

Social Media's Impact

Coaching Questions

“What can social media do for my business?”

Topic Introduction

Using social media should be part of your business' strategic plan. There are a lot of different things that social media can do for your business and a lot of things it can't.

Discussion Questions

- Does it help you manage your reputation?
- Does it help you collect customer feedback?
- Does it help you build a relationship with your customers or prospects?
- Does it help you find industry information and new ideas?
- Does it help you find suppliers and partners?

Key Learning

Knowing why you are using social media will help you use it more effectively.

“How has social media changed? How will it continue to change?”

Topic Introduction

Social media started off with tools like ICN (Yahoo's instant messaging), MySpace, and other online tools that are currently insignificant. At the same time, some of the new social media tools such as Tumblr and Pinterest are extremely young companies.

Discussion Questions

- Is your social media strategic?
- Is your social media growing followers and fans?
- Is your social media helping people find you?
- Is your social media getting you incremental business?

Key Learning

Often social media doesn't get your incremental business. Most businesses use it for other reasons in their business. If you use it for incremental business, how do you plan on accomplishing this?

“What is your social media strategy?”

Topic Introduction

There are so many changes in the social media sphere, your strategy and tactics need to adjust as quickly.

Discussion Questions

- What social media do you use?
- How do you plan on managing this?
- How do you measure your results?
- What does success look like?
- What are your future plans?

Key Learning

You need a way to stay on top of changes in the social media sphere if you plan on continuing to use it as a strategic tool.

Examples

Real Life Examples: What can social media do for my business?

Telus: Large enterprises often use social media in public relations to determine how the public is talking about them. By monitoring #telus or a related hashtag, Telus is able to track conversations about them (either negative or positive). For the negative conversations, they are able to add to the conversation to mitigate any negative press. For the positive conversations, they can thank the contributor and build a loyal customer. Public relations is a common strategic way for enterprises to use social media.

Copywriter: Social media was used to find business at networking events. Whenever the business was planning on attending a conference, tradeshow, or other event, they would follow the hashtag to see who was talking about it and what they were saying. This allowed the sales people to actually schedule meetings with people attending the event prior to, during, or after the event occurred.

Real Life Example: How has social media changed? How will it continue to change?

Head hunters can use social media to better serve their clients in almost all aspect of their business.

Marketing: Head hunters can update their status on social media platforms with new job postings that are available.

Recruitment: Head hunters can search for people in similar roles, with specific backgrounds, or within specific industries. LinkedIn is the best example of social media that allows for this as the current job and all past job experience is available through the platform.

Screening: During the resume screening, interview, and reference checks, social media can be another place to validate that a candidate is a good fit for the head hunter's job posting. Most employers now routinely leverage social media as a way to screen potential employees.

Real Life Example: What is your social media strategy?

A search engine optimization and social media marketing guru has to change their social media tactics all the time, to adapt to the changes in the industry. Google changes how they rank websites and blogs routinely and each social media platform ranks profiles differently. Here is an example of some of the changes that have occurred since 2009 alone.

1. **More recent content is prioritized versus historical content.** This made blogs more powerful than websites. The necessity to update your website content even more important. Social media updates could be ranked. Public relation firms had to start to consider search engine optimization in their press releases.
2. **Pictures are searchable and add to your rankings.** The introduction of Pinterest and Google Images has made images more important in rankings than they were before. Not only does the image have to be unique and interesting to look at, but it also needs to be named correctly for search engine optimization.

Mini Case Study

Joe wants to start up a floating ice cream shop that shows up at all of the festivals in the city. He doesn't have a physical location and questions if he really needs to use social media.

JOE: "Everyone is using social media. But if I'm just a little travelling ice cream shop, I don't really know if this applies to me."

COACH: "Social media isn't for everyone. It really depends on if you can reach out to your target market in a meaningful way. If your target market is using social media, than you probably should be as well."

JOE: "Obviously children and teenagers buy the most amount of ice cream from me. And they are the largest users of Facebook. Based on that, I guess I should be."

COACH: "That's step one. Is there a meaningful way to reach out to them?"

JOE: "We'll be at a ton of family and teenage friendly events. I guess by giving people a heads up about these festivals might be a good thing. Especially as we're always travelling, our customers won't know where we are without that."

COACH: "Posting the events is a good idea. But is there a fun or interactive way that you could interact with your customers?"

JOE: "We could post pictures of the event as they happen. Post pictures of the newest ice cream creations. This could get pretty fun. Maybe we could have an online competition for the 'coolest treat of the summer'"