

Social Media For Business



Well of course social media is here to stay and as the various platforms develop and new ones emerge, there is an ever-increasing chance that your customers and/or prospects will be “hanging out” somewhere online.

Therefore the challenge is how you interact with your target audience; because if you're not, your competitor is more than likely going to get ahead of the game when it comes to social media – and you don't want that do you?

So where do you start?

Well firstly you need to have a strategy and structure to your social media endeavours; otherwise you are going to spend a lot of time and effort for no reward.

Define Goals

What do you want to achieve by engaging in social media? It could be one or more of the following:

- Increase online presence

No doubt you have a website as a fundamental presence on the web?

Social media could greatly enhance this presence, particularly as the majority of websites are pretty static in nature i.e. once the content is generated, not a lot changes.

Social media on the other hand is dynamic with up to the minute information, albeit it only lasts for a short while – this type of content is becoming of more interest to search engines and therefore can only be of benefit to your business.

- Become a thought leader through content?

Whatever business you are in, you will have an area of expertise and knowledge, hopefully unique to you and your business?

Being in a position to share this knowledge to raise your profile as the specialist in your domain will be valuable content to get you noticed and increase your following and the amount of shares you get.

- Generate revenue

Of course it may be that you are looking to sell online, in which case you need to position yourself as a retailer and attract the type of customer that you are looking for.

It maybe that the nature of your business is such that your intention is to have elements for all three of the above.

Either way work out what you want to achieve and define the outcomes you expect.

Focus Your Efforts

There are a number of platforms to choose from and it is not practical or feasible to be on every single one.



The challenge is to identify those social media offerings that best suit what you are trying to achieve and where you believe your target audience will be.

For most LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube will suffice; but, given the nature of your business, specialist platforms like Pinterest, Instagram or the like could be considered. Probably best to stick with no more than 4 different arenas.

Listen & Engage

The last thing you want to be is a broadcaster of information that may not be relevant to your audience. So make sure that you are listening to what is happening on your media of choice.

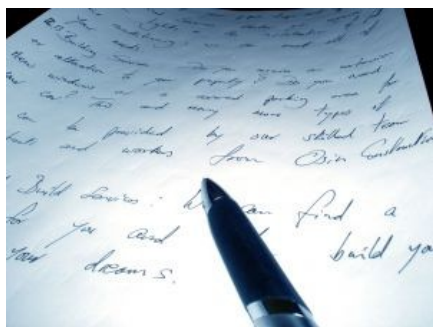
Engage your audience with surveys, questions, debates – but most of all make sure that you reply to any comments you receive as interaction is what you are looking for.

Measure & Evaluate

As with any marketing activity, you need to measure the effectiveness of what you are doing.

This will be based on return on investment of both your time and any money that you have put into the venture.

Getting Your Copywriting Right



Effective communication to your prospect and client base is essential and a big element of that is choosing the right words to use.

Let's break down copywriting into its basic elements:

Purpose

What are you actually writing for – what's the intention?

Typically the reason for putting pen to paper or keyboard to screen is to promote a service, a product, an idea, a person or just your point of view.

Each of these and the context in which you are writing: email, letter, article, blog, advert, social media content, website content, press release, etc., will need a subtly different approach to make sure your message is received in the way you intended it.

Goal

What is the outcome you want from your writing endeavours?

Ideally you want to persuade your reader to take action in some way – this maybe just to respond to your article or point of view. However it could be that you are looking for someone to buy as a result of your prose, sign up or subscribe to something or possibly to endorse something; write a testimonial for example.

Create

Once you are clear on the purpose and your desired outcome, then you can get your creative juices flowing and start to write a relevant piece of material.

Hopefully you can see that your approach will vary and there are a number of different styles that you may use dependent on the domain in which you are writing.

Process

If you do get writer's block, then consider the following to enable you to get clear:

- **Who?:** Identify your target audience – this will help you generate content that talks directly to them and is relevant.

If your words are too generic, then your impact will be less effective. This is particularly relevant to website copy where you have seconds at best to capture your reader.

- **What?:** Figure out what problem, issue or view you are trying to put across.
- **Why?:** What are the benefits of reading the article for the reader?

How are you going to entice them to engage with you – there must be something in it for them.

- **How?:** What solution is your content providing?

Put yourself in the shoes of the reader – what would they be interested in reading about?

This will relate to the action that you want them to take as a result of reading your words.



Style

There are a number of ways you can write your content.

Here are 2 to consider:

- **Bar Tender Approach** – imagine that you are sharing your story with a bar tender.

This means that the style in which you write will be conversational.

- **Elevator Pitch** – imagine that you only have the time it takes for you to arrive at your floor in an elevator to get your message across.

This style would mean that you are more direct, punchier; as you need to get your information across quickly and concisely.



"Words can be like X-rays if you use them properly - they'll go through anything"

Aldous Huxley, Brave New World



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Next issue: Getting The Most From Prospect Meetings ~ Rules Of Customer Engagement

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