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Wise up to social networking sites



Social networking is rapidly becoming the most preferred Web 2.0 (latest generation of web development) marketing tool. If you are engaged in selling your products or services online, there is plenty you can do with social networking sites to promote your business.

As a business communication channel, the arguments for social networking are compelling. Where someone might spend only a few minutes flicking through their daily newspaper, they'll often check their favourite social networking sites regularly throughout the day.

However, the numerous possibilities are accompanied by inevitable pitfalls. This article will highlight a few key elements to keep in mind when using social media to promote your business.

The world of social media doesn't just involve socialising. Social media marketing is quickly becoming quite a large part of business marketing campaigns worldwide. Businesses, big and small, are using social networking sites to capture the attention of clients, and in the process are finding a wealth of new opportunity.

The challenge faced by most online business owners is directing traffic to their websites but thanks to sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn you can now generate traffic.

Find out more about our professional [social networking](#) packages.

Twitter

Twitter is one of the fastest growing social networking website and hence would be a perfect place to start promoting your business. It works a bit like text messaging, in that users post messages (called Tweets) which can be of a general nature or directed to a particular audience. The public visibility of tweets provides a great opportunity to interact with your customers.

Facebook

Of the three social networking sites we're exploring, Facebook is probably the one where business to consumer communication is most prevalent, and indeed encouraged. It offers specific pages for businesses to announce their news and attract followers. The site is often described as "Fun" and "Informal" and it is particularly important to remember this when publishing news and information. If you make everything too formal and corporate you'll find your customer base quickly diminishing.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is one of the more mature social networks, both in terms of how long it's been around and the type of audience it attracts. As a marketing tool LinkedIn is probably most suited to SME's, and if used well it can be a good source of new business. One of the standout features of LinkedIn, and one not offered by any of its rivals, is the company profile page. These pages offer a detailed summary of every aspect of your business, from the year it was established to the number of employees.

Key Elements when using social media

- Open accounts with Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and cross-promote your content. Don't make the mistake of thinking this only applies to people with 'internet-savvy' businesses.
- Write articles about your products and services and promote through your profile. You can also create podcasts and/or videos. Make sure you always have a clickable link that sends people back to your website.
- 'Bookmark' your content and encourage other people to also bookmark your content and spread the word.
- Start community groups and encourage people to join and interact.
- Add a forum to your profile and encourage people to join in and give you feedback on your products and services.
- Remember that social media is about being sociable. Contribute to social networks, become part of the blogging community and integrate these tools to become popular, a better brand and have a following.
- Business is about people and that is the power of social media.

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While social networking is an excellent tool, it doesn't just stop at sending out tweets, status updates, answering questions and writing up blog posts. Social media is evolving so quickly that the opportunities for Internet marketing are now endless.

Driving traffic to your business links or website is what will determine whether you will make money online or not. Therefore, consider social networking as one of your marketing strategy and you will make money.

While many businesses prefer to maintain their presence on social networking sites themselves, it can take up considerable amount of time as well as staff resources. Another alternative would be to employ a professional marketing company to maintain your company's presence on social networking sites. Businesses need a focused, hard hitting continuous campaign and in the absence of regular care, your web page is sure to languish.

At Develop and Promote we offer a range of [social networking](#) packages including an effective monthly plan that is customised to make the optimum use of social media to enhance your company's online presence and overall goals and objectives.

So what are you waiting for? Get in touch with Develop and Promote now and let us create the right social networking package for your company.

For more information on our [social networking](#) packages or to get some friendly professional help give us a call on **(01522) 822520** or visit our [website](#).