

3 Social Media Tips Every Business Can Use



In recent years social media has become not only a primary platform for interpersonal communications, but for smart digital marketing as well. Unfortunately, many companies have left this huge resource largely untapped, or misused at best. Meanwhile, studies show that social media consistently ranks as one of the top five most effective digital marketing methods. Yet fully half the companies that use social media report that it is the most difficult method to implement. It doesn't need to be that way. Using just these three tips, you can realize serious gains in the effectiveness of your company's social media presence:

1. Use Consistency and Humor

It's important that your social media presence has a consistent and human voice. The whole point of social media is to connect with people, not with corporations or brands. So take the time to develop a relatable personality to represent your business online. Post messages that will relate to your target audience, and do it consistently.

If it's appropriate for your business, humor can work extremely well in social media. Paradoxically, self-deprecating humor can work best of all. Social media consumers relate well to businesses that appear not to take themselves too seriously.

And don't be afraid to engage with others. Acknowledge good posts when you see them, congratulate others for a job well done, and in general, remember that social media is a two-way street. It's not intended to serve as a bullhorn in which you blast out your own news: it's an open channel that allows you to easily send out and take in valuable information.

3. Spark Their Interest

With the easy, low-cost availability of publishing via social media, it can be tempting to serve up everything you've got. But remember that the goal is to get customers to take next steps that

are specific and measurable. So, what you really want to do is whet their appetite and make them want to click through to your landing page, where, ideally, you'll have quality content to offer – from white papers, to blog posts and other resources. The point is to be helpful, not promotional.

Also, be willing to leverage the work of others whose content complements or augments yours. Re-posts are not lazy; they're a smart way to reinforce your message. Just be sure to give credit where credit is due. Even a hint of plagiarism is considered unforgiveable among social media consumers.

3. Find Quality Followers

If you've ever participated in social media – even minimally -- then you'll know it's not uncommon to get offers to increase your Twitter followers by 5,000 or 10,000 (for a fee, of course). An increase of that magnitude might appeal to some people on some level, but the quality of those followers is often questionable, and for businesses, having a following of quality prospects is what matters most. Hashtags are one way to drive the right traffic to your social media platforms. Whether clever or to the point, hashtags can be used to attract people who are interested in the topics that your business has something to say about. Participating in Twitter chats and Google Hangouts can also help you build the kind of following that makes sense for your business as you encounter individuals with mutual interests.

Another little known way to quickly ramp up a targeted group of followers is to use acquisition data. Take the Kansas City-based marketing events firm, [IMS](#), as an example. Using email data from a [reputable business contacts service](#), the organization was able to drive growth of 650% for its Facebook page alone. It started by identifying the right target markets for its events by zeroing in on demographics, executive titles and industries within the acquisition data. The IMS team then used the data to implement an email marketing campaign that drove traffic to the company's social media platforms. Within a matter of weeks, its following -- not only on Facebook, but also on LinkedIn -- grew exponentially.

Not To Be Overlooked

While for some experts, [the jury is still out](#) on the power of social media, the reality is that the value of a consistent presence and a good following cannot be underestimated if **you** want your business to appear viable today. In fact, depending on your business model, finding and engaging with customers and prospects on social media might be essential to your success. At the very least, don't overlook it as one of many tools you can use to fuel growth and awareness for your products and services.

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