

The Official Social Media Cheat Sheet

1. The Basics- Why Social Media?

Social media marketing is fluid and is changing at breakneck pace. Companies are using different metrics to measure their success. Many companies feel that social media is all about getting “likes” and more about the statistics and numbers. That seems to be quite common. Contrary to popular belief, however, the goal of social media is to be on the tip of your potential client’s tongue when they need you. This brand awareness is far more valuable than clicks and likes, especially as the latter can be purchased but gives no real value.

Social media involvement helps to develop your position in your field as a thought leader and someone “to be followed” in order to stay “in the know”. In other words, it’s nice if you have a thousand “likes” or followers but what’s more important is to provide your audience with quality content to keep them engaged and interested. The point: numbers are great, but engagement and conversions are key.

2. A Changing Field- Keeping Up with the Sesame Street Generation

Most of the adults who grew up today in the Western world were exposed to Sesame Street as children. Sesame Street taught children basic skills like reading, writing, and math in 30-second segments. As a result, this generation expects results very quickly. Thirty seconds may be a bit exaggerated but wanting instant gratification has become the norm in millennial culture.

Even though one would assume that results would be seen quickly since social networks rose in popularity while the “Sesame Street Generation” was growing up, social media marketing does not follow this assumption. It can often take anywhere from three to six months to see results and to develop a following on various social networks. Determining what type of content your target audience enjoys and what types of posts create the most engagement takes time. Use that time to establish yourself as a leader in your field and to develop a real following.

3. The Four “Big Dogs” of Social Media

Having spent countless hours “in the trenches” with our clients, we can say that most social media marketing for B2B organizations is (and should be) carried out on four major platforms (although there are others that we can suggest). Here’s a bit about each of those and why they make up the “big four”:

Facebook

Created by Mark Zuckerberg in a dorm room at Harvard University, Facebook is probably the most well known social network. It is used by some B2B businesses as a resource, but it comes in second to LinkedIn in that world. Setting a business page and having a presence is a good thing to do both in terms of SEO and getting yourself out there. However, businesses do not have as much visibility on Facebook unless posts are sponsored and Facebook Ads are put in place. “Likes” and engagement do help get your posts and your page out there a bit more, but Facebook

is now a for-profit venture and they are letting everyone know it. The best way to get yourself out there is to pay for the exposure.

Facebook Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Post regularly either once a day or once every other day
- Have more than one administrator assigned to a page for safety and security reasons
- Set up a business page
- Consider setting up a (paid) Facebook Ad campaign in order to achieve optimal visibility
- Answer comments and private messages quickly and succinctly

DON'T:

- Set up a personal page and then run it as a business page - This is against Facebook's policies and you may lose privileges or your account
- Use hashtags on Facebook unless you are including one that is already very active
- Have only one administrator - If your admin's account is hacked, you will lose access to it
- Have too many admins. Some rogue team members have walked away- with login details
- Delete negative comments, especially if they contain expletives.

Twitter

Twitter is a great resource for reaching out to thought leaders in a field and connecting with potential clients. Many organizations use Twitter as a way to maintain relationships with current or past customers as they end up being the best brand ambassadors. In some cases, they may end up becoming clients once again in the case of an "upsell". Twitter is also great for "live-tweeting" events meaning that a conference can be covered in real time or sound bites could be recorded in writing and then "retweeted" or "favorited" by other Twitter users. This brings the tweet to their followers as well.

Reputations can be created and solidified on Twitter. The key here is that a tweet, even with a link or a photograph attached may only be 140 characters. Conversations are held in real time and it's important to reply to a tweet quickly since the person contacting you expects a "real time" response.

Twitter Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Post regularly...The lifetime of a tweet is short
- Respond promptly as readers want a real time response to their real time question
- Post before, during, and after an event or conference to let people know you'll be there ("live tweeting")
- Connect with thought leaders and "celebrities" in your field
- Make use of the "DM" or "direct message" feature to send private messages
- Follow thought leaders but don't harass them or bombard them with information
- Ask questions to engage others
- Organically include popular hashtags into your tweets, but don't go overboard – **Limit #s to 2-3 per tweet**
- Use tools like hashtagify.me or Topsy.com to see how popular the tag is, when you should be using it and if it's relevant

DON'T:

- Be afraid to speak to new people
- Use a hashtag until checking to make sure it's being used and is popular
- Use more than two hashtags in a tweet (there are special cases where this is ok)
- Feel obligated to respond to anyone. Ignore those that use inappropriate language
- Avoid others. If a competitor tweets to you, respond in a timely and polite manner as you would do in real life

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is by far the most used resource and the most beneficial for those of us in the B2B world. Having an updated and clean LinkedIn page (an individual page for you as well as a page for your company) is an incredible resource.

The best feature of LinkedIn for B2B is by far its "Groups" feature. Groups are created by professionals in a specific field to provide a forum for people within that field to ask questions, share knowledge and in some cases, promote themselves. LinkedIn rewards individuals who provide quality content and create meaningful interactions with group members by listing them as "Top Contributors" within a group. Self-promotion is not always welcome, but if you provide quality content, then it's a positive "side effect" of using LinkedIn.

You should be active on LinkedIn and joining relevant groups is part of this process. It may be worth it for you to create a group depending on what you offer and your target market. Creating a successful group is a great way to establish your company as an industry leader. Research should be done to determine which groups your organization should join. It's important to note "group rules" on certain groups. Too much self-promotion or not following the rules can lead to being removed from a group or being moderated ("SWAMed") whereby a post will only go up if the moderator of the group is contacted first. This "punishment" can be put into place for up to two weeks and can affect your overall metrics.

[Click here to learn more about LinkedIn Site Wide Automatic Moderation \(SWAM\)](#)

LinkedIn Do's and Don'ts**DO:**

- Post relevant and informative content
- Ask questions and participate in groups regularly
- Check group rules and know the "flavor" of the groups where you post regularly
- Announce personal or professional milestones on your personal page (within reason)
- Add relevant connections and check your account at least twice a week
- Respond to comments and professional feedback in a timely manner.
- Use LinkedIn for research on individuals and before conferences to prepare for networking opportunities

DON'T:

- Post only your own content - Make sure you share content from others as well to balance your posts
- Ignore group rules - It may get you kicked out of a group and SWAMed
- Use hash tags

- Ignore connection request or private messages - You may miss out on an opportunity

Google+

While Google+ has proven to be effective for some B2B businesses and a few individuals, the network hasn't really caught on. It's a good idea to post regularly since this has shown to improve SEO overall (after all, Google+ IS owned and operated by Google.) Make sure you have a page and are posting regularly, but don't throw too many resources into the Google+ ring.

Google + Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Post regularly - We recommend once per campaign or once per day if you are active
- Have more than one administrator on the page for safety and security reasons
- Make sure to accept circle requests and keep track of who is "circling" you
- Stay on top of industry news in your field to see if this network is gaining speed in your area.

DON'T:

- Use hash tags
- Set up a personal page and then run it as a business page. This is against Google+ policies and you may lose privileges or your account
- Let your account just sit there. Make sure to post regularly for SEO

4. Social Media Messaging

Some social media messaging is governed by rules that are already in place. For instance, Twitter messages may only be 140 characters. That being said, messages should be relatively short and engage your reader.

As with any type of writing, you need to know your audience.

Put yourself in your audience's shoes when creating messages. You can be a bit controversial; it helps to create conversations. However, don't go too far over the top. Ask questions to get people into the conversation and answer the questions other people ask. This may seem obvious, but a surprising number of companies have lost out by not doing this.

Social interaction online doesn't have to be complicated.

Where you should I hang out?

Many of our clients ask where they should be most active. Which network is the best?

The answer is the same as with any marketing tool or venue- **use the social network that is most popular with your potential client base or the audience you want to attract.** Twitter is a must for most clients in both the B2B and B2C world while Facebook is only good for some B2B businesses but not for others. Do your research, know where your target audience is hanging out, and then join them there.

Questions?

Contact us for a free social media marketing
consultation

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