

Social Media for Start-Ups

10 tips to get it right from the start

by Kathy Wall

For new businesses or those who have yet to dip their toes into the social media pool, you hopefully realize the critical importance of this component to your marketing plan. How you create these digital communications also matters.

1) Become knowledgeable. If you are winging this on your own, there are a number of free resources that will help you navigate the waters. Try Socialbakers, Hubspot, or Social Media Examiner. Services can also be outsourced to an agency if you want to leave it to a pro and spend your time focusing on your bringing in new clients and establishing a healthy bottom line.

Consistency

There's a big advantage for social media start-ups who are ready to establish social accounts as opposed to those who set them up over a period of time.

2) Proactively create pages in all social channels including Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, and so on. Do this even if you don't plan to use them all initially.

3) Create these accounts using the same name or @ on all of them to make it easier for potential clients to find you. Ideally, it will be the name in your website URL and email address. Shorter is better but don't abbreviate so much that your online name becomes unrecognizable. Finding the same name that meets the character limitations across all channels may be challenging but remember consistency is a key component of marketing a new brand.

Think Big

There's a big difference between personal accounts and business accounts and in the case of Facebook, you have to have one to create the other. You'll establish a business page by logging into your personal profile.

4) Make a good first impression. Be sure to completely enter all pertinent information and quality images before publishing the page.

5) Create a business account in Instagram as this allows you to incorporate clickable "email" or "call now" features for instant communications with people interested in doing business with you. These valuable features of business pages are not available to individual accounts.

6) Be sure to link accounts to each other in the settings for each. This allows you to post once and have it appear across platforms. Although we are seeing a decline in Twitter usage for some designers and companies, you will nevertheless want a presence. Using the auto-tweet option for posts from Facebook and Instagram will minimize the need to create unique content on Twitter, thus saving time.

Cast a Long Shadow

7) Do "speak" as if you are a brand using first-person plural (we, our). This communicates a professional company or business rather than just a one-person operation. Use the tone, verbiage, and degree of sophistication or whimsy that has been established in all your branding materials.

8) Do not use slang or abbreviations unless it is brand-appropriate. And, just say "no!!!" to excessive punctuation marks.

9) Posts with visuals are more engaging—it's a fact. Your analytics will support that. An uploaded photo with keyed-in copy will provide better engagement than a post created with a link which automatically generates an image.

10) Check your analytics. Nearly all social platforms include a free mechanism to measure and evaluate your initiatives and you should review these at least once a week. There are also some paid options that assimilate your analytics into one tool.

Now that your SoMe sites are set up, it's time to create content, post, tag, share, comment, engage, monitor, evaluate, and improve...and build longstanding client relationships within your community and beyond. ✂



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