

What's All the Twitter About?

Three Critical Steps to Success in Social Networking

For many people, technology has been both a blessing and a curse. While most have grown to enjoy the benefits that come with the latest and greatest gadgets, many are also resistant to the changes that seem to be happening faster than the speed of light.

It is a mistake for businesses to take the "wait and see" approach. They need to engage now to keep up with the impact technology has on communication with our customers, our clients, our employees, and the general public.

According to research from Webvisible and Nielsen, while 63% of consumers and small business owners turn to the internet first for information about local companies, and 82% use search engines to do so, only 44% of small businesses have a website and half spend less than 10% of their marketing budget online. The research finds an accelerating trend toward online media for local search. However, the report says the study uncovers a significant disconnect between the way small business owners act as consumers versus the way they market their own business.

A Three-Step Formula to Success

step 1 **Create Your Strategic Plan**

If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan.

And guess what they have planned for you? Not much. - Jim Rohn

Business owners know that developing a strategy plan is far more effective than leaving the future to chance. Developing a strategy, vision, mission and a specific plan of action contributes to long-term, sustainable success. A strategic plan helps businesses create higher levels of motivation and commitment that help fuel continuously-higher-levels of achievement. A strategic plan is the starting point to engage in using and integrating social networking.

step 2 **Integrate Web-Based Social Networking into Your Marketing Mix**

Social networking has always been important to business building. While just a short time ago it meant going to meet and greets and handing out your business cards, today it is critical to include the many web-based social media sites in networking strategies. The big three – known as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, are the most common place to start, but there are thousands of social networking web sites that potentially can reach your target market.

Social media sites also provide businesses with a forum for communication with their target markets. According to the Nielsen Global Online Consumer Survey, 90% of online shoppers trust the opinions of other like-minded shoppers. Opinions posted online are valued most by consumers, and are second only to recommendations from people known. 70% of people trust recommendations from unknown online users. The explosion of user-generated content provides consumers with "word of mouth" recommendations in their decision-making process, either from people they know or anonymous online consumers.

step 3 **Create/Promote Your Personal Brand**

Businesses have long known the importance and benefits of establishing their brand and brand identity. The internet has changed how consumers and businesses buy, research, and interact with each other. That dynamic has created the need for personal branding to become part of the marketing mix. Personal branding takes brand strategy to the personal level of relationship building.

Personal branding means taking proactive steps to manage your professional and personal image. By identifying and communicating your unique value and distinction in the marketplace, you can create differentiation and stand out from others providing similar products and services. Successful participation in social networks depends on your authenticity and transparency.



Luck is When Preparation Meets Opportunity






The changing face of communication and the opportunities available through technology gives businesses today an even playing field. It's no longer the David vs. Goliath scenario, because businesses can engage in the same space and make an impact. The formula starts with a strategic plan that is consistent, realistic, and actionable; it integrates social media; and your personal brand is conveyed authentically and transparently.



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Elkay Corporate Advisors specializes in leading, coaching, consulting and training businesses and individuals to help them be more effective and profitable. We use customized processes and practical guidance to help clients make strategic and informed decisions to achieve success faster and easier than they could on their own.

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-  Business/Marketing Strategic Plan Development
-  Social Media Consulting and Training
-  Coaching – Executives, Personal Branding
-  Leadership, Customer Loyalty, Team Building, Time Management
-  We are also available for keynote/conference addresses and training workshops.

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