

Peer

Marketing Group

Guide to Social Media

Based upon our experience at Peer Marketing Group, we have developed a system to allow your company the ability to effectively communicate with your customer base.

In this guide we have included tips, hints and helpful links to useful tools.

Listen to what's being said about you online

Listen to what customers are saying; prospective customers are asking and what influencers are suggesting within minutes using a few online tools. The power of social media is derived from the truth that with online anonymity disappointed clients and happy clients alike can write about their experiences. Listen to what's being said about your business online in a few simple steps.

1. Search Blogs

- a. Use Google's blog search tool and type in your business name, products, and competitors.
- b. Visit: <http://blogsearch.google.com>

2. Search who is linking to your website.

- a. Visit: <http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com>
- b. Click to follow the link and find who is discussing your website online.

Once you know who is talking about you and where your traffic is coming from you can start to develop an idea on where to focus your online efforts. More detailed work will allow you to find out what keywords are funneling traffic and adversely what information is turning potential clients to look elsewhere.

Join the conversation

Starting a blog is very easy and can dramatically change the public perception of your business. By having a company blog you are able to release company statements, white papers, updates and more. By sharing useful information anyone searching for your company online will be able to easily find and access your company's archives. This is useful when trying to get your company's information into mainstream media and other public relations situations.

To view step by step directions on starting your free blogs visit either:

<http://Blogger.com>

Created by one of Google's advanced programmers in his spare time, Blogger has become the #1 free blogging software. Google has made this online program so easy for anyone to use, the login is your Gmail account and you can setup your blog in minutes! With tons of applications to add to your blog and an infinite number of ways to customize the look, you will be able to convey a professional blog through this free software.

<http://Wordpress.org>

Wordpress is a complex software package. Both available online and able to host from your server there are thousands of plugins and templates available for this software. Being constantly updated to remain lighter and faster, this program is behind a considerable amount of the content that is hosted online. If you've used the internet, you've seen a lot of Wordpress pages... know it or not.

Start using communications tools

Using interactive public communications channels can be useful for any business. The best way to convey the benefits of this is by example.

Example: You are a restaurant and you've just tapped into the Social Media scene. People are slowly becoming your "Fan" on Facebook, or "Following" you on Twitter. You can effectively market to this active market by experimenting with offering special deals only on Twitter.

<http://Twitter.com>

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform where you can tell people what you are doing "at the moment" and share quick thoughts and ideas. The popularity of twitter came from internet integration with mobile technology. It is a large network; however there are few avenues for a business to take that will be effective ROI.

<http://Facebook.com>

Facebook is the second most visited website in the world... If you're not involved, you're going to fall behind. This is not a passing trend, it is a fundamental shift in the way we share information and communicate with one another. There are avenues to take to promote your business using this tool, however we recommend you tread lightly. Social Media sites are trying to keep a spam free environment, and will kick you off if you abuse the network.

<http://Linkedin.com>

If you're a professional in the world, chances are you're on LinkedIn... If you're not you should be. LinkedIn is a free professional networking site that allows a communication channel to prospective clients, employees, and data sharing. The power of this website is the ability to contact people in a non-threatening way to ask for their business.

Actively crowdsource your ideas

Crowdsourcing is not a new idea; it has been around since the dawn of time in one form or another. The idea behind crowdsourcing is to use the collective creativity and knowledge of your online audience to develop new products or alter current products to make them more applicable to your current and future clients.

A client that has time invested in a crowdsourcing activity or online community is more likely to evangelize the product and remain a dedicated customer. Through online tools such as Forums or Blogging you can use the techniques of crowdsourcing to get your clients actively involved. The key to getting an answer is asking a question, if you end your blog posts with a call to action or request for comments it will happen.

To build your own free forum visit:

Forumotion - <http://forumotion.com>

Forumotion is a easy to use free forum hosting service. They offer free software, free message boards and 3,000 free skins to customize your own forum.

FreeForums.org - <http://FreeForums.org>

FreeForums.org claims to be able to have your forum set up within minutes. With over 300 templates and a very reliable community you should feel comfortable trying them out.

Use the power of Facebook

Facebook is the second most visited website in the world, second to Google. More people are joining Facebook each day, the fastest growing demographic are 30-55 professionals. Marketing on Facebook is still in its infancy with their main advertising system a non-intrusive pay per click system with very affordable rates. Marketing is key on Facebook if you have a small budget. Setting up a “Fan” page is free and easy.

Use Facebook as a tool in your marketing plan and you will soon see its value. Encourage your patrons to sign up as “Fans” online to receive special deals only online. When you have “Fans” sign up for your page, you are able to send them mass private messages.

Homepage: <http://Facebook.com>

Fan Page setup: <http://Facebook.com/pages/create.php>

Facebook Advertising: <http://Facebook.com/advertising>

Share digital media

Sharing digital media files does more than add clutter to the ever expanding sea of content available online. You are actively growing your internet presence and increasing the chances that a potential client will stumble upon your content. If you do this on a large scale as many successful Internet entrepreneurs have done the effect can be profound.

Sharing digital media files is as easy as sending an email now. I have provided you with 3 of the largest public digital media sharing websites. Facebook remains the largest of the digital media sharing websites, however because of privacy settings the images and videos do not currently get picked up by search engines.

Images: <http://Flicker.com>

Flickr is one of the largest online photo sharing websites. It has turned into more of a social network where photographers go to see each others work. It is so easy to setup anyone can jump on and within minutes backup and store all their photos online. For business this is important because you can draw a significant number of people to your site by putting up photos on flickr and tagging them correctly.

Video: <http://Youtube.com>

The ultimate video storing and sharing website in the world is Youtube.com. Youtube has created a revolution by allowing anyone with a \$10 webcam to become an international star if they have an original idea. Once again like Flickr, Youtube can be a powerful business tool; however tagging your videos properly is essential.

Powerpoint/Keynote: <http://SlideShare.com>

Slideshare is a powerful business tool, this website can draw more clients than any other if you are able to put out good information and correctly tag your slides. What SlideShare

does is put your slideshow online so everyone can follow it. This allows for two things, 1. You can share slides with co-workers or a boss easily via the web. 2. Slideshare can be picked up by the search engines, if a potential client views good information they will perceive you as an expert in your field.

Track your progress

Now that you have successfully broadcasted and promoted your business through some of the larger websites you should start to track where the most traffic coming to your site is coming from! Previously software that was able to track website traffic cost hundreds, even thousands a month...

Google came out with its own free analytical software called Google Analytics. This is a science unto itself, however if you have a webmaster set your website up with it and show you how to read the account you will begin to see the benefits instantly.

With Google Analytics you will be able to see how many visits your site gets, if the visitors have been to your site before, where they clicked your advertisement or link, if they typed in your website into their search engine, what area they are visiting your site from, how many pages within your website they viewed, how long they stayed on each page... etc.

Visit: <http://GoogleAnalytics.com>

Thank You for reading

Please feel free to contact us to discuss putting together a custom Social Media Marketing solution for your company. Our unique strategies will prove how powerful Social Media can be for your business. The best part is, it's all trackable!

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