4 ways to really make social media work for you

***There have been a ton of pieces in the media lately about the benefits – and lack thereof – of social media campaigns. What’s your stance on social media platforms – and what can you do differently to make them really work for you?***

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Pinterest… there’s seemingly no end to the social media platforms available to you – and the list keeps growing daily!!

If you use social media on a regular basis, then I really don’t have to explain the value and reach of it to you. Why then, are so many marketers lambasting it and writing it off as ineffectual? Probably because it is – from a pure advertising point of view anyway.

There’s a reason for this – Facebook, really, is a PR platform. It’s all about public relations and media; effectively you need to think of your Facebook (and most of your other social media pages) as your own magazine or newspaper – somewhere where you can publish the things you want to say and get out there, to the people who are interested in what you have to offer.

# 1. Utilise a social media PR strategy

The first distinction you need to make between advertising and PR, is that PR is not hard sell. Advertorials are written by ad agencies mostly, while PR is about editorial. And that’s what you should be offering your followers on social media – real content, that exists for the purpose of the content, not for the purpose of the sale.

So how does this benefit you, I hear you ask. Simply put, it keeps you top of mind, and establishes you as interesting in the minds of your followers.

## We remember interesting people and things

And when we remember interesting companies, they stay top of mind, and that habit jumps in when they have a need in our arena.

So, really your posts on Facebook and other platforms should be about being interesting, so that you have a better chance of going viral, reaching maximum exposure, and staying top of mind with your already-existing customers.

# 2. Stop thinking your website is enough

Having a website really isn’t enough nowadays. It’s important, sure, because you need a place to drive people to, and a place where people can gather and access information about your company. Sadly though, even your most ardent company admirers will not visit your website everyday.

## People visit their social media sites almost daily

This is the single biggest reason you have to have a social media presence - it’s the one guaranteed way you can keep yourself front of mind with the people who are already connected to your business. And it doesn’t have to be overkill either – just a few posts a week is enough to reach and maintain contact with all the people connected to you socially, without them having to do any extra work.

# 3. Forget the statistics!

I love a good-looking report as much as the next person, and it’s great to see the numbers up, but what good is it really if you don’t convert those numbers into sales, and feet through your door?

Sometimes, as marketers, we get so caught up in the reporting and analytics, we forget that there is a rands and cents business behind the public profile. And at the end of the day, our function is to drive the sales and business. You can have the best numbers in the world, but if they aren’t turning into business for you, then is it really worth your while?

On the flip side though, the majority of the people who will connect with you socially are people who have already engaged with your business – so there is no need to hard sell to them.

Your job on the social media platform, in this instance, is to keep yourself top of mind, and keep your current client base interested in what you have to offer. That way, the future sales will take care of themselves.

Another important feature of social media is that it allows interactions to play out in public. So, when you have a glowing reference that comes in, everyone can see it. And when you have a complaint come in, you can handle it well in a public forum, and impress so many more people than just the original complainant.

Yes, it takes guts to do something like this – but a customer who you have made happy after they were upset is much more likely to become a raving fan than any other kind of customer. A public forum, like a social media platform, simply lets you multiply that goodwill ten-fold.

# 4. Contacts and Conversions

This is probably one of the biggest reasons that social media can turn into a gold mine for you: it takes multiple repeated contacts and touch points before you convert prospects into sales.

I heard an interesting stat the other day from an American company that does research into sales and conversions: 81% of sales are converted after the fifth call or interaction. What their research also showed is that the majority of sales people stopped calling after only the first or second interaction.

## It takes time to build trust

Social media offers you an easy way to reach multiple people, with multiple touch points, on an ongoing basis. This means that you reach the level of contact conversion much more easily – and with much less effort. And isn’t anything that makes sales easier worth its weight in gold?

In closing, social media, if used effectively, can be a powerful platform for you to promote your business and increase your sales. And more importantly, it doesn’t have to cost you a single cent.

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**A note to the editor:**

Dsignhaus is a B2B Marketing Services Agency with in-depth and specialist knowledge in the field of digital marketing.

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