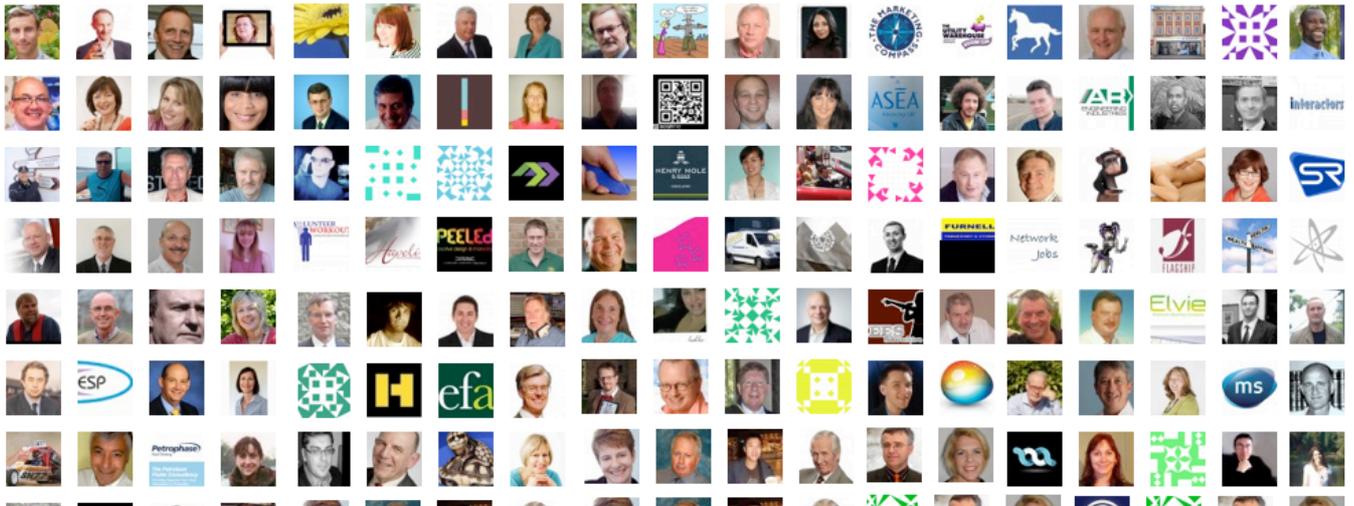


The 9 Secrets of Social Media

Navigator guide by The Marketing Compass



What is Social Media?

Social media = Web based interactive communication software. Social media resources use Web 2.0 technologies which take advantage of the USP of the Web: *interactivity*.

Web 2.0 allows you to share, collaborate and, above all connect with: * Dormant customers * Current customers * Prospective customers * Advocates * Suppliers

Blogging

You can blog about your professional knowledge using a blog platform such as:
<http://www.blogger.com> / <http://www.twitter.com> / <http://www.typepad.com>
<http://www.wordpress.com>

Events

Spread the word about your events using: www.networkinginberkshire.co.uk /
<http://www.business-scene.com> / <http://www.findnetworkingevents.com> /
<http://www.thebestof.co.uk/> <http://www.eventbrite.com>

Marketing

Discover the secrets of low cost marketing here: <http://www.marketingcompass.co.uk>

Photo sharing

Do you have products, people or events which you could take photos of? If that's a "Yes", share your photographs here: <http://www.flickr.com> / <http://www.picasa.com>

Social bookmarking

See the section below.

Social network aggregation

www.socialmedian.com / <http://www.friendfeed.com>

Create your own social network

www.ning.com / www.webjam.com / <http://www.buddypress.com>

Social networking

Here are a selected few...

<http://www.facebook.com> / www.ecademy.com / www.marketingcompass.co.uk / www.fastpitchnetworking.com / <http://www.linkedin.com> / <http://www.naymz.com> / <http://www.plaxo.com> / <http://www.viadeo.com> / www.xing.com

Join The Marketing Compass for free here and promote your business:

www.marketingcompass.co.uk/register

Social news

<http://www.Mixx.com> / www.Digg.com / www.Reddit.com / www.stumbleupon.com / <http://www.delicious.com>

Video sharing

<http://www.sevenload.com> / <http://www.viddler.com> / <http://www.vimeo.com> / <http://www.youtube.com> It's easy create your own YouTube channel. You can then upload informative and helpful videos and embed them within your website.

How can Social Media help your business?

You can use Social Media to create more awareness for your business, your brand and your products / services. Social media allows you to attract 'Followers' who read your 'posts'. It can generate more visitors to your website, sales enquiries and sales.

Positioning

How will you position yourself on the social web? Helpful? Knowledgeable? Interesting? Informed? Are you looking for contacts locally, regionally, nationally or internationally?

What should you write about?

Your professional knowledge. Aim to share circa 20% of what you know. Here is an exercise. Create a list of your professional knowledge using categories, i.e. ➤ Customers ➤ Technical ➤ Dos and Don'ts ➤ Etc.

Which social networks should you join?

There are plenty to choose from, including professional, local and special interest online networks. Some are just online, whilst others offer 'real world' contact as well. Alternatively, it is now possible, by using such services as ning.com to launch your own network (or you can get one built for you). For this exercise, we will look at Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.

Social bookmarking

You probably already bookmark your favourite websites, using your web browser. This is a great time saver, when you need to find useful websites. However, your bookmarks are then tied to the computer you have saved them on. Wouldn't it be nice to find them from any computer? In addition, when you change machines, wouldn't it be great to have all of those sites at your fingertips?

Social bookmarking sites are like sentient search engines. The indexing and referencing is done by human beings. The human brain is quite different from a computer. It works on a contextual basis and each person brings a lifetime of human experience to bear to the task in hand (in this case, social bookmarking). On the other hand, search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing use algorithms to figure out the meaning of a resource. This is highly clever:

but it is not human.

Another benefit of social bookmarking is that people can find and bookmark web pages that have not yet been noticed or indexed by web spiders. (Why not try and bookmark some of the pages on your website?)

Social bookmarking should be an integral part of your promotional mix. If you are a blogger (and you should be), adding social bookmarking buttons to your blog is a great way of driving more traffic to your site. 'Content is King', so adding regular, fresh material, loaded with relevant keywords, will push your site up the search engine rankings. The first social bookmarking site was launched in 1996, called itList, so it's certainly not a new concept. There are hundreds of different sites that offer social bookmarking, including Delicious, StumbleUpon, Digg, Reddit, Newsvine and Google Buzz.

Twitter

www.twitter.com If you haven't already done so, register your name and your company name within Twitter.

What is Twitter?

It is a 'micro blogging' website. If you are technically inclined, Twitter's core technology is a device agnostic message routing system with rudimentary social networking features. There. Now you know. You can really impress people at parties, can't you!

The idea is to answer the question 'What are you doing?' in 140 characters or less. Messages can be sent via mobile texting, instant message or the web. Notice that the messages are not delivered by email. They appear online / on your phone etc.

Once you have registered, people can choose to 'Follow' you, which simply means that they will receive your messages.

How does this help my marketing, then?

1. It is another way of 'getting the word out' about your enterprise.
2. Followers can get to know you and what you do.
3. You can alert your Followers about new articles, blog postings, events etc.
4. As networkers know, relationships lead to paying customers.

Your Twitter profile allows you to put a line or two of information about yourself. For example, 'Small business marketing specialist'. You can let people know whereabouts in the world you are based and include a link to your website, if they want to find out more.

When you have a reasonable number of followers, you can manage everything by using <http://www.tweetdeck.com>. TweetDeck extends the functionality of Twitter by taking an abundance of information i.e twitter feeds, and breaking it down into more manageable bite sized pieces.

Amongst other things, Tweetdeck allows you to: * Add multiple Twitter accounts * Manage your Twitter Lists * Sort friends and searches into columns.

There are numerous other applications available, which help you to get more out of Twitter / social networking, including Hootsuite: <http://www.hootsuite.com>

Twitter tips

1. Positioning. If you are using Twitter as part of your customer attraction strategy, think about

your 'Twitter Positioning'. In other words, what do you stand for and how do you want to be seen by other Tweeters?

2. Who do you want to connect with? What are they interested in? What are they searching for?

3. Be a Giver. People will follow you if you have something to give them. For example, helpful, useful and interesting tips and ideas.

4. People first, business second. Twitter is first and foremost a social network, so be sociable.

5. Reveal something about yourself. You are a unique and interesting human being. We want to know more about you.

6. Be Helpful. Recommend other Tweeters. ReTweet interesting stuff. Answer questions. Connect people to each other.

7. Engage with people, by joining in and becoming part of the conversation.

8. React now! Twitter works in 'real time'. It is a continual flow of conversations, feedback, ideas and chit chat. Become part of the flow and react quickly to what's going on in the Twittersverse.

9. Your website. Upload helpful, useful and interesting material to your website. From time to time, Tweet about this content and point your Twitter followers towards your site. Ask them to ReTweet (RT) these messages.

10. Commitment. Use Twitter regularly, ideally every day. (Gasp!)

Twitter search

Search within Twitter here: <http://search.twitter.com> (start by searching for yourself / your company).

Find The Marketing Compass on Twitter here: <http://twitter.com/marketingcompass>

Find Nigel on Twitter here: <http://twitter.com/nigeltemple>

LinkedIn www.linkedin.com

LinkedIn is a social networking website for business people. However, it's worth joining (for free) just to get the link back to your website.

LinkedIn has over 75 million members in over 200 countries.

"I've found it a great place to connect with past colleagues and customers. It's also an excellent tool for researching potential business partners or customers. Joining relevant groups, asking questions and engaging with other members is another way to widen your network." - David Willis, Information Drivers

LinkedIn is a great way of connecting with dormant customers, past colleagues, old friends, influencers and potential customers. It should automatically appear in your web browser, when you wake your computer up in the morning. (You can achieve this, by using 'tabbed browsing'). When you make an interesting new contact, check to see if they belong to

The search function only allows you to search for people within your network, the networks of each of your contacts and their contact's networks.

Joining groups is a good way of building your network. An example of a large LinkedIn group is LION (LI Open Networkers), run by John L. Evans, which has 20,000+ members. Once you've joined a group, you will be able to connect with any of its members, without knowing their email addresses. This will help you to find useful contacts.

At the time of writing, Nigel has 786 LinkedIn contacts. This gives him access to over 11.6 million business people. *gasp*

Be an 'open networker'

To use LinkedIn effectively, you should connect with all of your existing contacts. In addition, you should be open to connecting with new people. This will give you access to a much wider network. Building an extensive network on LinkedIn is like having access to a huge database.

Testimonials

Testimonials and recommendations: the best way to get these is to give them. From a marketing perspective - this is part of 'social proof' (i.e. other people saying how good you are). This is much more believable than you saying it, isn't it?

SEO

Google likes inbound links (to your website) from high traffic sites, i.e. LinkedIn.

General tips

- If you use Outlook, you can download your contacts and selectively invite people to connect with you.
- When you meet someone via networking / a business meeting, etc., send them a LinkedIn invitation.
- You can export your contacts to Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Yahoo Mail, and Mac OS X Address Book.

Connect with Nigel here: <http://uk.linkedin.com/in/nigeltemple>

Facebook

www.facebook.com Facebook is the world's leading social networking site. More than half of users log onto their account at least once each day.

Facebook was launched in February 2004 by a group of Harvard science undergraduates. In September 2006, the site was opened to anyone over 13 years old with an email address. According to Wikipedia, it currently has over 500 million active users. About 24 million people are registered within the UK.

Facebook is a great way to reach potential customers and network with business contacts. More than two-thirds of users are outside of university. The fastest growing demographic comprises people over 35 years old. So there's plenty of opportunity for new business relationships.

Your Facebook profile

This is meant for individuals, not companies. Connect with friends, family and contacts, via your profile. Communicate with them directly, via their Facebook Inbox. Check out their status updates within your News Feed and share your status updates with all / some of your friends. Messages can be open or private. Users can create and join interest groups and use a myriad of features to connect with companies and contacts.

You are limited to 5000 Friends (that's a lot of friends). The 'Like' feature allows you to give positive feedback or connect with things you care about on Facebook. You can like content that your friends post or Pages that you want to connect with on Facebook.

Wall

This is where you tell the world what's happening and where your Friends can write updates.

Info

It is important to keep this up to date, particularly the contact information.

Other tabs

You can add more tabs – such as 'blog'.

Facebook Groups

Another possibility allows you to create discussion groups and watch the debate you've created unfold. Invitations to your events can be sent to all of your 'fans' in an instant. You can upload current media, such as photos and videos for viewing. Most importantly of all, you can tap into a rapidly-growing database, with a huge potential for new customers.

Facebook advertising

Facebook for business contains some great features. These include advertising, which allows you to choose your target market's location, age etc, so that you can ensure your message is going to the right people.

You can target people living in particular counties or cities. You can choose age ranges (i.e. above 18, or 18–30 year olds). You can then select Likes and Interests. In addition, you can target people who are connected to a Page, Event, Group or Application.

Several of my internet marketing seminar attendees have reported success using Facebook ads.

You only pay when someone clicks on your ad and you can set the amount of money you wish to pay on a daily basis. You can find out the number of impressions you ads have received (i.e. how many times they have appeared within Facebook), the click through rates and how much money you have spent on a campaign so far.

www.wildfireapp.com

According to MarketingSherpa, the primary reason for friending or following a company through social media is to learn about special offers or sales. With Wildfire you can build and launch your own social media marketing campaigns. Within Facebook, you can add a 'Promotions' tab to your Facebook page. Campaign formats include quizzes, contests, coupons and virtual gifts. You can create layouts and designs yourself. Their 'Basic' service cost \$5 + \$0.99 per day.

URL shortening

A 'URL' = a web page address. (If you are interested, it stands for 'Uniform Resource Locator'). When it comes to social media, the snag is that URLs can be quite long. So the answer is to shorten them. Here are three online resources which allow you to do this:

- <http://bit.ly/> * <http://goo.gl/> * <http://goo.gl/>

Each of the above offers a quick and easy way to shorten long website page addresses.

Having opened up a web page, highlight the page address, using your mouse. Then click 'Control +C' (on a PC) to copy the address. Click within one of the above resources (i.e. Bitly) and click 'Control +V' to drop the long URL into the space provided. You will then see the shortened URL.

For example: http://www.nigeltemple.com/articles_segmentation.htm ...becomes <http://bit.ly/aBt8fQ> within Bitly.

Three types of content

People like to learn in different ways, i.e. by reading, listening and by watching. Online, you can provide words to read, sound clips and audio files to listen to and videos to watch.

Connecting via your phone

If you have an iPhone or a smartphone you can connect to Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and keep up with what's going on. There really is no peace any longer, is there?

<http://www.marketingcompass.co.uk>

The Marketing Compass - social networking site for small business owners

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www.twitter.com/marketingcompass

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<http://www.facebook.com/themarketingcompass>

Nigel's internet marketing blog can be found at: <http://www.totosites.com>