

How to Manage Social Media
On a Busy Schedule

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Introduction

Businesses, whether large or small, know the importance of marketing. If no one knows about your business you certainly can't expect to make any sales or even be in business for very long.

How you go about marketing your business will determine your success. To reach your target market, convert them into paying customers and increase revenues, you and your staff (if any) will need to employ a variety of effective marketing strategies.

It's important to note that you will need to include both offline and online marketing/advertising techniques. Due to the heavy growth of the internet as a means for making purchases, this is one area you will want to pay particular attention to. Although it is one of the easiest and quickest ways to reach out to prospective customers, you must make sure that you are reaching them not only through their computers but through their mobile devices as well.

To reach as many customers as possible in the online world, you will want to be sure to include email marketing, video marketing, **social media marketing** and search engine marketing techniques.

Failure to take advantage of all that the online world offers could cost you thousands of dollars in lost revenues. You can be sure that your competitors will be there to eagerly pick up those missed sales opportunities in no time.

What Should You Share on Social Media?

To be successful on social media, you need to keep in mind that it is a place to be, well, social. So what does that mean? It means that it's not a place to constantly promote your offers. Being successful on social media requires you to provide regular content that will keep your fans and followers engaged.

It can be a little confusing in the beginning to figure out what kind of things to share. Take a look at these three types of popular content to get yourself started:

Everyone Loves a Good Laugh

Think about when you are with friends and family. Don't you enjoy hearing a funny story or joke? Your fans and followers are no different. Humor is a big part of being social.

Look for content that will entertain your audience and give them a laugh. Your objective is to get a conversation flowing. Forget about your business for the moment and think about what your market will enjoy.

Don't worry if this is a little hard for you at first. With time and practice you'll get the hang of it.



Relevant Content

This type of content could be anything from an article to a video to a blog post. The important part is that you are sharing the kind of information that will be useful to your audience.

A good example of this kind of content would be a travel agency. They might choose to share some photos of the Virgin Islands that were originally shared by an airline or hotel.

Here is a reminder and caution. Not all social media platforms are created equal. What this means is that it's important to get to know the culture of the various social media platforms that you'll be using – the ones that your target market can be found on.

For example, game, quizzes, certain types of humor are accepted and expected on Facebook. These are not considered acceptable on LinkedIn unless they serve a specific purpose.

I like to think of Facebook as the informal Barbecue where family and friends gather in their jeans and cut-offs. LinkedIn is the Cocktail Party where everyone is dressed-up in suits and evening attire. Two different types of settings and the content that's posted should reflect that you clearly understand the difference.

Your Content and Products

Of course you don't want every update to be about you and your company, yet you do want to share about your business periodically. This is your opportunity to share a post from your blog, announce an upcoming launch or let your audience know about a service you offer.

Creating visual images of your products or services in a way that highlights how they make the life of the customer easier is a great way to share without appearing to be self promotional. And something to keep in mind that even when promoting your own products and services, highlight the benefits that your readers and visitors will gain, rather than just focusing on features.

How to Build Engagement

As part of your overall social media marketing plan, it is crucial that you engage in conversation with your customers everyday across all of your social platforms. Social media is all about engagement. Simply put, the more you interact, the more success you will see.

What is the best way to get these conversations going? Fortunately there are many ways to do this quite effectively. Let's take a look at some of them.

Ask Open Ended Questions

Open ended questions requiring more than just a simple yes or no answer. These are the kinds of questions you want to ask to get the conversation flowing. You don't have to ask questions that only pertain to your business. You can ask about anything as long as it is intriguing to your audience. People love to give their opinion. One point to remember, however, is that you may want to avoid topics pertaining to religion or politics.

Comment on Posts

Again, social media is not all about **you** and **your** business. Just as you want people to comment on your posts, others want the same from you. This is your opportunity to share your opinion. When you comment, make it a point to say something meaningful. Generic comments like "Great post" are not enough. Ask a question or share your experience as it relates to the subject at hand.

Reply to Mentions

You can set up alerts that will let you know when your name or brand is mentioned online. Take this opportunity and reply to the person who mentioned you. Thank them for the mention. Reply to the topic that is being discussed.

Reply to Questions

You may be asked a question directly or someone may post a question. Answer with a helpful reply. The person who asked the question will be grateful for the information and it is one more way for you to reach out to others.

Be Yourself

Being a real person online and showing off your personality will do wonders for building your business. This of course does not mean leaving professionalism by the wayside. What it does mean is giving audience the opportunity to get to know the person behind the business. People like to do business with those they know, like and trust.



Setting Up a Social Media Schedule

Engaging with clients on social media requires you to spend time on social media sites each day. You can quickly find your time slipping away due to all of the activity going on. For this reason it is vital that you develop strong habits that will help you filter out the distractions.

Set a Schedule and Stick to It

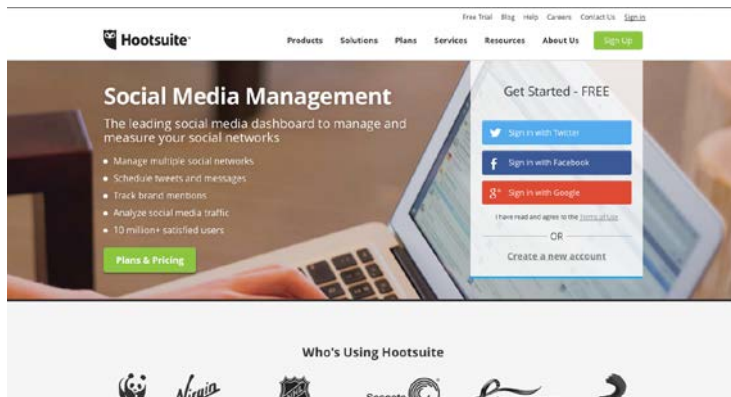
You are on social media to meet certain goals and objectives. In order to do that you must have a schedule that you diligently stick with. Without one it will be very difficult to manage your time. Here are some tips to help you:

- Set a time limit. You may decide to spend 15 minutes a day on each platform and that you'll share an article and write two posts or replies.
- Focus on your goals. What do you want to accomplish today on social media? Maybe you want to leave 3 comments or replies, engage with new fans, etc. Whatever the goal is, stick with that and ignore everything else. If it doesn't pertain to your business save it for another time.
- Have someone else handle your social media activities. Give them specific tasks to perform such as replying to customers or scheduling your posts for the week. There are many tools that you can also use to automate many of your online activities as well. Don't be afraid to use them.
- Monitor your results. If you don't know whether your social media activities are helping you, you could be wasting your time. Keep an eye on your results. If you aren't happy with what you are seeing, consider changing things a bit as far as how often you are posting or how much time you are spending on social media.

Tools to Help You Avoid the Time Drain

There are a variety of apps and programs that can help automate your social media activities. What can get confusing is which one to use? Let's take a look at two of the most highly recommended programs.

Hootsuite



Hootsuite is a program that allows you to manage all of your sites, lists, searches and more from one dashboard. When you make an update on Hootsuite you can send it to all of your accounts or only to particular ones. You can also monitor activity as well and do bulk scheduling.

Sprout Social



Like Hootsuite, Sprout Social lets you manage all social media profiles in one place. It has a free 30-day trial so that you can give it a try. Mobile applications are what make Sprout Social very special. It offers a number of location-based features that work with Foursquare and other geo-local sites. Sprout Social is also good for reputation management. You can set it so that it alerts you anytime your brand or certain keywords are mentioned.

Conclusion

Similar to your business, social media requires your attention and patience. It's not a set it and forget it process. Daily maintenance and participation are required. It is also important that you are able to adapt to the changes that frequently arise. You also need to always be open to learning new strategies and techniques for engaging with your audience.

The more you can get your business's identity shared, processed and talked about, the more people will end up visiting your websites and stores. This will undoubtedly result in increased revenues. How you go about generating this interest will depend on your business's specific marketing goals and strategy.

Who is Yvonne A Jones

Yvonne A Jones is Your Client Retention Mentor and Small Business Consultant because she supports small businesses and highly-motivated Entrepreneurs to bridge the gap between client attraction and retention.

Her mission is to help business owners bring the FUN back into their business, spend more time doing what they love to do, and less time chasing new clients.

Yvonne's many loyal clients named her "The Queen of Business Breakthrough" because she supports them with systems, programs, and mentoring that result in clarity in their message and marketing that brings them real results. Her online and offline Relationship Marketing and Social Media Marketing systems and strategies take her clients from **knowing** to **doing**.

Yvonne believes that when you "Focus on relationships; the money will follow."

Testimonial:

"After just the first two coaching sessions of working with Yvonne, she's helped me to have clarity in my message and develop a focus on who I want to attract with my message. I'm now able to create and develop my personal brand in the business that I love. I got more out of my first coaching and mentoring session than I had by purchasing programs and trying to do it on my own for over a year."
Joy Ruffen, PSL



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