trouble down the road.

Set up alerts to scan news, Twitter and blogs for your company name (and misspellings!) so you can immediately respond if necessary. Consider using tools similar to those outlined below:

The logo for socialmention, featuring the word "socialmention" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with a small orange asterisk to the right.The Google Alerts logo, featuring the word "Google" in its multi-colored font, with the word "Alerts" in a smaller, red font below it.The hootsuite logo, featuring a small cartoon owl icon to the left of the word "hootsuite" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.

9. Optimize for Search

Optimizing your online presence for search does require some effort. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- *Ensure you have quality inbound links* – Don't simply try and paste your link anywhere you can. Ensure they are on relevant websites where you are developing a relationship
- *Focus on the text* – The search engines are not able to read and index flash or images, so if something is important, make sure it is written out in text.
- *Use specific, tuned copywriting* – use key words in an authentic manner that still considers the webpage's readability.

10. Know Google-Fu

The ideal situation is to be at the top of the organic search, as this often appears more credible to customers. However, this can often be unpredictable, so you may also consider purchasing some advertising as well. A good starting place is often to analyze the ads of your competitors.

Determining the right words can often involve some trial and error, so make sure you closely watch the successes and ROI on the different words you purchase.

Leveraging Facebook for your Business:

Facebook can be a valuable tool for Small Businesses, but it requires a different mindset, as it is no longer a social place, it is another valuable channel for your business.

"About 80% of my business now comes from Facebook."
~ Zaheer Molu, Z Molu Photography

Brand Page

- Make a page for your business that is separate from your personal page
- Start to build your followers – reach out to friends, and friends of friends, and then move on to other industry players
- However, remember fans and followers are about quality not quantity.
- Don't think of this as an after-thought, be as professional on Facebook as you would be in other channels.

Ads and Reports

- Facebook is able to help you target beyond just typical demographics to very specific segments
- In addition to providing data about your campaign performance, Facebook's reports can help you learn about your audience
- Reports show you detailed demographic information and provide insights into the likes and interests of users who click on your ads
- You can immediately assess the impact of individual ads so you can identify and then maximize the exposure of your most effective ads