



How to Build your Brand on Social Media:

Top 8 insider tips to success

Industry Article



Social media is a powerful brand building tool, but it's a tricky beast to master. With so many different platforms to use and ways of getting your message across, it is important that you have a clear strategy in place and a few tricks up your sleeve when running or setting up any social media campaign. Here are our industry insider tips to the top 8 ways to engage your audience, build your brand and make an impact with your social media:

1. **Research, Research, Research**

Consumers look for different things from different brands. Before you start any campaign, make sure you know exactly what your target audience is searching for online and what they want from you. Compile a list of keywords or phrases to search on Twitter that coincide with your products or services. Then match the language you use and the offers you share with what you find.

2. **Choose the Right Platform**

Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest. They all serve different functions and appeal to different audiences. Make sure you think carefully about the platform that best reflects your brand. Twitter, for example, is a flexible platform that any brand within any industry can benefit from despite the 140 character limit. Facebook, however, is typically better suited to fashion, food, sports, and entertainment brands. Of course that's not to say you can't use both or several platforms, but don't spread yourself too thinly. It's better to use one platform that really makes an impact rather than using several unsuccessfully.

3. **Keep your Content Fresh**

No matter how relevant it is to your brand, if all you are doing is re-posting news articles and pieces from mainstream sources, engagement levels will be low. Recognise the potential of the organic content that your brand produces, be it articles, white papers or blog posts, and mix it up with research materials such as industry news and topics. Photos, videos, snippets, calls to actions and seasonal profile updates all help in keeping your content fresh. Create a content strategy and stick to it.

4. **Engage your Audience**

Without a loyal following of brand advocates, your social media won't have an impact. Building that initial following is one thing, but making them stay is more important. Engagement is key to this. Stick as closely as you can to the '*Serve, don't sell*' philosophy. Don't just talk at your audience and go for the hard sell. Strike a healthy balance between posting new content and

connecting with your audience by replying to their comments, asking new questions or starting competitions. This should help you both keep your existing audience happy and attract a new following.

5. Build a Network

Never forget that social media is a 'network'. The more you 'follow', 'like' and interact with other relevant companies and industry leaders, the more likely you will build your presence across all platforms. Mentioning and highlighting others in your updates also works wonders in gaining re-tweets, likes and shares later on. Add value to the online conversation and expose yourself to their audience by commenting on their blogs, following them on twitter and occasionally re-tweeting their content.

6. Incentivise Brand Loyalty

Give your audience a reason to interact with your social media pages by offering special promotions or industry tips that they can't find elsewhere. Make sure they have a reason to keep coming back for more. Running innovative campaigns including retweet competitions on Twitter, photo contests and giveaways on Facebook are proven crowd-pullers. Creating tabs on your Facebook fan page for games or quizzes your fans can take part in also enhances interaction and increase 'likes.'

7. Add Personality

Don't forget that social media is 'social' by nature. It's not all strictly business. You're interacting with humans so maintain that human element. Stand out by mentioning simple things like what's going on in your office, glimpses of what your company is up to, debates/conversations among team members, highlighting team members, entertaining updates. All of these contribute to constructing a strong online brand.

8. Be Transparent

Most of all, social media allows your brand to be transparent and remain impartial. Consumers love honest and candid brands who keep updates original. Celebrate the culture of your brand's home industry. See this as an opportunity to allow your followers to connect with what your brand represents - be it a lifestyle, a philosophy, or the inspiration behind your brand. Not only will this increase their confidence in engaging with your brand above your competitors, but it will help build the overall trust between you and your audience.

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