

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

No doubt you've heard plenty about social media by this point, but many business owners are challenged with how to make it relevant for their business. According to Wikipedia, Social media are primarily Internet- and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings. The term most often refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications and social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and "building" of shared meaning among communities, as people share their stories and experiences. Businesses also refer to social media as user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media (CGM).



Social Media Platforms

Source: Universal McCann Wave 3 Report

ESSENTIAL STEPS TO SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

- 1. Establish Clear Business Objectives and Metrics** Social media marketing should not be an executive pet project. As a marketer responsible for a social media initiative, you should never move off the starting mark without clear and measurable business goals.
- 2. Marketing Communications Moves from Monologue to Connected Dialogue** When customers control content, marketers inevitably lose some control of the message. But that doesn't diminish the capability of good marketers to communicate effectively with their markets—in fact it can create a significant competitive advantage.
- 3. Clarify Your Positioning** For all the novelty of social media, successful execution invariably hinges on an age-old fundamental—a clear and consistent position across all business touch points.
- 4. Identify the Influencers** The first meaningful step of engagement is to identify where the conversations are taking place that are relevant to your market community, and who is shaping those conversations.
- 5. Listen Before You Launch** In any conversation, a smart communicator spends time listening to the dialog before they engage.
- 6. Integrate Your Social Media with SEO** One of the most powerful capabilities of social media, especially blogging, is the ability to dramatically

impact search engine positioning.

- 7. Engage Your Audience** Whether you're launching your own social media application or engaging in others, the key to building influence in your community is getting involved.
- 8. Engage Your Employees** Social media programs are a valuable opportunity to build cross functional teams in your organization.
- 9. Engage Your Customers** Nothing filters up good ideas and new content like talking directly to customers. Interview a few of your customers or partners and ask for their take on the issues.
- 10. Be Honest and Up Front** Whether you're launching your own social media site or just participating in discussions around the Web, be conspicuously honest and straightforward about who you are and who you represent.
- 11. Define Metrics According to Business Objectives** Get involved in defining what business outcomes are relevant for your social media program, and look for ways to measure progress toward the goal. Chances are, the data is available.
- 12. Fail Quickly. Fail Cheaply** If you are launching your first social media program, focus on an initiative with minimal investment in time and money.

Social Media Tools

Free blogs:

Blogger - www.blogger.com
Word Press - <http://wordpress.com/>

Technorati

Blog search engine technorati.com

Free Micro Blogging sites:

Twitter - twitter.com/
Plurk - www.plurk.com

RSS Readers

Google Reader - www.google.com/reader

Photo Sharing

Flickr - www.flickr.com

Video Sharing

YouTube - www.youtube.com

Social Bookmarking

Delicious - www.delicious.com
Jaiku - www.jaiku.com

How much time & money will this take?

Most businesses can implement a social media strategy for very little money; however, the best strategies that generate leads and revenue are launched in conjunction with professional help and can cost a few hundred to several thousand dollars. Moreover, social media takes time and personal involvement that are unprecedented in the world of mass media.



MarketingSavant

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MarketingSavant Social Media Marketing

Social media consulting and coaching by an award-winning blogger.

Award-winning blogger and internet marketing expert, Dana VanDen Heuvel, provides social media education and consulting to corporations, non-profits and educational institutions.

Our training and content consulting services are the product of more than five years of intensive study, training, writing and practice in the area of social and new media. MarketingSavant can save you months of learning and prepare you to enter the global online conversation with a strategy, and voice that stands out from your competitors. Our training and custom consulting services address these key business priorities:

1. Understanding social media's growing importance in the changing media landscape;
2. Tools and tactics for tracking online conversations;
3. Turning online feedback into actionable information;
4. Overcoming internal obstacles to social media initiatives;
5. Selecting tools and metrics to match business objectives; and
6. Building and sustaining effective online communities.

Services begin with the strategic education phase and proceed through strategy and implementation.

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What is it?	What is it good for?
<p>Blog A blog (a contraction of the term "Web log") is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Free to low-cost ♦ User comments are free feedback on services, prices ♦ Creates searchable archive for search engines ♦ Acceptable to discuss topics or ideas that are not yet fully developed
<p>Message Boards/Chat Rooms/Forums An Internet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site. It is the modern equivalent of a traditional bulletin board. From a technological standpoint, forums or boards are web applications managing user-generated content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Educational information ♦ Ability to increase traffic through repeat visitors ♦ Organization gains more credibility ♦ Builds relationship with visitors
<p>Micro Blogging (Twitter) Micro-blogging is a form of multimedia blogging that allows users to send brief text updates (140 characters or fewer) or micromedia (photos or audio clips) and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, email, MP3 or the Web. Micro-blogs provide short commentary on a person-to-person level or to share news about a company's products and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ VERY simple to use ♦ Multiple ways to send updates: text messaging, instant messaging, email, MP3 or the Web. ♦ Computer not needed to send an update, can use a mobile phone
<p>Photo Sharing (Flickr) Photo sharing is the publishing or transfer of a user's digital photos online, thus enabling the user to share them with others (whether publicly or privately). This functionality is provided through both Web sites and applications that facilitate the upload and display of images. The term can also be loosely applied to the use of online photo galleries that are setup and managed by individual users, including photo blogs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Free or low-cost ♦ Easy to use and share photos ♦ Great tagging and organizing system ♦ Can be incorporated into personal blogs and Web sites ♦ Easy to buy prints and other photo specialty items ♦ Good backup for paper and digital photos
<p>Podcasts A podcast is a series of audio or video digital-media files which is distributed over the Internet by syndicated download, through Web feeds, to portable media players and personal computers. Though the same content may also be made available by direct download or streaming, a podcast is distinguished from other digital-media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Communicate with large numbers of people via the Internet ♦ Incorporates video, audio, music and effects ♦ Syndicated via RSS feed or archived on the Web ♦ Listeners can download podcasts to their mobile players or listen to at their computers ♦ Production is fairly inexpensive with the right equipment

SOCIAL MEDIA - A SELF-GUIDED TOUR

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

Listen to the conversation	
As part of our social-media strategy, let's presume all businesses need a way to listen to their audience, their customers, their partners, and their detractors. Let's begin with the tools we use to listen to the conversation. Start with Google Alerts and subscribe to keywords pertinent to your brand. You'll get daily emails telling you when your keywords show up on the Web.	www.google.com/alerts www.keotag.com www.technorati.com www.summize.com http://crazyegg.com
Social Bookmarking	
Social bookmarking is an excellent way to share the collective intelligence of the Internet. This is near the top because you may want to "bookmark" some of these other sites using del.icio.us.	http://delicious.com/ www.digg.com www.reddit.com www.diigo.com
RSS Feed Aggregators	
Sign up for Bloglines, a free Web-based RSS reader that will allow you to follow numerous blogs and news sites. Add the feed from www.danavan.net to get started, then look for the RSS button on your favorite news sites to subscribe to more feeds.	http://www.bloglines.com Google.com/reader
Subscribe to Blogs of Interest	
Reading blogs through RSS readers is how blogs were meant to be read. Use Google Blogsearch and other resources to find blogs you like using keywords from your hobbies, company or industry. Subscribe using your new Bloglines RSS reader account.	google.com/blogsearch www.blogpulse.com www.technorati.com
Wikipedia	
Do you know what's been written about your brand (or your competitors) on Wikipedia? If you're not in Wikipedia, write a mock version of your own Wikipedia entry.	www.wikipedia.org