

Why Small Business Have to Use Social Media

Marketing is about getting out the word, engaging in conversations, taking suggestions, problem solving, educating your audience, and promoting your company, product, or service. Today, one of the best ways for a small business to get the word out is through social media.

Much cheaper than traditional marketing and advertising – Social media marketing shouldn't cost a small business nearly as much as traditional advertising. Most outlets are free. However, it might be worthwhile to hire someone to help with the social media marketing.

You can create thousands of dollars worth of free advertising with just a few minutes of time.

- **Social Media allows small businesses can compete with the large companies** – It has been difficult for small companies to compete with the advertising and marketing budgets of large companies. With the right type of viral social media, you could get an immense amount of traffic with quickly growing natural links, and keep traffic coming for a long time.
- **Provides another way for potential customers to find you** – If you're not high enough in the search engines for potential customers to find you, they can still find you through social media. Social Media has the potential to send you unlimited traffic. **It makes your company accessible** – An accessible company translates into a more trustworthy company.
- **Establish yourself as an expert** – Use forums and message boards to answer questions professionally, honestly, and correctly, which will earn you respect as an expert in your niche. People will look to you for answers.
- **Find out exactly what your customers wants** – Social media is amazing in so many ways. You don't have to wonder what your customers want - ask them on social media, and they'll tell you.
- **Your customers can play an active role in the business** – Instead of focus groups, let your customers offer suggestions. Have them share their likes and dislikes. You could find yourself with ideas for new products and services.
- **Establish Branding** – Create a recognizable identity for your product or service. This is extremely important for a small business.
- **Get the word out** – Let your customers and the public about your products and services. Today more and more customers are turning to the web to find products and services. A well defined web presents will make you stand out.
- **Manage your reputation** – Social media is a way to find out what other people and sites are saying about your name, company, or brand. It also is a medium to respond and to fix any problems you find.
- **Word of mouth** – Customers need to trust a company before purchasing from them. People trust their friends and loved ones more than anyone else. So, if they hear from someone trustworthy about your company, chances are higher that they'll buy from you. Market your products using word of mouth virtually.

- **Build relationships and become more personal** – By using a variety of different social medias, and you can build relationships with customers and potential customers. Trust comes through honesty and sincerity.
- **Open up the line of communication between business owner and millions of potential customers** – This means *millions* of people who could possibly become customers?
- **Social networking with potential clients and customers can come from all over the globe** – With social networking sites such as *Facebook, StumbleUpon, MySpace* and *Twitter* among many others, you can hold personal conversations with each of your customers. Let them about new products, sales and coupons, suggestions and tips – the topics are endless.
- **Improve web traffic** - For example, if one of your items becomes viral and makes it to the front page of *Yahoo Buzz* (a social news site), it could get you 100,000 to 1,000,000 viewers.
- **Increase your link-ability** – One way to move up in the search engines is to have links from other sites pointed to your site. Natural links – or links that come naturally to your great post, awesome video, or amazing picture, are the best kind for your business. They'll not only bring in traffic, but should also help move you up further in the search engines.
- **Helps with search engines** – As mentioned above, social media helps you move up in the search engines because of links. Many social news sites and social networking sites have “do follow” links in their profile pages. Every time you create a profile with your blog, they will be sending link juice to you – in other words, it's telling Google your blog is worthy of a mention.
- **Direct conversation to a specific niche** – There are so many social networking, social bookmarking, and social news sites that are dedicated to specific niches. You have the ability to speak directly to these people and not have all the other noise of unrelated topics getting in the way. If you are speaking their language, you have a better chance of them actually hearing what you are saying – and you're getting the **RIGHT KIND** of following.
- **It's a way to explain yourself** – Some businesses are afraid of social media because they're afraid of negative comments. Social media provides the platform to explain, to make things right. If someone has something negative to say they can say it. Ignoring them doesn't stop the damage. However, when you reply, you are seen as a business owner who cares and wants to make the customer happy. Social media is a two-way conversation and can be used as a platform to defend your business.

If you are still aren't convinced, consider these two results from the BRANDFog 2012 CEO Survey:

- 1) More than 82% of respondents more likely to trust a company whose company engages in social media.
- 2) 77% of respondents are likely or more willing to buy from a company whose mission and values are defined through their leaderships' involvement in social media.