

Planning a Social Media Campaign

The growth of social media for business purposes is growing rapidly. But one cannot just sign up to a social media website and expect success. Properly planning a social media campaign is essential to success.

Why Businesses Use Social Media

Customer Behavior

- Learn how customers behave in real time: conversion rates, store behavior etc.

Feedback and Focus Groups

- Ask others for their suggestions and opinions

New Ideas

- Get ideas for new products, campaigns, partners, sales channels, etc.

Advertising

- Often free, as customers promote you and pass your message on to others

Expertise

- Be recognized as an expert

Outline for Planning a Campaign

Portfolio Management

Portfolio management is used by venture capitalists to manage risk, not return on investment.

By diversifying their efforts, venture capitalists can reduce risk and emphasize successful

ventures. Venture capitalists will:

- Invest in **several companies**
- **Actively participate** in the management of these companies
- **Support successful** companies and move them forward
- Have an **exit plan** for those that do not work out

The same process can be applied to social media campaigns.

Selecting the Social Media to Use

There are thousands of social media companies and websites. Selecting one because everyone else is there will not work. Just as in mountain climbing, you need to establish a good base camp or base of operations to work from because:

- Establishing a social media presence is a long-term activity
- The basic plan is to watch first, then join in.
- Six months is a reasonable time to establish a good presence

Monitor

Monitor blogs, forums, posts etc. and look for places that mention your company, product or service. Look especially for places where the target audiences you want to reach are present.

Create Accounts

For the social media services you want to use, create your business accounts. Set up the account to appeal to the target audiences in your sector that you want to reach.

Good Targets

Continue to monitor and begin to participate in your selected social media channels. Do not mention your product or service unless asked, and always use good manners. Look for the best opportunities or targets. Good places to search include popular social media sites, blogs in your sector, places where people ask questions and check out your competitors.

Make the Commitment to Participate Fully

Now you must make the commitment to participate in your chosen social media channels. This means you must dedicate enough resources over a long period of time in order to:

- Contribute information that people will find relevant and valuable
- Demonstrate your own competence and expertise
- Contribute on a regular basis
- Add tools to your own social media sites to make it easy for people to share your contributions with others.

Exploit Successes

Set Goals

As you set up your social media activities, make sure you can also check your progress. Measuring social media activities is still evolving, so use metrics that you can easily measure and evaluate.

Measure Progress

Online activity is easy to track, sometimes too easy. Collect the data you need and carefully analyze it. Be flexible, things can and will change online quickly.

Have an Exit Plan

Every online venture will not work out. You must know when it is time to leave. Remember that social media is like a conversation. You should leave gracefully and politely, you never know when you might want to come back in the future.

Campaign Killers

Here are some things that can quickly kill an online social media campaign.

Do Not Place Tactics Before Strategy

Have a good strategy in place before you begin your social media activities.

Be Honest

Make sure everything you say is correct to the best of your knowledge. It is too easy for others to fact check online, and dishonest statements will be found out and publicized. Admit mistakes when you make them.

Be Committed

If you decide to use social media, make the commitment to use it properly. No one likes to come to a site and see that it has been left unattended for months.

Do Not Use Adspeak

Too many people prepare content that is full of weak phrases, vague words, and terms that have little meaning. Write good content for your contributions so that people will want to see what you have to say.

Do Not Use Automated Tools

There are services advertising that they can produce valuable, fresh content using automated tools. These are not a substitute for content produced by real people.

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