

Social media: Not just for IT and marketing departments

 By Conrad David

18. Jan 2014

Since joining the digital era and having plugged myself into the world wide web, I have observed that IT people can get lost in binary codes. They succeed in giving us tech support and solving our daily email glitches but generally neglect communicating constructively and strategically to online audiences on a mass scale.

In addition, after studying marketing for three years I dropped out of campus to pursue an entrepreneurship lifestyle in the corporate world. I found that traditional marketing media such as newspapers, magazines, tv and billboards formed the cornerstone of information to the people.



A social collaboration

Despite marketers spending large budgets and time in planning and executing a marketing campaign, they did not receive instantaneous feedback from their target audiences. Questions like: "Did they understand my advert? Did they get the joke?".

The above scenarios reflect that the separate functions, roles and responsibilities of IT and marketing departments in the corporate sector, have become the departments where social media is managed.

The social media revolution challenges this status quo and calls for an integration of IT, marketing and the strategic collaboration of all corporate sectors (from the customer service department to human resources). There needs to be a seat for social media on your company's board before its too late.

This integration has the potential to harness the power of social media. Social media are platforms that facilitate interactions among people in which they create, share and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks - such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

From tweeting about a new movie they have just watched; or taking and uploading a photo of a new shoe that they have purchased to checking in at their favourite hangouts for a status update.

These information bytes can be used by companies to develop strategic content to target specific audiences thereby creating public awareness about their product, which leads to engagement, which results in consumers in return tweeting about you and sharing photos of your new products.

A complete ecosystem

Social media is your entire business, you *need* to create a complete social ecosystem of your business for all departments to embrace with open arms. Which means you should hold a meeting with heads of each department and draw up actionable plans in the line of social media.

If you're a one person business, I suggest you go somewhere quiet, play some classic music preferably Bach or Chopin, pull out a white chart paper and draw up your companies departments current roles and create content for each.

Every staff member in your organisation needs to be on LinkedIn. Each employee will hold an average of 100 connections that will see your company name in their job title. That's opening your business brand to 100 connections times 100 times

100 and so on. Its the String Theory Effect and its awesome.

The String Theory effect is much like the process of association. If I meet you I know at least 20 people that could benefit you, and vice versa. Online we add people on different platforms for specific reasons - in this case the more you connect with the more people you know that can assist you in engaging with a project of cause of mutual benefit. Now don't go on a rapid friend request session after this article - be strategic and engage in communication with your new friends.



© Javierafael - Fotolia.com

Having your staff on social media is not bad for business, it has become common social business sense, before you take a step into this action draw up a one page social media policy. If a staff member is not in sales he or she should not be spending more than 30 minutes twice a day engaging with customers.

As the weeks progress, expand your social media policy from draft to legal testament. A social media policy is a corporate code of conduct that provides guidelines for employees who post content on the internet either as part of their job or as a private person.

Share with the community

The time your staff spends on the internet should be constructive - draw up a daily to weekly report to monitor online interactions to stay informed of potential leads and appointments obtained, you will be surprised at the amount of productivity and new business you will obtain from the social scene.

Each department and employee has a different view of your business, huddle your thought leaders and put up an "Idea Board" at the watering hole. It's these key steps that can contribute to you formulating content to share to your social community.

Make it routine to take pictures with your customers and share milestone moments of your success with your social audience, it's these points that help to create a warm social experience. We are not machines, so our sales pitches and concepts need to change to speak to consumers just like we would when they walk through your business doors.

ABOUT CONRAD DAVID

Conrad Travis David is the Founder and CEO of Hashtag South Africa, a Social Media Agency that specializes in Social Media Management, Consulting and Analytics. Hashtag South Africa was created out of the National Development Plan 2030 of South Africa based on the growing need to expand the awareness of South African products and services to the world. Conrad focuses on Geographical locations and growing awareness of the people in these sectors to stimulate GDP with the use of Digital.

» Social media: Not just for IT and marketing departments - 18 Jan 2014

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>