

Social Media Marketing as a Business Tool



I recently attended a local Chamber of Commerce after-hours party where one of the discussions turned to Social Media Marketing as a business tool. An interesting point was made that prospects, cross-industry, aren't as open to

direct sales calls, but would rather search the Internet for information related to potential purchases for everything from shoes, cars, homes and restaurants – to web hosting.

Now that everyone on Earth owns a cellphone (or so it seems), local search queries are sky rocketing. With so much information at their fingertips, prospective buyers are turning to the Internet for How-To articles and videos to pretty much everything. Do you want to be able to replace an O2 sensor on your 2004 Blazer SUV? There's probably a video posted online of how to do just that.

Do you write content for your website or blog?

It only follows that if prospects (for your products or services) are keying in search queries to find relevant information on the Internet, that you should be there. I guarantee this – your competition WILL be there. Why leave anything on the table for them?

Consistency is key because you want your readers and visitors to keep coming back – regularly. When it comes time for them to pull the trigger on the products and services you offer, you want your business to be in their sights. This relates directly to rememberability and branding.

Writer's Block

Don't know what to write about? Select anything you're passionate about. What do you know about your product or service that could be beneficial to the reader? Very often, if you just start jotting down notes throughout the day, some topic will jump off the paper and hit you square in the middle of your forehead. The real key here is to just do it. There are NO excuses for NOT writing. All of us lead very busy lives, bombarded with demands on our time and energy.



Check out what others are commenting on in forums related to your products or services. Perform your own search queries to spark your creative juices.

It's important to keep track of trends, because nothing is status quo anymore. The Internet has made our world a more dynamic place, and there's no going backward.



Providing information relevant to the search query is paramount

First, pick a topic geared to providing information, either how-to or solutions based – the goal being to help / provide insight. Start with a topic in your specific niche, like “Website Design” or “Automotive Repair,” then create a title based on emotion, or anything that you think would draw a click through. Some examples would be, “Unlimited space and bandwidth = unlimited risks” or “Increasing the quality of marketing campaigns – what you need to know.”

Keep your paragraphs short

I realize you're excited about your stuff, but loooooooong unbroken paragraphs turn OFF most readers. Break your content

down into specific thoughts or steps, with one paragraph leading or flowing to the next. Try to compile some fashion of chronological order. Hopping around will only confuse the reader and cause them to lose focus. Plus, a confused prospect never purchases.

Touch as many of the five senses as possible

Of the five senses, I mean sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. Obviously, these won't all apply to each article, but through a combination of graphics, and painting pictures with words, you'll create mental images that will reinforce your call-to-action.



If a picture is worth 10,000 words, what would a video be worth? It's so simple to create videos and post them to YouTube these days that there's no reason any longer not to. You don't need sophisticated video equipment or a studio. Smartphones have become so commonplace that videos created with them are becoming accepted as mainstream.



End with a recommendation

Recommendations can be tips, precautions or proposed solutions. Prospects are searching the Web to alleviate some pain or issue, grow their company or enhance their lives. You can establish yourself as an expert in your field through

your articles, giving you and your organization a step up on your competition.

You don't even have to be the cheapest or least expensive solution out there. You just need to get the word out, and

social media is the going thing. Post your blog's articles on your Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts ... and any other portal that fits your fancy. If they get shared, you're golden. Nothing is better than having someone else on social media shout your praises.

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