Social Media Marketing GPS

A Guide to Social Media,
1 Tweet at a Time

Interviews with 40 Marketing Leaders

By Toby Bloomberg

Sail away from the safe harbor.
Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore.
Dream.
Discover.
—Mark Twain

Dedicated to the pioneers of social media
marketing who are showing the world there is
a new way to do business.

They understood that digital intimacy creates
stronger customer relationships.

They realized that social media goes beyond
marketing to impacting how business is conducted.

They discovered that social media does not
only live online but offline as well.

Suggested Retail Price $14.95

Contents

Foreword

Shel Israel
www.twitter.com/shelisrael

It had to happen—an entire book, one tweet a time, and yet it is a real book that will help you understand what SM is about.

SMGPS will tell you the why & how using social media, 1 tweet at a time. You'll learn essentials in digestible little spoonfuls.

The book will explain why old-school broadcast practices are waning and new conversational methods are on the rise.

This is the way it should be. These days, companies cannot waste money. They need to cut costs.

And SM is MUCH more efficient.

Writing a book in tweets is like writing a very long #Haiku series.

Reading it should be both interesting and useful.

And hopefully, it will encourage you to talk about social media with others. After all, conversations is what SM is about

And when you stop to think, conversations are also what marketing is about. It's not just about messages and targets.

It's not about talking TO, but talking WITH.

Marketing is about getting closer with customers, which requires listening at least as much as talking.

Which is one of the really cool things about what @TobyDiva has created for you.

Because you'll get to spend more time talking about what she provides here, than it takes you to read it.

Will tweeted books replace traditional books? God, I hope not. I have no desire to be put out of business.

But #SMGPS is something new and different and will change things just a little.

And seems to me to be a very good thing. Enjoy what you are about to read. And tweet us what you think.

Introduction

Toby Bloomberg
www.twitter.com/tobydiva

Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler.
– Albert Einstein

Dedicated to the pioneers of social media marketing who are showing the world there is a new way to do business.

"If you don't risk anything, you risk even more." – Eric Jong

The back-story: I was curious to see if Twitter could be used to write a business book in a traditional chapter format.

My goal is to create a resource for marketers written by the community of social media marketers. An experiment in crowd sourcing.

Each tweet will be tagged and numbered.12 chapters will be posted to a dedicated blog. http://is.gd/pQJe

Can a book be written in bites of 140 characters? Curious about new ways to communicate? Please join me in this adventure!

Coloring Outside The Lines

Social Media Marketing GPS began as an experiment. I wondered if marketers would be receptive to, and find value in, a new book genre built on a succession of tweet interviews about one business topic: social media marketing.

The goal was to create a comprehensive body of knowledge that could serve as a roadmap (GPS) for developing a strategic social media plan. My thoughts were if this could be accomplished in a series of 140 character tweets it might help ease the apprehension for people new to social media, while at the same time, providing a review and offering some interesting ideas for those more experienced.

Forty prominent marketers from Canada, England, India and the United States were interviewed on Twitter. The focus was on how to leverage social media, not in terms of the technology, but as a vehicle to build and nurture stronger business relationships. Each tweet included the hash tag #smgps.

What developed was the first *business book of interviews* written on Twitter by the people who were working in the space. Twitter became both a content platform and a distribution channel.

Lessons Learned

Multiple re-tweets (RT) were a strong indication that many of the interview tweets could also stand alone as unique, inspirational thoughts. The following are a few examples of the RTs:

"Bottom line on social media: You ARE what you publish. (And what others publish about you.)" – David Meerman Scott

"And when you stop to think, conversations are also what marketing is about. It's not just about messages and targets." – Shel Israel

"The secret power of SM is not in the search rankings or new channel messaging but the ability to build cross cultural relationships." – Toby Bloomberg

"Core strategy = Go where the conversations are. We've had ups and downs in our social media efforts and will continue to do so." – Lionel Menchaca

"In the end doesn't it come down to who we are and how we define a REAL relationship?" – Liz Strauss

Although people seemed to enjoy the all tweet interview series, Twitter streams move too quickly and even people following missed many of the tweets.

It was a challenge comprehending how the chapters came together as a cohesive body of work that could be used to build a social media strategy. The initial solution was to consolidate the interviews on a blog. That helped but was still not the optimal approach to delivering the extent of information that had been created. The next logical step was to create this eBook.

For People New To Twitter

Twitter has developed a unique language all its own. Content is referred to as *tweets*. Since Twitter allows only 140 characters per tweet, people often collapse the spelling of words, ignore traditional grammar rules and/or make up their own abbreviations. For example, in the following Twitter interviews you'll find social media referred to as sm, SM and SoMe.

The photo, that introduces each interview and those on the front cover, are the Twitter avatars of the interviewees.

The boxes that highlight a tweet in each interview are some of the thoughts I found insightful.

Throughout the interviews you'll see hash tags - #. Hash tags are a way to create and track group thoughts on a topic. Twitter also turns them into live links. If everyone who tweets about Social Media Marketing GPS uses the hash tag #smgps we'll be able to continue the conversation together.

On A Personal Note

Since 2004, when I began my adventures in social media, my passion has been to help marketers view social media as a credible strategy. From blogs to social networks, if tactics are developed with your customers at the heart, social media can support and extend the value of your brand.

It is my hope that the insights and ideas in this book will encourage you to color outside the lines and test the limits of this exciting approach to building stronger business relationships.

Chapter 1: Why Social Media?

All lasting business is built on friendship. – A. A. Montapert

Tweet Intro

Technology connects people from across town to across oceans. Oxymoron is "unfeeling" digital builds personal relationships.

What began as a way to keep in touch w/ friends morphed to open conversations between customers & the PEOPLE w/in organizations.

> SM brings back the "corner grocery store relationship" where business was built on trust. The grocer was part of the community.

The grocer knew & cared about the people that purchased her products/services. SM helps create and nurture closer relationships

Most successful SM strategies focus on a niche .. think the "long tail" concept. SM is the poster child for segmentation marketing.

As w/ online marketing, social media can be measured and tracked. New success metrics include halo effect of influencers.

SM can provide a point of difference for your organization resulting in stronger customer loyalty and more effective targeting.

Interviews

In the following interviews Paul Chaney explains why social media is an important part of your marketing plan. Ann Handley tweets a case study about how the popular Marketing Profs business community used social media to grow attendance at its virtual B2B conference.

Paul Chaney
www.twitter.com/pchaney

Question: *Why should organizations take what many think is a risk, and invest $, people, time in social media marketing?*

I can think of five reasons why, all related to shifts in cultural trends. 1st, consumer skepticism is at all-time high.

Next reason for Why Social Media? is... media fragmentation is out of control. Hard to get consumer's attention.

Third reason for Why Social Media?... Increasingly the consumer is in control of branding/mktg message. Ppl are talking about us!

Reason #4, pressure is on to improve targeting/minimize waste; niche marketing is in.

Finally, fifth reason for Why SoMe? Companies are being held to new levels of accountability.

Why Social Media? People are talking and we better be listening and engaging the conversation. "Markets are conversations"

Ann Handley
www.twitter.com/marketingprofs

Question: *Why should organizations take what many think is a risk, and invest $, people, time in social media marketing?*

My mini-case study, 140 character segments: This week we held MarketingProfs Digital Marketing World. Many of you were there.

In fact, 14,000 of you registered for #mpworld. MarketingProfs has a huge email list/subscriber base of just over 300,000.

Our original goal for #mpworld was 8,000 people. We hit that after 3 emailings to our list. But then...

The social networks continued to build interest, awareness and drive registration. Specifically, Twitter & ads/conversation on FB.

In the end, preliminary results show about half of the 14,000 registrants weren't MP members/subscribers at all.

Meaning, #mpworld was likely their first real interaction with our brand. The soc networks allowed us to reach farther/wider...

...and deliver a meaningful, rich experience to all via #mpworld, which trended to the #2 spot here on Twitter during its height.

The following day, when we had a follow-up email glitch, it was again the social networks that alerted us to the problem.

What if we weren't here? Listening, communicating, interacting? That would have been a loss for our org on a lot of levels.

Key Concepts: Why Add Social Media To Your Marketing Mix?

Although some may consider social media a rogue approach to customer communication, others acknowledge that social media is not a passing fad but a valid component of a marketing "tool box" that is here to stay. The perception of the *wild digital west* is giving way to a world that includes: corporate governance guidelines, accepted norms for measurement, strategies that support business outcomes and industry-wide ethical behavior.

1. Social media creates rich, relevant customer experiences that can organically grow and strategically change to fit the interests, lifestyles, needs of your customers.
2. Social media cuts through the message clutter to capture the attention of your customers.
3. Social media provides opportunities to achieve your goals through digital word of mouth with help from your brand champions.

Continuing the Conversation

1. Who are the people you want to reach through social media? Keep in mind you might have multiple audiences with diverse needs and brand experience expectations.
2. Where (what platforms) do your customers *hang out* in the digital world?
3. How do your customers want to engage with (the people of) your brand?

Chapter 2: # The New Enterprise Direction

When you're finished changing, you're finished. – B. Franklin

Tweet Intro

It would be foolish not to acknowledge the "big gorilla" in the room - what is the risk in participating in open conversations?

Risk will be different for each organization.You must define the type & amount of risk. But with risk there can be great benefit.

> The larger issue is not negative comments but SM influences how business is/should be/will be conducted. This must be mgt's focus.

The answers to questions that you did not ask your customers impact all aspects of an org from PR, customer service, sales & more.

Savvy marketers understand that SM changes external & internal communication flow, processes & responses to customers' concerns.

Benefits to organizations include: team building, better cross silo exchanges, a focus on customer-centric marketing.

Challenges to organizations include: impact corp culture, staff must have knowledge & buy-in to values, transparency is important.

Begin a social media strategy by creating a global corporate direction. Take into consideration long-term impact of biz and staff.

5 step SM Direction model:
- Step1: Prepare and educate. Include competitive analysis, customer activity, industry trends, biz goals.
- Step 2: Invite people who perceive they have a stake: C-suite, PR, marketing, legal, IT, customer service to table.
- Step 3: Encourage people to talk openly within an ideology format meeting.
- Step 4: Confirm and prioritize issues.
- Step 5: Create a "Red Flag Memo" summarizing highlights, challenges, opportunities, actions. Identify a SM champion.

Interviews

Marc Meyer and Geoff Livingston discuss how although social media might be a grass roots strategy, your senior team's involvement is critcal for developing cross-enterprise structural communication change. Marc tweets the importance of identifying the 'right' tools that will solve specific business challenges. Geoff tweets that although front-line employees must be empowered to fully engage with customers, they also have new accountability and responsibility in their roles.

Marc Meyer
www.twitter.com/marc_meyer

Question: *SM goes beyond just a marketing strategy. SM changes the way business is conducted. What does that mean to you?*

The tools need to track back to the precise problems within the organization, you can't just have "tools"

I always like to start with the "why" or more specifically what are the companies goals

And then even more on a finite level- each department doesn't require the same tool either.

Agree with @geoffliving Have to have enterprise buyin even IF each dept.is autonomous

Top down is important but I also like to see bottom up-meet in the middle. 1st and foremost employees must see value

2 Takeaways here: The problem will define the tool and at the beginning and end of the day-it's all about the interaction.

@GeoffLiving Wonder sometimes if a guerrilla tactics should b a viable option to get the top 2 notice the benefit of sm interaction

RT@ecairn Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat —Sun Tzu

Geoff Livingston
www.twitter.com/geoffliving

Question*: SM goes beyond just a marketing strategy. SM changes the way business is conducted. What does that mean to you?*

Thanks @tobydiva! Enterprise marketing direction – It's important for the CXO team 2 B involved. SM requires more than just tools.

In fact, social media for CxOs represents larger transition fr siloed industrial structures to mesh-like information organizations.

Communicating/marketing w/ social media tools shld be seen as a movement towards embracing new structure. New customer expectations

New structure of enterprise social media means empowering internal & external stakeholders w/ time, rewards and revamped policies.

To successfully adapt, examine dept/division/enterprise missions & explore natural directions 4 improvement. Audit processes, too.

It's all about empowering the front line & ass. stakeholders; more people power vs. less control. Don't relinquish quality checks.

Examine dept/division/enterprise missions to lead to a measurable SM result, something achievable. Time, process, ROI improvement.

Audit HR and workflow processes to enable social media participation versus punish. Old industrial processes seek to close silos.

@Marc_Meyer Agreed. Sometimes bottom-up forces the top to pay attention. SM on the edge can work to affect enterprise change.

Key Concepts: Social Media Impacts The Total Enterprise

The development of the *Social Enterprise* may result in changes to the organizational structure, hiring practices, employee evaluations, internal communication practices and the very basics of an organization's culture. Most significantly, social media will influence how customer touch points are managed such as marketing, customer service, public relations, sales and after market support. Don't be surprised if social media redefines who interacts with the customer to include departments that traditionally had minimal direct contact.

1. Involvement in social media changes customer expectations of and with your brand experience.
2. Each organization defines what it considers to be their "risks" within the social media eco system.
3. Senior management must be onboard and involved to successfully employ enterprise-wide changes

Continuing The Conversation

1. What "gorillas" are your organization challenged to understand and resolve? What have you identified as the biggest risk?
2. How is/will social media effect the structure of your organization and what will be the new responsibilities of employees?
3. Who should be included in your cross functional social media team? Hint: include both champions and nay sayers.

Chapter 3: Research: The 1st Listening Post

Listen or thy tongue will keep thee deaf. – Native American

An exciting benefit of SM is "hearing" the raw voices of your customers. We can listen without formal prompts of questions/guides.

Consumer-generated media provides one more piece of information that businesses can use to mitigate risks in decision making.

Caution! Back fence conversations maybe early warning signs or trends but could be short lived buzz started by a few influencers.

Statistics won't tell you the entire story. Critical new metrics to analyze include the halo influence & "snow ball build."

Social listening is not effective as a one shot tactic. To realize the benefits it must be incorporated as an on-going strategy.

Integrate SM into a marketing research strategy as the 1st listening post. Use traditional research to delve & confirm findings.

Benefits from actively monitoring digital buzz range from an early warning for crisis management to responsive customer care.

Researchers now must come out from behind the 2-way mirrored room, share their M&Ms and engage in a dialogue with their customers.

Thanx Tom Morder, Chick-fil-A & Greg Rathjen, Marketecture for the use of the term "1st Listening Post."

Interviews

C.B. Whittemore shares how social media listening resulted in new insights and opportunities that directly benefited her customers. Joel Rubinson encourages marketers to be open to the unexpected and to consider social conversations as one element of a comprehensive research strategy.

C.B. Whittemore
www.twitter.com/cbwhittemore

Question: *How did "listening" to your customers impact decision making when you were working for Wear-Dated?*

It's so critical and yet so often done poorly especially in many pre-digital or traditional, product based organizations.

Why? Because product based organizations tend not think about the needs and wants of the marketplace. It's just too messy!

And, a severe case of 'curse of knowledge' means routinely underestimating consumers, and assuming that they just don't understand...

So, listening for Wear-Dated meant an opportunity to educate the flooring retail marketplace about [women] consumers. That's right.

...their retail experience. They didn't see it would cost them business, WOM & referrals because consumers have many choices now.

We explained that women consumers have high expectations for the retail experience – including clean bathrooms and tidy stores!

They also hate a hard sell, and salespeople who don't listen, aren't patient and don't value their research & requirements.

They want websites that clarify and simplify, that offer relevant information and educate rather than obfuscate.

The best ways we found for listening? Not necessarily via Twitter which produces tweets about stuff happening 'on the carpet.'

... in-store, speaking to retailers, via our Wear-Dated reps, talking to friends, to my Mom [I've blogged her experience].

Also, via Google alerts, watching blog & website traffic patterns and which words resonate with readers, and then re-validating.

Overall, listening led to developing more topics to address with retailers, pattern & styling suggestions with carpet mills..

A blog focused on all things carpet [Carpetology], a more social & content rich website http://WearDated.com, more conversations...

And you can't do that without keeping your ear to the ground and paying close attention to improving your customer experience.

Joel Rubinson
www.twitter.com/joelrubinson

Can SM "listening" off-track you if buzz is a small fraction of what most customers feel about your brand?

Must separate measuring the expected (tracking biz growth) from listening for the unexpected (innovation and corp rep)

Census in naturally occurring vocabulary—people's own words— what THEY care about, not just attribute lists

Mkt research must evolve. surveys can be torture yet people love to express themselves in SM. Why?

People want to be heard, opinions validated. Brand loyalty flip— how will YOU show loyalty to ME?! By Listening and conversing

Listening to SM places human in control—what THEY want to talk about. If data are "thin", that's a finding

Surveys are often centered on the brand. listening is centered on a human-based framing question

Skate to where the puck will be. Representivity of SM is growing but in 3 years will be fairly representative. must start now

Recent ARF conf #rethink2009, P&G and Nielsen co-presented integrated strategy. presentation online at http://bit.ly/wGnJ

Surveys missed the passion, cultural connections, words that listening picked up but surveys quantified. NEED BOTH

Summary: must listen for unexpected and corp rep but I believe we WILL find the stat science too.

Summary: stats are not just frequentist n=1000, but Bayesian and I'm sure listening to SM has Bayesian value (improves odds)

Last word: Must survey but must listen too. hear unexpected, honor custmr voice, real time feedback, catch things asap. Duh!

Key Concepts: Listening Can Bring New Consumer Insight

As more people participate in social networks, making sense of the tsunami of data points will be an overwhelming undertaking. However, taking an ostrich approach of pretending that your customers are not influenced by social conversations will be detrimental to your reputation, customers' brand perception and ultimately to the bottom-line.

1. Hearing the unfiltered conversations from your customers adds depth and emotional context to consumer insights that is frequently missing in traditional research.
2. On-going listening leads to a market-focused orientation.
3. Social conversation analysis is not just about the number of mentions. The focus should be on information that provides insights into: marketing goals/objectives, industry trends, customer service, competition, new product development, campaign buzz, etc.

Continuing The Conversation

1. Who will "own" social media monitoring in your organization? Will it reside in consumer insights, digital marketing, public relations, customer service, human resources, etc.?
2. What type of information will you track e.g., brand sentiment, competitive product development, customer service, new campaign buzz, industry trends, etc.
3. How will the findings from social media support your traditional research program? You do have a research strategy?!

Chapter 4   # Social Media Ethics

The time is always right to do what is right.
– Martin Luther King Jr.

Tweet Intro

How do you build trust when global relationships are often made without benefit of "seeing eye-to-eye" becomes a critical issue?

When you can portray yourself as your alter ego or a fantasy avatar does that shake the reality of people who do business w/ you?

How do you define virtual civility, kindness and politeness when idea and ideals differ widely? What happens when people disagree?

> With each new tool that technology brings the virtual world is challenged with what is means to be a good online business citizen.

How is disclosure and transparency defined? Does accepting client contracts ($) to write posts or tweets walk in the shadows?

How can we, as online marketers, ensure that our customers feel safe

Interviews

Wayne Hurlbert believes that ethics must be built into the DNA of how an organization conducts business; for him social media is simply one more aspect of that equation. Mack Collier tweets there are shades of gray in emerging media. What constitutes ethical behavior may not be as easily defined as it may seem.

Wayne Hurlbert
www.twitter.com/waynehurlbert

Question: *Ethics in business is the hot, news topic. In the SM world we struggle with what is black, white and gray. Why is that?*

Social media users often struggle with ethics because many see SM as different from other media. It's not. Ethics are the key to SM

Sharing matters. SM isn't about getting. It's about giving & helping others. Those using SM just to get from others fail at SM

SM is about trust & trust must be earned. Once lost, trust is hard to recover. In SM, there may be no second chance to recover it

An SM user who speaks through a character must be upfront about the proxy voice. Personas are often confusing & can lose trust

Seeing SM as something to game or spam fails because no one will listen as there is no trust or listening first. Bad ethics fail

Approaching SM as a numbers game fails when there's no engagement. Chasing numbers alone is a dead end. On SM bad ethics fail

SM ethics like all ethics are not personal interpretation. That shallow short term thinking failed Enron & AIG. It fails on SM too

Using tricks & tools to get more SM followers may add numbers but without engagement & trust, raw numbers mean nothing

Faking someone else's identity on SM is unethical. It's also a pointless dead end leading to lost reputation for the impostor

Ethical biz people get referrals & long term customer evangelists. Ethical SM pays with strong relationship building that lasts

SM posts live forever on Google. Ethical people benefit from searches of honest & open ideas that boost online reputation & trust

Looking at SM as only for sales & marketing fails without listening, engaging & building relationships. SM is about trust

When posting ethically on behalf of a company, don't post company info you wouldn't write in an email or say in person

Ethical companies respond to customer concerns openly & don't hide. Doing the right thing builds deeper trusting relationships

Ethical companies trust their employees to do the right thing on SM. They help & encourage employees to engage with customers

Good SM ethics work for everyone: Company, brands, employees, customers, listeners & the economy. Good ethics are good business

Mack Collier
www.twitter.com/mackcollier

Question: *Ethics in business is the hot, news topic. In the SM world we struggle with what is black, white and gray. Why is that*

I think a big reason why there is such confusion around the 'ethics' of social media right now is because the space is still new

And businesses are trying to figure out how to monetize their efforts. That is leading to a discovery of where the 'lines' are...

...when it comes to ethics in social media. For example, ghostwriting is a hot topic in social media. Some people say ghostwriting

...a blog post is fine, because other types of business communications are ghostwritten. But the expectations of the blog's..

...readers might be different. They expect the post to be written by the person that 'signed' their name to it.

As the space continues to evolve and as monetization becomes clearer, ethical issues should more easily sort themselves out

Key Concepts: Ethics In Social Media Develops Trusted Relationships

Most people agree that ethics play an important role in business development and long-term relationship building. However, when it comes to social media the rules of the game seem to blur. Even what constitutes disclosure, and the ever popular buzz word "transparency" differs. FTC regulations will change the game for some companies in terms of how they handle product disclosure - impacting blogger relations initiatives.

1. Confusion about what is considered "ethical behavior" in the social web may be a result that people are uncertain of what constitutes *acceptable* in this new media.
2. Ethics form the foundation of trusted relationships.
3. Good ethics = good business. It's a long-term strategy not a one shot tactic.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How does your organization define transparency in the social web? Is it the same across all platforms e.g., Twitter, blogs, Facebook, etc?
2. How do you handle ethics in other aspects of your business e.g., communications, advertising, customer service, etc.?
3. What processes are in place to ensure that vendors who are involved in your social media strategy adhere to your organization's ethical principles?

Strategy First

The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do.
– Michael Porter

Tweet Intro

> Without strategy social media marketing is simply a cool cocktail conversation topic and not a business decision. A resource dump.

Or as the title of the Twitter-book implies social media marketing needs a "gps" or a roadmap to succeed.

For SMM to be perceived as credible give it same respect as other marketing "strategies" & ensure it supports business objectives.

To succeed SMM must also integrate into an organization's master marketing/customer service/etc. plans and support brand values.

Customer focused is not an empty buzz concept when it comes to SM. It is critical to understand and involve your target audience.

What if companies thought in terms of "sharing" the brand? How would that influence your planning?

As in any planning SM includes a budget process. Don't be caught in the illusion that SM is free. Human capital, time & finances.

Your due diligence: identify companies in your industry who are doing it right. Look outside your sector. SM continuously changes.

Interviews

B.L. Ochman and Rajesh Lalwani both believe that a successful social media strategy incorporates measurable goals and ties back to business objectives. B.L. tweets the importance of aligning all of your employees around the same definition of social media. Rajesh reminds us that without a strategic direction social media is a waste of your resources.

B.L. Ochman
www.twitter.com/whatsnext

Question: *On a strategic level how would you align and incorporate a social media strategy to support business goals?*

Allow social media to bring about changes in the company. When problems are identified, change, over-deliver, delight.

Don't hit people over the head with a sales message. Remember: we're all humans, talking to other humans

Monitor, measure, refine. Take chances, be bold. Don't be afraid of failure

Join in. Be real. Talk like a human being. Offer to help people, answer questions, give away intelligence, not intellectual property.

Set goals for ROI, benchmark results with current methods, seeing which are getting the most bang for the buck

develop company-wide corporate guidelines for social media participation. who can rep the company? How? when?

Are you willing to devote time to achieving social media success? There is no quick social media fix. Results come in the long term

The tools may be free, but It costs money & requires specialized knowledge & experience to create an effective social media campaign

Listen first! monitor online conversation about the company – identify major customers concerns and kudos

Where does your audience gather now? What social networks do they frequent? How do they use the tools these networks provide?

begin by determining: what are your goals? Who are you trying to reach and why? What do you want the interaction to lead to?

Be sure everyone in the company is defining social media in the same way – you'll be surprised when you ask for definitions

Rajesh Lalwani
www.twitter.com/rajeshlalwani

Question: *What happens when you begin social media marketing without a strategy?*

Good news is 84% of respondents of recent @blogworks & exchange4media #indiasocialmediasurvey 08 associate value with SM Strategy

53% in fact say that long-term SM Strategy is very important if they need to engage social media

The difference between starting SM with/ without strategy is difference between informal/ casual, where casual means 'I don't care'

Using no other tool in markg/ comm do professionals not strategize: figure the need, environment, competition, who to reach, how, goals, measures, risks, guidelines etc. why should SM be different? It's the same precious brands!!

When beginning without a strategy, you are following, not leading; you are not prepared for the next step, you are not anticipating

No strategy means you are not really differentiating, you are merely copying what everyone else is... SM becomes a toy

No SM strategy means that the brand/ org network is not really ready to act upon feedback, the backend is not ready, lip service

No SM strategy means can't measure because you didn't set objective & goals! Also, you can't celebrate success, for same reason :)

No SM strategy means that when you abandon conversations mid-way, you didn't take into account the repercussions on brand

No SM strategy means that the blame, for not working, goes to Social Media, not to the lack of planning :)

No SM strategy means that you are confused about RoI of SM, not stopping to think that measures come from setting objectives

No SM strategy means that SM remains in a silo, not integrating back into the org/ marketing strategy/ into departments/ people

No SM strategy means wastage of resources that could have added value & reach - advtg, PR, databases, other channels

No SM strategy means that you are playing with fire, might get burned

No SM strategy means you'd never really get to know, if you weren't really made for Social Media, you just crash landed :)

Key Concepts: Strategy Begins With Defined Objectives And Goals

For social media to be accepted as a credible strategy we must begin by defining objectives and goals. However, before you can build the plan it is critical that you have a strong appreciation of the benefits and limitations of the "tools/tactics." For a social media program to succeed it is also necessary to determine how your target audience uses each platform (Twitter, Facebook, blogs, Flickr, etc.) and what their expectations are of a digital-social brand experience.

1. Develop your social media strategy as you would any other marketing initiative by determining objectives, goals and success measures.
2. Monitor the social conversations of your target audience and competition to help develop the structure of your social media strategy.
3. Many of the tools may be free or low cost but that doesn't mean it's a free ride. Social media's cost is in human capital: people and time.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will using social media support your marketing objectives/goals/business outcomes?
2. How will you integrate your social media initiatives into your current master marketing plan?
3. What does success mean to you? What do you want the engagement to lead to? What do you consider to be conversion?

Tactics Second

Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory.
– Sun Tzu

This chapter provides an overview of the benefits and challenges of seven of the most popular social media tactics:
- Blogs
- Twitter
- Community/Social Networks
- Podcasts,
- Video/Vlogs,
- RSS
- Widgets

Blogs

I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship.
– Louisa May Alcott

Tweet Intro

These websites, with the funny name, set social media marketing in action & forever changed biz communication.

Early adopters found, as @davewiner put it that, "A weblog is kind of a continual tour, with a human guide who you get to know."

> Blogs are People talking to People; People listening to People; People interacting with People within a website. What is missing?

What is missing? The words "company" & "department." Blogs demonstrated it was ok to build person-to-person relations w/ customers.

Relationships include not only talking, what marketers term 'messaging' but continuous, active listening. We were now involved.

Blogs can be leveraged to support many strategies including: thought leadership, customer service, segmentation, branding, loyalty.

Successful blogs focus on a niche, topic or personality of the author/s. They provide information, point of view, entertainment.

Blog writing follows web-style format but the tonality is always conversational & never hard sell. Think value-add w/ personality.

Blogs should be held accountable based on your goals. SM and traditional measures will confirm your success. Non quant is powerful.

In 2003, blogs were a novelty. No longer. The web is cluttered w/ blogs. Promoting your new blog should be part of your initiative.

Interviews

Yvonne DiVita and Julie Squires both agree that while a website might be thought of as your formal, corporate image to the world, blogs are more a casual opportunity to communicate with your customers. As Yvonne tweets … blogs are like *meeting over a cup of tea*. Julie reinforces that there are many elements that should be taken into consideration including posting frequency, tone, content and graphic design.

Yvonne DiVita
www.twitter.com/y2vonne

Question: *With tactics like social networks/videos taking center stage are blogs still relevant for businesses to consider?*

My take on blogs: website is corp presence, blog is inner office – invite me in for tea.

> Inviting me in 4 tea is more personal – that's what I want – to get to know YOU – UR other web presences R mere representations

The thing about blogs is their flexibility. Changing UR blog design is like changing UR office decor. Fun,interesting &personal.

Shld YOU blog? Instead of what? Or, in addition to what? Takes thought and consideration. Connect 1st with others.

@TobyDiva says blogs work for niche marketing– so true. But, also work to create expertise and show thought leadership.

The relevance of blogs will B determined by the audience– not the blogger. Do you regularly engage your audience, provide value?

Twitter is a blog tool, now, isn't it? @CBwhittemore says, 4women, we have high expectations - so true! Blog brings us closer 2U.

Women want the connection a blog provides. That "this is me" conversational tone. We learn fast who is authentic and who isn't.

W/out a blog, UR video/podcast/etc. Becomes more push marketing. Women R so over that! A blog breathes & pulses – it has heart.

Caution: blog w/out comments is just a webpage! Engagement is everything! Talk WITH not AT your customers. It works.

Relevance of blogs remains high – b/c they deliver, when done right. What's right? Consider these points:

Authenticity (truth in writing), approachability (willingness to discuss contrary ideas) and relevance (stay on topic).

B not afraid. It's not about the technology, it's about the people. Trust UR people - you hired'em

Be prof. about UR blog. Get the right advice on strategy, implementation, and voice. Women, especially, are listening.

Final tweets on relevance of blogs in today's crowded multi-media environment online: if we stopped blogging..

Would the Internet go silent? Only noise blasted outward? Blogs build connections& share friendships, resources. Relevant? Yes.

Julie Squires
www.twitter.com/JulieSquires

Question: *With tactics like social networks/videos taking center stage are blogs still relevant for businesses to consider?*

John Markoff, NYTimes fame says "blogs might be the CB radio of the 21st century." Agree. For me its about Transparency & Trust.

Transparency. Each blog – frequency, tone, content, look-and-feel – is an imprint of its author.

You, personally, are a global micro brand. "What you are speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you are saying." – Emerson.

For instance, I blog infrequently– 2 to 4x per quarter (true!) – and almost always philosophically @ the Networked Economy. Why?

College major was philosophy + I enjoy writing thoughtfully @ big ideas I care about = Transparency. I join the converso as Me [Also, @Mikeschinkel told me about Kevin Kelly's book "New Rules of the New Economy." Mike read it 17 times! Oh yeah.]

Trust & how to build it: Wellness. A blog is a peek into the state of your soul (like it or not) so take good care of yourself.

Three great rules for mental health: know yourself, like yourself, be yourself.

If you are transparent and peak performer (b/c you are best you can be mentally, physically, emotionally) = you no blow up in SM

P.S. I differ a bit w/ @y2vonne:"Caution:blog w/out comments is just a webpage! Engagement is everything!" Depends on your goal.

Blogs are also a fun, put-everything-in resource. Got a one-minute video email snack? Link through to more info on…your blog.

[Love it. RT @y2vonne: My take on blogs: website is corp presence, blog is inner office - invite me in for tea.

Blogs provide information, point of view, entertainment.

And now (drum roll)....here's a haiku about blogging ...

Workday time clock ticks, white crane digs wet soil for food, blog clicks bring new life.

Key Concepts: Blogs Can Build Your Brand

With the onset of social networks, blogs may seem like a retro tactic. However, there are benefits that these websites offer that you will not find in other platforms. You may not have control over consumer generated. Facebook and Twitter can impose their own rules. However, since you "own" the site/blog you do have control over content direction, governance and creative layout.

1. Blogs can be used to support a wide range of content directions from thought leadership to niche topic information to customer support.
2. Relevancy is the key to successful blogs. Keep in mind that relevancy is determined, not by you, but by your community.
3. People read blogs for: information, a unique point of view, entertainment and to be part of a larger community.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will your blog support marketing objectives?
2. Who will be the voice/s of your blog? If you chose an agency or freelancer how will you handle transparency and ensure your brand value/promise is kept?
3. What is your high level content direction? Keep in mind it should be sustainable over the long-term.

Twitter

Be sincere; be brief; be seated. – Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Tweet Intro

Online message boards are not new but overlaying Web 2.0 and mobile technologies made Twitter fun, easy extended real time access.

> The same social media rules hold true: be your authentic self, transparent, honest, add value, be part of the community = trust.

As with any SM initiative there is the risk if your Followers don't agree or think you are behaving badly they'll call you out.

Tweet benefits range from extension of your brand, new champions, extended resource network/friends, viral wom, biz opportunities.

Develop a Twitter strategy that includes defining your Followers, the extent of personal versus biz tweets, tweet name branding.

The "Twitter Stream" runs fast and not all of your Followers will read all of your tweets. Consider tweeting at different times.

How many Followers are the "right" number for you? How many people should you follow? Marketer's answer:depends on your strategy.

Interviews

Connie Reece discusses the lifespan and visibility of a tweet. AV Flox advises that using Twitter to broadcast messages will result in the loss of Followers. Both women agree that although Twitter is only 140 characters, if you intend to include it as a channel to reach and respond to customers, it must be integrated into your business strategy.

Connie Reece
www.twitter.com/conniereece

Question: *Twitter is rage but w/ the "TwitterStream" moving so quickly does it really make sense from a marketing perspective?*

The Twitter Stream flows rapidly. The lifespan of a tweet is inversely proportionate to the number of followers in your timeline.

In other words, the more people you follow, the less time a tweet will be visible on your Twitter page.

Tools like <u>Twitter Search</u> extend lifespan of a tweet. Search by username or keyword; you can link to results or subscribe by RSS.

3rd party apps like <u>TweetDeck</u> help organize your Twitter stream & allow you to create groups. Helpful if you follow lots of ppl.

But keep in mind that average user (not adventurous early-adopter types) follows fewer than 100 ppl and uses Web interface.

Marcom on Twitter is communicating *with* people, not *to* them. Use Twitter solely as broadcast channel & you will lose followers.

Microbloggers can be influencers, not because of number of followers but authority and credibility earned over time.

Twitter can be a big source of traffic to your blog. Trend: ppl now relying more on links from friends than RSS feeds.

When sharing a link on Twitter, add concise description. Don't say, "OMG this is awesome." Tell me what you're linking to and why.

When describing a link, think like a headline writer. You've got 140 characters; use them to convince me to click your link.

A retweet (RT) is the best kind of marketing: a third-party endorsement. Create content that people want to share.

Hint: To make it easier for ppl to retweet, leave extra 15 chars for thr username. That way they don't have to edit your content.

Instead of blasting messages randomly, use tools to find & follow ppl who will be interested in your product/service.

Tools include Twitter Search and 3rd party apps like TwitterGrader, Mr. Tweet, etc.

This is marketing through relationship building. You may also hear terms like conversational marketing or social media marketing.

Twitter = opportunity to humanize your brand. Ex: @RichardatDell @LionelatDell - both individual & corporate at once.

> When tweeting for a company, let your individual voice shine through. Relate to people as people even when it's business.

Remember the Golden Rule: Tweet unto others as you would have them tweet unto you.

AV Flox
www.twitter.com/AVFlox

Question: *Twitter is rage but w/ the "TwitterStream" moving so quickly does it really make sense from a marketing perspective?*

Assuming your target market uses Twitter, it can be a good and cost-effective marketing tool.

Like any form of marketing, using Twitter requires strategy: clarify your objectives.

Twitter moves fast, but there is much to be gained from creating and maintaining discussions.

Conversation generates interest, assists your positioning goal and gives you credibility.

Having a presence on Twitter makes you accessible to consumers.

Twitter is a powerful tool to survey consumer needs and engage defectors.

A network expands your reach. Retweets are a good way to get to more people.

Twitter is useful in understanding your competition's marketing strategy and weaknesses.

Regular searches on your company will reveal your strengths and weaknesses.

Don't just talk about you—show your knowledge of your industry.

Don't spam. No one needs a link to your site in every tweet.

Don't be afraid to make mistakes. You will.
Be transparent and learn from them.

Be human. In a highly computerized world, consumers value interacting with people.

Have fun, be creative, don't stop learning and reassessing your strategy.

Key Concepts: 140 Characters Can Speak Volumes

As with any social media initiative, Twitter's success is built on providing value to your target audience. Part of that value is derived from your engagement with your Followers. Few @s makes for a dull Tweeter and in turn, fewer Followers.

1. Twitter influencers are derived from their credibility providing relevant information and engaging with their community ... not from the number of their Followers.
2. By monitoring tweets you'll gain insights, not only about your brand and customers, but your competitors.
3. Tweet chats can be a valuable resource, as well as, a grass roots learning experience.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will Twitter support your marketing objectives?
2. Who will be the voice/s that tweet on behalf of your brand? If you employee an agency or consultant consider how will you define transparency and ensure your brand's value/promise is retained?
3. How will you identify the people you should follow and how will you engage with them?

Social Networks

Living together is an art. – W. Pickens

Tweet Intro

Logistically social networks are an efficient and effective way to connect with many-to- many and many-to-one on the World Wide Web.

We all have many "selves." The challenge: how to combine both business & personal personae in a public network. How much of "you"?

The opportunity to add photos, videos along with text increases the complexity & comfort level of people and company acceptance.

No matter which social network you choose to belong to bottom-line it's about people who enjoy common interests.

"Strangers" not part of a community might perceive wall posts or tweets to be silly. But for Friends & Followers they are relevant.

It's not your teens Facebook any longer either.
Baby Boomers are the "new" demo. How will they change SNs? Peer-to-peer interaction varies. Passive participation, multiple visits frm 1 person, are important 2. Influence builds over time.

Relationships built w/in SN do impact purchase decisions. Smart brands don't blast messages they become part of the ecosystem.

Brands that offer value-add content And participate as members of the community will be the big winners. Yes it a risk? Yes.

Can there be big payoffs? Yes. People-to-people relationships build mutual responsibility and accountability. Results = Sales.

Interview

Nancy White offers her views that social networks are not necessarily new but are a continuation of a concept that has been in effect for over 29 years. She cautions not to over look what occurs on the "edges" of a community; and encourages that if you pay attention you'll discover a few surprises that can be of great value.

Nancy White
www.twitter.com/nancywhite

Question: *What does social networking/community look like in 2-3 years?*

OK, first some term shorthand: Social Networking=SN and Comm=Community (tweetcheats)

Definition for this tweet flow: Communities=bounded, shared interest, Soc Networks=fuzzy boundaries, overlapping interests

Humility: We have always been SNing, just not online. The current upswing has been emerging for 20+ years. We didn't invent it!

Over time, SNing and comm life changes as our tools and processes emerge. Look for changes in practice and tech, not fundamentals.

Biggest area of change will be how Comms can benefit from the wider SNs in which they sit. How will we maximize the boundaries?

We'll face at least 2 SN/Comm challenges: too many options & too many people. Sweet spot - develop tools and practices 4 this.

Good things are on the edges so look for what happens on the edges of your Comms and SNs.

Find links, patterns and people

Practice prediction: We'll use tools to look across their SNs and Comms. Multimedia to help us make sense where volume overwhelms

Challenge: We'll struggle with personal & professional boundaries (as we do now). We'll worry about privacy but — too late?

Hope: We will find new ways to be together, to create, learn and produce in ways that affirm people and protect the planet

Key Concepts: Community Of Shared Interests

Social networks from Facebook to Twitter to branded communities are creating worlds where people learn from and with each other. Convenience, ease of use and value are factors which will determine a community's longevity. As brands find utility in engaging with their customers in social networks, it is critical that they understand the culture of that environment; if they fail to do so they loose not only their way in social media but the goodwill of their community and brand champions.

1. Privacy issues and personal/professional boundaries will be key issues especial for "non digital natives."
2. People who are engaged in social networks have a strong inclination to place brands higher on their purchase consideration set.
3. Peer-to-peer interaction will set the culture and direction of your community. Don't under estimate the influence of one status update or one tweet.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will the social networks, you choose to participate in, support your marketing objectives?
2. Who will be the voice/s behind social networks? If you chose an agency or freelancer how will you handle transparency and ensure your brand's value/promise is kept?
3. What type of engagement do your customers want from you/your "brand?"

Podcasts

The human voice is the organ of the soul.
– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Audio files were part of online marketing for many years. Web 2.0 technology made it easy. RSS expanded reach w/ MP3 portable.

Listening to a laugh adds an extra dimension to the way your customers get to know you. Your voice brings more of your personality.

As w/ other SM tactics, the strategy for your "radio show on demand" should be developed for each niche. Downloads can be measured.

SM is all about choices. Customers want it their way. Hint frm Bill Marriott - record your blog posts.

As for podcast content direction keep your brand values in mind and let your creativity soar. It's about value-add not hard sell.

Including listeners as active participants or "guests" is an exciting way to get to know your customers in a more intimate way.

Interviews

For Neville Hobson and Jim Turner podcasting is a great way to build a brand. Neville's four step concept of how to create a successful podcast initiative places the listener at the heart. Jim calls podcasts *the lazy man's blogging*. He reminds us that podcasts must be integrated into a larger social media program. Neville demonstrates how Twitter and a blog post can be integrated. Listen to the innovative podcast of his Twitter interview.

Neville Hobson
www.twitter.com/jangles

Question: *How can podcasts support & extend a social media strategy?*

Much depends on what the measurable goals are of your overall strategy.

Let's pick one goal: build and nurture community. I offer the FIR podcast as an example. http://bit.ly/g8EGw

FIR is the twice-weekly audio podcast I co-host with Shel Holtz (@shel) on Mondays and Thursdays which we started in Jan 2005.

In our 4+ years of podcasting, FIR has developed an active and influential community.

That community originally grouped around the show itself and the blog.

Today, the focus has shifted: still the show itself, of course, but also the FIR Room on Friendfeed.

Wherever your audience focus is, building community increases listener loyalty to your show (your brand).

Members of the community share a common bond that enhances their sense of loyalty.

The community is also a catalyst for content development: ideas come from the community not just the show's hosts.

All this has signficance when viewed in the context of supporting a broad social media strategy.

Your podcast community can be a focal point around which all your other 'social communication' connects.

It sounds easy to do, doesn't it? But like everything, it takes time and commitment.

In our experience with FIR, there are four essentials to building community around a podcast.

- 1st: Involve your listeners. Ask them questions: solicit their input.
- 2nd: Encourage your listeners. Thank them, name them, praise them.
- 3rd: Address their needs. Always respond to listeners' questions and comments.
- 4th: Engage your listeners. Make them the centre of your attention and all you do.

So depending on your overall social media strategy, a podcast can help you achieve the following.

Help customers feel like they are privileged insiders by providing a unique window into your brand.

Help create a bond between customers and the people behind the brand.

Give customers more of a say in the development of future brand extensions and marketing programmes.

Jim Turner
http://twitter.com/genuine

Question: *How can podcasts support & extend a social media strategy?*

I have always said a blog is a good place to call home. A place where you can invite customers and friends to talk to you.

I have always said it is easier to talk than it is to type your thoughts. Podcasting is no different in that regard.

Not only is it easier to talk than type it is easier to listen than it is to read. Podcasting could be the lazy man's blogging.

Passion, sarcasm, excitement and other emotion is much easier to communicate using a podcast than trying to write for some people.

Podcasting is a great brand builder, yes, even if you are an individual. It makes you appear more personal than formal writing.

Podcasting is just a tool in the overall social media tool belt. For some it will be a more difficult task than is writing.

You have to know your market, your demographic and the likelihood that they will participate with you in that area.

There are ways to make podcasting an easy solution. It needs to be considered when sitting down with an overall social media plan.

Count how many iPods or mp3's you see on the subway, in schools, and other places. Podcasting helps deliver. Can it help you?

Key Concepts: Voices Bring A Special Intimacy

Podcasts add a unique dimension and personalization to a social media program. For people who may not be comfortable or want to write a blog, podcasting offers another option to connect with your customers.

1. Podcasts provide the ability to "time transfer" content through computers, iPads, MP3 players and smart phones.
2. Podcasts can help create additional intimacy with the people behind your brand and your customers.
3. As with any tactic, it's important to have measurable goals that integrate into your overall strategy.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will podcasts support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
2. What will be your high level content direction and the consistent, branded, format of your show?
3. How will you engage with your listeners to ensure they feel welcomed and consider themselves to be a part of your community?

Videos

What you see is what you see. – Frank Stella

Tweet Intro

As the saying goes - the camera tells all . no place to hide. Vlogs can be the most personal of SM tactics. Often the most viral.

Understanding your target audience & developing a strategy that supports your brand is more than a game. http://twurl.nl/31a3nu

With that in mind, information integrated with humor can take your brand from mundane to YouTube stardom. http://twurl.nl/35hj6y

Vlogs work in B2B. Develop a YouTube channel to support your brand. http://twurl.nl/544547

Most online video communities provide view stats & sites linking info. Reviews, sharing and comments bring it into social media.

In "do it yourself"social media details matter even more than with vlogs. Lighting and sound can kill a great interview.

Who should vlog? Based it on the person's comfort level with the media & personality.Your smart CEO may not =great video host.

With text/blogs, audio/podcasts and video/vlogs any company can be their own media enterprise. SM is about experimentation.

Interview

Roxanne Darling tweets what may be a surprise. Did you know that the audio, not the visual, is the most critical aspect of a successful video? She reminds us that with any on-going customer communication vehicles, brand consistency is essential.

Roxanne Darling
www.twitter.com/roxannedarling

Question: *How can a vlog support and extend a social media strategy?*

Aloha & Welcome! Online video: If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is priceless! And the web has surely noticed.

Online video comes in 4 flavors: live-stream, talking head cam, edited shows, & screen cast tutorial

Online video takes more time/equipment to produce & is more compelling & transparent than text or audio blogging

Online video hosting is free at these sites: blip.tv, viddler.com, youtube.com, dailymotion.com & many more

Online video: YouTube is home to quality shows like JNJ Health from Johnson & Johnson; don't dismiss it for your business

Online video delivers max results when you provide both a Flash version that allows embed sharing plus an RSS feed for iTunes

Online video: curiously, audio quality is more important than picture quality. Invest in an external mic & supported camera

Online video: When it is nearly free to produce and host, why don't you or your company have its own internet TV show yet?

Online video: Do you have something to say? Yes. If you freeze in front of the camera, practice on unimportant topics.

Online video: Consider having your business sponsor an existing show with built-in audience to get the feel of how video works

Online video: Conversion rates & brand recall are several fold higher with podcasting ads than with banner or text ads

Online video book reference: Web Video: Making It Great, Getting It Noticed by Jennie Bourne http://bit.ly/jb-webvideo

Online video work flow tip: build a template with recurring items:theme music, URL, contact info, copyright, logo

Online video branding tip: use the same theme for recurring episodes and have your own original music

Online video marketing tip: post your videos to www.TubeMogul.com to auto cross-post to multiple sites & get stats

Online video: Chill out in #Hawaii with us on Beach Walks with Rox, www.beachwalks.tv. Aloha & Mahalo for joining us!

Key Concepts: Lights, Camera, Action!
So you wanna be a social media rock star?

Videos provide the most intimate way of reaching out to your customers and stakeholders. Although videos can be inexpensively produced, basic production guidelines that ensure quality of lighting and sound, are critical. Even for an interview format developing a story-line can help increase viewers' interest.

1. Videos are not just for B2C but work for B2B, as well as, nonprofit and healthcare. A well produced video can take your brand from mundane to rock star status.
2. Videos are assets that can be leveraged for multiple uses e.g., website, blog, social networks, tradeshows, newsletters, etc.
3. Develop a branded template that includes: theme music, URL, contact info, copyright, and logo.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will videos support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
2. In addition to YouTube, have you identified other video platforms and made plans to include on your corporate website and blog?
3. If you consider sponsoring a video, have you taken into consideration the match of the host and content direction with your brand values?

RSS - Real Simple Syndication

You try to give away what you want yourself.
– Lois McMaster Bujol

Tweet Intro

Real Simple Syndication/RSS is the secret of the success of many social media marketing programs. You choose the content you want.

For the non techs in the stream simply put RSS is coding that allows for specific content to be distributed to through feeds.

People who are interested in receiving your content through this channel can subscriber to news readers with no eMail required.

RSS is incorporated into most blog platforms. Every time new content is added Web 2.0 magic happens. Your news reader is "pinged."

In our world where people are crunched for time, RSS provides a solution that ensures our customers receive relevant information.

In addition to blogs, news publishers were one of the first to incorporate the big orange button into their distribution strategy.

The common theme of SM is basic marketing 101. Understand your customer and build to fit her needs. Same is valid for RSS

When developing your RSS strategy consider the type of information your customers want. Think: niche content opportunities.

> Once again we learn that social media is about choices. However, those choices are not for us . they belong to our customers.

Interviews

In their tweet interviews Bill Flitter and Nick Burcher clearly and simply explain the mystery of RSS. Nick uses the analogy of RSS as a radio station where you tune into listen to what you want when you want. For Bill one of the benefits of RSS is using the technology to consolidate your media assets, ensuring that your customers have easy access to all of your digital content.

Bill Flitter
www.twitter.com/bflitter

Question: *How can RSS support and extend a social media marketing strategy?*

RSS is a tool that enables two key components of SMMS: Aggregation and Syndication. SMM is not a campaign, its a marathon.

Syndication reaches today's fragmented audiences. We have so many choices of content and places to consume that content.

Think about your SMMS as an ongoing narrative. One off blog posts need not play here. Expand how you think about what creative is.

Creative in a SMMS is content: Videos posted to YouTube, blog posts sent to Facebook, PR releases, Tweets, delicious links.

Find your digital center (Twitter/Blog/Meet-ups): hub of where your SMM begins. Use it as a springboard to syndicate beyond.

Aggregation: Use RSS to collect your media assets so your loyalist can easily have access to them.

Measurement: measure the flow of your content running through the RSS pipe, understand how users are interacting with your content.

A successful SMMS includes RSS. It makes it easy to extend your reach/brand where traditional methods fail. It's the ground troops.

RSS extends your reach/content. Provides flexibility to your audience. They consume where/when/how they want.

Syndication is not a luxury, it is a necessity in today's social media driven environment. It's not rich media vs. RSS, its both.

RSS is today's newsletter. Start building subscribers to your feeds as a way to stay connected with your audience.

Examples: Cisco News Room is their digital center: http://newsroom.cisco.com/

Examples: The Ford Story syndicates and aggregates their content: http://www.thefordstory.com/

Nick Burcher
www.twitter.com/nickburcher

Question: *How can RSS support and extend a social media marketing strategy?*

Easiest way to get your head around RSS and feeds is to think in terms of traditional radio

RSS makes your central content point (website, blog etc) like a radio station, with RSS broadcasting a virtual signal (aka a feed)

People can then tune in to this RSS data signal and receive your RSS broadcast - often 'subscribing' to it for regular updates

The RSS receiver is software - either a standalone 'Feed Reader' like Google Reader or built into something like a blog or Facebook

RSS signal is received wherever the 'listener' chooses – allowing content to be easily syndicated + picked up in multiple locations

RSS is therefore technological backbone of social media, allowing people to consume content wherever they want, whenever they want

RSS enables marketers to easily distribute content to multiple locations - Facebook Fan Pages, Twitter, other sites, email etc

People want to receive /share things. Marketers can use RSS to syndicate messages into different platforms and environments

Highlight the RSS feed with the standard orange RSS graphic and make it easy for people to subscribe – and promote the feed!!!

SM strategy suits lots of little rather than one big hit – take content to the consumer but use RSS to tie it all together

Key Concepts: RSS The Secret Behind Social Media Success

Real Simple Syndication (RSS) is a behind the scenes technology for social media tactics such as blogs, videos, podcasts widgets. However, what is important to marketers is not the technology but that RSS provides customers with a choice of how they can receive communications from us. In a hectic, multiple tasking world customers can create customized "feeds" of the information that is important to them.

1. RSS places the responsibility on the brand/content creators to ensure that information is not only relevant but of high quality.
2. RSS can syndicate information from specific pages and environments e.g., media room, blog comments, etc.
3. RSS allows marketers to distribute content to multiple platforms e.g., Facebook, Twitter, blog posts, widgets, customized home pages a la Google or Yahoo.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will RSS support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
2. In addition to social media platforms what other digital environments can benefit from a direct customer/stake holder pull of information?
3. Have you built in a monitoring initiative that reviews the number of RSS subscribers, as well as, the number of people who unsubscribe?

Widgets

Well done is better than well said. – Benjamin Franklin

Tweet Intro

For me Widgets wrap fun and value-add with 'feet on the web" providing unique branding, awareness and sales opportunities.

These grab-able pieces of code, sometimes called "virtual fridge magnets" often find their way into segments not thought about.

A successful widget program begins with the end user in mind. In the widget world that = the host (site) owner's community.

The widget must also add value to the host's blog, website or desktop. Design matters as much as content in this brand experience.

Widgets that only benefit the originating or parent company are perceived as glorified banner ads. Rarely do they get "grabbed.

RSS technology powers changing content of a widget. Applicable to B2B, B2C, nonprofit & gov't; traffic reports to movie trailers.

Widgets usually include an analytic program that tracks: unique visitors, linking sites, location, click-throughs.Tie into goals

Example using widgets to help reposition Ad Council; included in its Exponential Action Network campaign. http://twurl.nl/r22oge

Interview

Marianne Richmond provides an overview of the benefits and challenges of a social widget. She tweets that it provides a second distribution channel where your fans can help you promote your brand. However, she cautions that, as we've seen with all social media tactics, content must be of perceived value to your community. Although not specifically addressed, the concepts hold true also for mobile applications.

Marianne Richmond
www.twitter.com/marianne

Question: *What is a widget and why should marketers care?*

Like everything else in marketing tool box, the way to get the most out of widget marketing is to integrate it into a mkt strategy

Especially with social media tools, the temptation is to want to try out a shiny new tool just because it is shiny and new.

First mkt strategy & then decide if widget is right. For instance to increase awareness for a new campaign use a video clip widget

Or build relationships with customers by providing relevant information that is updated and always fresh.

A basic def of a social widget: a stand alone portable sharable application that can be placed on a web site, blog, SN or desktop

This is slightly different than a social application that is integrated into a specific social network such as Facebook

A social widget is a 2nd distribution channel for web content & the audience is everywhere. For marketing this is obviously good.

What makes successful widget marketing? Begins with having content that people want to share by placing on site or emailing

If the content isn't engaging enough to energize the "share" factor, you will not experience widget success regardless

It is critical to support the widget launch. "Viral" needs a kick start unless you are very very lucky.

Widget needs to be promoted through other marketing channels and distributed as many places as possible . Email, other web sites

Widgets have been around long enough now so that there are many choices, many vendors and many examples of good & bad

Like so many other social media tools,the Obama campaign made use of widgets with goal of energizing voters to spread the word.

They used multiple widget platforms at every level of complexity. Just go to their widget page http://bit.ly/WBQ5x (expand) for examples

Key Concepts: Widgets Your Virtual Fridge Magnets

As with all successful social media marketing programs, the creation of a widget begins with understanding what your community values. If the content is not relevant or engaging, your customers will not share -- regardless of the *cool factor* you or the developer might think.

1. The win of a widget is the ability of your fans and customers to easily help you create virtual buzz for your brand.
2. Widgets usually include a backend metric system, that among other measures, can track downloads and placement.
3. It's important to develop a plan for how you will initially create awareness for a new widget ... they will not come unless you tell them.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will widgets support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
2. Widgets can range in cost from free to thousands of dollars. What is your budget?
3. What type of interaction do your customers want from a widget? Do they want updated information or would an interactive game be more engaging?

Chapter 7 Social Media & Branding

A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person.
– Jeff Bezos

Tweet Intro

No matter how diligently marketers work to create a brand it is defined by the customer's perspective. This always was and will be.

In the open channels of conversation customers express their ideas, concerns. Marketer's challenge is to not llisten but "hear."

Understanding leads to trust between customers & people in orgs who are the heart of the brand. SM helps validate brand values.

> Social media offers unique opportunities for customers and companies to share in the creation of a brand by working together.

SM pulls away the Wizard of Oz curtain to reveal true brand values/benefits and honest customer expectations. Relationships Rule.

SM demands the authentic brand be woven into the fabric of the all tactics (see chapter 6). This is not the same as "messaging."

One way to achieve that is thru sharing stories. SM offers an environment where you can tell your stories using your own voice.

More compelling than just facts, storytelling creates emotional bonds. R. Jensen . stories "capture the heart not just the mind."

SM strengths: builds & nurture relationships where customers feel connected with the brand because they've helped create it.

Interviews

Beth Harte and Dana VanDen Heuvel discuss how digital engagement in the social web can lead to stronger brand loyalty which, in turn, impacts purchase decisions. Beth points out that brand management is changing. Dana tweets that smart brands are integrating social media service into their brand proposition.

Beth Harte
www.twitter.com/BethHarte

Question: *What makes a brand "social media smart?"*

What makes a brand social media smart? They are listening to and engaging with their customers daily. Sounds simple, right?

It's a challenge for a lot of companies to recognize that their brand equity balance lies in the hands of their customers.

By brand equity balance, I mean that customers can rather quickly affect established a company's perceived brand equity via SM.

For example, a company may have a perception that their brand equity is positive, but in reality it might be neutral or neg online.

Brands that are SM smart, tune into rating scales, conversations, etc & aren't afraid to engage when something is negative.

Here are some examples of companies that are brand social media smart: http://is.gd/2aC8 [From @PeterKim].

Brand equity takes a lot of time to build & companies had the ability to quietly address (or not) customer feedback & challenges

The days of companies to quietly handle customer feedback (+ or -) is coming to an end. Customers now have a voice & they use it.

And when customers use their voice, they want to make sure someone is listening...even if it's that guy/gal at the next computer.

> Customers with a voice affect brand loyalty too..and brand loyalty affects revenues. Social media smart brands accept this.

SM smart brands know that if a customer is having a neutral or negative brand experience, they could be swayed by online comments

Social media smart brands listen, engage & address any online comments/conversations that could affect the brand loyalty of others

As marketers, in the era of SM, we need to accept that the only brand mgmt in our control is the name, logo and brand colors.

Companies need to accept that they no longer control the brand equity or loyalty. And they need to embrace those who do: Customers.

Smart SM brands understand that customers have an "emotional aftertaste" after engaging their brand [EA term courtesy of @ZeFrank]

Smart SM brands go where the conversations are being had and participate there. They don't make customers come to them.

Smart SM brands know that there's a tendency to ignore interruptive/one-way push marketing (no matter how large their budgets are)

Smart social media brands know that they will make mistakes and they work with brand evangelists to get it right.

And finally, smart social media brands know that it's still business & that they need a plan of action, staff & budget to continually engage in social media.

Dana VanDen Heuvel
www.twitter.com/danavan

Question: *What makes a brand "social media smart?"*

Social media smart is 'social media approachable' according to @y2vonne. Approachability is born from confidence.

Confident, self-assured and differentiated brands are *capable* of being social media smart. Weak brands have no chance.

Social media smart brands practice 'altruism before capitalism'. Help, engage, deliver value and then profit..

Smart brands integrate social media into their 'service', regardless of what they sell. Not doing so is a dis-service to customers.

> Brands need to realize that their employees (all of them) are part of the social media equation. Empower and enable them.

Smart brands have sorted out the "3 R's - Risks, Resources & Rewards" of social media

Twitter is a perfect example of people's comfort with the "BETA" economy - smart brands always work in "BETA" re: social media.

Brands see social media with "Faith" or "Fear" "Faithful" brands, that trust in their customers, are successful. Fear has no place
This recent Domino's Pizza response on YouTube is a smart way to engage through social media:

Finally, social media smart brands will lead the charge for equal engagement – like SMBs did with Yelp.

Key Concepts: Brand Value Can Be Reinforced Through Social Media

Smart marketers have always known the *brand secret*: customers control brand perception. With the onset of social media, customers have very public forums, to not only tell their brand stories, but also, connect with others who feel the same way. Smart marketers are learning how to be a part of these conversations, and in doing so, are increasing the value of their brands.

1. The social media brand experience begins with an altruistic approach that engages and delivers value; which in turn, results in increased profit.
2. Smart brand managers understand that if a customer has a neutral or negative brand experience, they can be positively influenced by peer-to-peer and brand-to-customer social conversations.
3. In the social web you cannot 'control' but you can 'manage'.

Continuing the Conversation

1. How will you use social media to help your customers help you create "the brand?"
2. How can you alleviate, or lessen, the fear factor to help your internal brand stewards understand the benefits of incorporating social media into branding initiatives?
3. How will you integrate social media into the DNA of your brands to ensure it supports customers' expectations?

Chapter 8   # Blogger Relations

Two monologues do not make a dialogue. – Jeff Daly

Tweet Intro

A few surprises emerged w/ growth of SM including the extent of influence people creating content enjoyed w/ their communities.

Marketers always understood peer-to-peer influence had the potential to impact purchase behavior. SM added a new dimension.

Bloggers were an interesting resource for brand mgrs to explore as a new channel for idea distribution, expanding product awareness.

Bloggers could not only reach niche communities but there was a halo effect derived frm their credibility & it was trackable.

But BR did not fit the traditional PR model of working with MSM. Bloggers were Not reporters and they didn't want press releases.

Most bloggers don't answer to an editor. They write what and when they want. Content is personal & passionate. Readers are friends.

To gain their trust the SM culture had to be in place: honest, transparent, authentic relationships w/ value for the community.

Pulse of the Industry: Blogger Relations study I conducted #1 request from bloggers: Read My Blog First
http://twurl.nl/quyop1

5 Tips for working w/Bloggers:

1. Know content direction.
2. WIFM. Why should I care?
3. Value for the community.
4. Tell about you.
5. Big BR Tip 5—Remember what your mama taught you: Don't lie. Don't cheat. Don't bully. Play nicely together. Say Thank you!

Case studies on Blogger Relations strategies frm New Communications offers insights into goals and metrics. http://twurl.nl/0hl7h5

Interviews

Elisa Camahort and Susan Getgood tweet about Blogger Relations from two points of view: the blogger and the brand. They ultimately reach similar conclusions: begin by building relationships that add value and treat bloggers with respect.

Elisa Camahort
www.twitter.com/ElisaC

Question: *From a blogger's point of view, what makes a great Blogger Relations program?*

There are ways in which bloggers are not much different than the other media types PR folks have to reach out to.

Biggest Similarity: You get to know your media contacts, don't you? Their interests, subjects of focus, preferred contact methods.

Bloggers appreciate at least that same respect you show any reporter: Know them, know what they write about, know who they are.

Bloggers make it easier to figure out who they are, yet few marketers bother to invest the time. They're obsessed with the "A-List"

Forget "A-List". Find *your* List…30 bloggers who care abt what you do, who write abt what you do & who don't mind being pitched!

Build relationships with your List. Read them. Comment. Link. Bloggers often aren't beat reporters, they show their whole selves.

Bloggers care about simple things. Like spelling our names right. Like not assuming because we're women we're moms…or straight.

Like not attaching huge PPTs/PDFs. Like not telling us how much we're obviously going to want to write about what you're pitching.

Can't imagine PR folks go to reporters with pitches they go to me, the blogger, with. Personalized does not equal unprofessional.

> Bloggers don't feel they're here to spread the word about you. What is in it for us, or for our reader? Where is the value?

Value can be, most often is, *content*. Compelling, relevant, timely content. Bloggers have to come up with it on a regular basis!

If you're building your list, you probably trust bloggers on it, but remember: You can & should set and enforce ethical policies.

Ask for the disclosure/transparency that will keep you/the blogger in the clear & maintain bond betwn the blogger & her readers

Marketers have as much responsibility for the ethical arrangement as bloggers...don't throw up hands or pull a nudge nudge wink wink

Tough or not, the benefits of working with bloggers with influence whether broad or niche are well worth the challenge.

When done well, marketers and bloggers can be a match made in heaven.

Susan Getgood
www.twitter.com/sgetgood

Question: *From a client's view, how would you design a Blogger Relations program?*

Most important is remember, blogger is your customer. Not a disinterested 3rd party. Blog is abt her passions not your product

We need to put the product / service in context important to blogger, not expect him to fit his story around our product message

This is Relevance, the most important part of any blogger relations effort. Relationships & respect for the blogger are important.

I recommend taking a 4 Ps approach. Prepare, then participate, then pitch or publish

First step in any program is to prepare. We start by listening to what bloggers are saying – abt product, issues related to product

Once we have a feel for community, we start participating – emailing replies and leaving comments as appropriate.

Be v. clear abt who you are; pretending to be just a regular reader is easily seen thru, esp. when you use message pts.

If you can meet people f2f, either at conference like BlogHer or by putting on yr own event, w/o too much pitching, really helps

It's a progression. Only after bloggers know you, your company, should you float a pitch or start a blog.

So turning to the pitch, since that's core of blogger outreach. Basic mechanics – brief, clear, transparent abt intent, agenda. V important

You should define measurement at outset, tied to a mktg. objective & an action/outcome, not just output like mentions

The secret sauce for the perfect pitch: relevance, respect, brevity, clarity and adding value.

Remember , it's a long term commitment, to a relationship with customer. Not a one night stand. Don't go for the quick hit.

If you can't add value, you should advertise.#bloggeroutreach To add value: provide access to exclusive info, offer eval product/samples, offer products that blogger can give away on her blog

If there isn't fair return of value for company, it's expense with no ROI. If no real value to blogger, co. asking for free ads

Balance what makes process so intriguing, fun & beautiful. Yes beautiful. Companies have oppty to talk w customer like never bef.

Key Concepts: Blogger Relations Can Be A Brand's New Best Friend

The digital reach and influence that a blogger has earned may be more valuable to a marketing program than traditional marketing avenues. However, it is critical to remember that bloggers are not main stream media outlets. The first step to successful blogger relations is to understand the blog's content direction and community culture. How do you figure it out? Here's the big secret: read the blog and talk to the blogger!

1. A successful blogger relations program must hold value for the blogger, the community and the brand.
2. The bloggers who might help you the most may not be part of the "A List" but people who have a strong platform within your niche.
3. Relevance is critical to a successful blogger out reach or "pitch."

Continuing The Conversation

1. What steps can you take to build a long-term relationship with bloggers who are important to your brand and product category?
2. What can you do to ensure that your offer to bloggers is a three-way win for the: blogger, community and brand?
3. How will you determine if your blogger relations efforts are successful?

Chapter 9   Sponsored Conversations

Customers buy for their reasons, not yours. – Orvel Ray Wilson

Tweet Intro

Lines between earned media & paid advertising continue to blur. Monetizing SM content is not new but continues to be controversial.

In a message driven world SM carved a positioning of op-ed purity. Taking influencer programs into paid posts shatters that image.

Be it good-bad-or indifferent by accepting $ SM content creators can no longer be perceived as altruistic. SM is a business.

In their report Forrester Research concludes the payment model will become more pervasive. @jbernoff http://twurl.nl/4pa5qf

Issues & concerns center on what made bloggers attractive to advertisers. Does $ for content erode Influence built on Trust?

Transparency, honesty, authenticity and brand alignment w/ content direction are critical if adopting a payment for post model.

Chris Brogan's post about his Kmart venture is an example of disclosure with his community. @chrisbrogan http://twurl.nl/f6qb0u

New models are emerging that expand one paid post into on-going campaigns across multiple SM platforms e.g. blogs, Twitter, etc.

Campaign Sponsored Conversations between SM content publishers and advertisers go from ad placement to a partnership relationship.

Resources: @jowyang List of Sponsored Conversations http://twurl.nl/am7m3 WOMMA Disclosure Tool Kit http://twurl.nl/o8dg4h

Interviews

Melanie Notkin and Scott Monty provide insights about sponsored conversations from two points of view. Melanie tweets about her successful partnership with Disney. Scott explains what Ford looks for in identifying bloggers with whom it wants to develop long-term relationships.

Melanie Notkin
www.twitter.com/savvyauntie

Question: *What do you expect from a company entering into a sponsored conversation contract?*

I expect feedback to improve my ability to have a sponsored conversation that meets the expectations of the participants & client

In order to have an effective sponsored conversation, you need content. I expect the client to provide that.

Disney Team at Razorfish asked me to participate in a Twitter Sponsored Conversation last month. They told me it was a success

The story about the Disney / @savvyauntie sponsored conversation is told well here by @eholmeswsj here http://budurl.com/wsjdis

@robblatt said in his WSJ comments my ..involvement with Disney was only way I was aware that Pinocchio was available for purchase

Over 600 of you clicked that blog link, plus many more created your own links I cannot track. I loved the comments!

Disney allowed me to have an authentic conversation with my Followers-never told me what to Tweet. That's important!

Before I did launched the Sponsored Conversation with Disney, I went to my advisers and asked for advice and they came thru!

@edhorwich My advisers agreed with transparency/authenticity but also good benchmarking to see trackable results.

Since some of you asked, Disney approached me for Sponsored Conversation and let me show them how it's done :) kudos to them

Disney = Family Brand. Savvy Auntie = Family Brand. Sponsored Conversation = Authentic.

I took launching pilot Twitter Sponsored Conversation campaign 4 Disney seriously. Knew if success could be win/win for long time

Sponsored Conversations can be vry powerful if done authentically. Companies should leave to the "trusted sources " to lead the way

Bloggers, Tweeters and all social media publishers can show even Fortune 500 companies how it's done. Lead the way!

Scott Monty
www.twitter.com/scottmonty

Question: *What do you look for in inviting bloggers to participate in Ford SM initiatives?*

We're trying to include non-traditional bloggers (i.e. more than automotive media) - tech, green, parents, lifestyle bloggers.

Established entitites are preferred - they need to have a known, respected presence with significant reach/engagement with readers

Bloggers that are trusted by their communities are best - free of controversy, transparent w/readers, engage well on many platforms

Whenever possible, we like to give bloggers an experience that they can't get elsewhere - access to high-level people & cool places

We don't require them to post anything, but if they do, we suggest hashtags, to make aggregating content easier.

Ultimately, we expect bloggers to be 100% completely honest with their readers, otherwise it won't sit well.

We're ready to heard the negative as well as the positive. It's only by listening that we continue to learn.

On the other side, our executives love meeting with bloggers, as it's a different world for them that they're fascinated by.

It's different from the crush of journalists execs are used to. 1:1 conversation, engagement and genuine curiosity on both sides.

As a prime example of how our CEO enjoys sharing & learning from bloggers and the public, see http://bit.ly/wgIoZ

The #fiestamovement is the perfect example of co-creation. Digital influencers giving feedback on how to improve the car for U.S.

Ideally, the blogger relations function doesn't begin & end with marketing and communications efforts.

The input, feedback & relationships built could extend to customer service, product development, IT, HR and more.

If we do it right, we'll be able to effectively connect with consumers and let them connect with each other.

Key Concepts:
Sponsored Conversations Connecting
With Customers

Some people question if sponsored conversations are an authentic way for a brand to be represented in the social web. As with blogger relations transparency is the foundation to maintaining hard earned trust with a community. The halo effect from social networks/content developers (blogger, video blogger, tweeter, podcaster) can go beyond just creating awareness to developing customer goodwill.

1. To be successful, the brand value and the values of the content provider must be aligned.
2. Brand managers and content providers must work in close partnership
3. The most successful results occur when the community trusts the authenticity and honesty of the content providers.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will authenticity and transparency be maintained through out the campaign?
2. How will negative comments from the community be handled?
3. What is success and how will it be determined?

Chapter 10 Metrics That Make Sense

First get your facts; then you can distort them at your leisure.
– Mark Twain

Tweet Intro

Give SM its due respect. Hold it to standards of accountability as you would any marketing strategy PR, research, advertising, etc.

Begin SM strategy development with specific goals and objectives. These indicators of success should support your biz objectives.

SM provides traditional online/website analytics e.g., unique visitors, geo location, time spent, key word referral, SEO ranking.

SM's new metrics based on influence & engagement: reach, respect of content creator, extent of conversations. You define meaning.

Social media metrics are new value propositions; altho they can be measured they hold only the value that you associate with them.

What is value of the Community the "Influencer" brings through links & extended commentary? Ask Motrin.
http://twurl.nl/mejbdn

Example: Goal to reinforce CEO's leadership position in the industry and with customers. Tactic: Twitter Town Hall Meeting Example: Metrics: retweets/'influence- followers', questions, answers, continuation of convo, pick up by blogs/MSM, goodwill

Interviews

In their Twitter interviews, Kate Kiederhoffer and Peter Kim address the challenges of determining what to measure in social media marketing. Kate reminds us that not all metrics may include ROI. Peter reinforces that when done right social media measurement involves cross functional coordination.

Kate Kiederhoffer
www.twitter.com/katenieder

Question: *To determine success marketing strategies must be "accountable." How do you measure success in SMM?*

I would start by putting the emphasis on measure rather than success

With good analysis, the course can change on the path to what you preconceived as "success"

Measuring, taking different perspectives on data you create with conversations and connections in SM, yields unexpected value

People confuse value and return. Metrics that tap into the depth of social interactions are not ROI per se

Well-worn paths in social science let us move beyond the "black box," from a campaign to a community to social business

We can measure the connections, conversation, and meta-communication

We just need to shift our thinking to be open to more social constructs and value beyond the intended bottom line

Peter Kim
www.twitter.com/peterkim

Question: *To determine success marketing strategies must be "accountable." How do you measure success in SMM?*

Marketers first need to own up to their weaknesses in left-brain thinking, which is usually outcast to the department's fringe.

And secondly, own up to the fractured relationships with departments that support measurement: IT and finance.

Success requires a coordinated approach, starting with a holistic strategy and supported by each department's strengths.

The entire business needs to embrace measurement and results - not trusting blindly in the merits of social media on faith alone.

In a social business, measurement is THE backbone of success.

Key Concepts: Measurement Turns An Experiment Into A Strategy

Determining the value of your social media initiatives involves thinking outside of traditional metrics. If you take into consideration new value propositions: the influence of longevity and the halo effect of influencers, you'll find that social media's impact is far reaching. Marketing objectives must be taken into consideration along with how areas of the enterprise are impacted.

1. Measurement should tie into business outcomes.
2. Metrics are not always directly equated to ROI.
3. Your objectives will determine what you measure. Keep in mind social media includes new concepts/values about metrics.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will you involve other departments in defining metrics that go beyond marketing objectives to include business outcomes?
2. What roles will the 'new social media measurements' play in your tracking?
3. How will you tie value back to measurement?

Chapter 11   Solving Business Challenges

Vision is the art of seeing the invisible, – Jonathan Swift

Tweet Intro

Almost every chapter discussed that to succeed a social media strategy must be developed and integrated into your marketing plan.

> As with every other "credible" marketing initiative an inside out approach of tactics 1st wins you short-term gains. if any.

Chapter 11 explores how organizations are putting pieces together including B2B, B2C, small business and nonprofit organizations.

Brendan Hurley, VP Goodwill of Grter Washington, shared a light bulb moment behind innovative SM strategy. http://twurl.nl/lp56hw

"I was trying too hard to develop a social networking strategy instead of incorporating SM into my marketing strategy." —B. Hurley

Goal was to grow secondary market segment w/ young, professional women; educate about Goodwill's mission to develop brand loyalty.

Multiple tactics were developed reinforcing strategy: blog http://twurl.nl/gwn7d2 (expand) ,videos posted to YT, spacebook page, eBay store.

From funky vintage dresses 2 conservative "suits" Ernst & Young established a Facebook page for recruiting. http://twurl.nl/3rrtf2

"We wanted to be able to reach candidates through a medium they're very comfortable with," Dan Black, Ernst &Young

Interviews

This chapter highlights how social media is used to solve challenges in three types of organizations: business to business/B2B (Dell: Lionel Menchaca), business to consumer/B2C (Comcast: Frank Eliason and GourmetStation: Donna Lynes-Miller) and nonprofit/the arts (Woodruff Arts Center: John Maley).

Frank Eliason
www.twitter.com/comcastcares

Question: *How has your organization used social media to solve business challenges?*

Twitter/social media is a quick and easy way to gather Customer feedback in their voice.It's helping us improve service

Donna Lynes Miller
www.twitter.com/gourmetstation

Question: *How has your organization used social media to solve business challenges?*

Strategy: Defensive-If small businesses don't engage in SM, the 1st consumer comment will be "these guys don't know what time it is."

Strategy: Defensive-Observe your competition's social media efforts. You can bet they're watching you!

Strategy: Brand Awareness-How many impressions do consumers need to build trust & engage?

SM-A cost efficient way to get attention

Strategy: Brand Personality-Use SM as brand extender to embellish brand personality in casual ways that don't fit commerce web sites

Strategy: Team Personalities-Use social media to weave team member personalities into brand personality thus expanding brand

Strategy: New Product Launch-Use SM to provide sneak peak of new products in development without spilling beans to competitors

Tactical: Web Site Traffic-Use brand impression points and SM network to create excitement & generate web site traffic

Tactical: Web Site Traffic & SEO-Use SM posts, key SEO phrases with anchor text links to web site to increase search rankings

Tactical: Web Site Traffic & Advertising-Use SM to support, supplement & extend PPC, banner ad & affiliate campaigns

Tactical: Conversions & Sales-Social media networks more likely to be advocates & customers with highest conversion percent

John Maley
www.twitter.com/johnmaley

Question: *How does the Woodruff Arts Center and its brands use social media to solve mktg/biz challenges?*

I'll focus on Alliance Theatre's use of facebook apps to maximize the return on other initiatives while minimizing manual updates.

Alliance's key app: http://apps.facebook.com/alliancetheatre - consolidated version of Alliance's site focusing on current season.

Apps can use facebook's API to publish things to feeds - the Alliance creates a feed story whenever you watch a trailer for a show.

By not asking the user to do anything extra in order to share, the "viralness" is maximized. Auto word-of-mouth marketing = good.

A feed story can be attached to pretty much any action in a facebook app, even just clicking a link.

The other goals of the Alliance's app are to drive blog particiation and build awareness of upcoming performances.

But manpower can't be devoted to updating content across the web -nonprofits don't typically have dedicated social media staff.

By creating RSS feeds of important content, we can syndicate what we've already got to the facebook app. Automatic updates.

Better still, fbook API+RSS allows us to update the profile boxes that some users add to their pages. Boxes can include anything.

The Alliance app has auto-updating sections for upcoming shows and recent blog posts. Can expand to include any future content.

Since fbook now allows API usage within standalone websites, it can be easier to leverage the w-o-m mktg nonprofits thrive on.

Word-of-mouth and easy are crucial feature for any nonprofit's marketing. Facebook's tools are very useful for reaching people.

By taking advantage of web 2.0's automation, the Alliance can participate in social media as fully as larger organizations.

Lionel Menchaca
www.twitter.com/lionelatdell

Question: *How has your organization used social media to solve business challenges?*

I'm Dell's Chief Blogger, and have had the pleasure of being involved in Dell's SM efforts since the day we started in April 2006.

Michael Dell was the one who prompted us to start monitoring the blogosphere to connect with those customers and fix the issues.

From that listening, we learned volumes. That work in April 2006 was the foundation of @Direct2Dell and our later SM efforts.

We made some mistakes then, but we got the listening right. Advice I give to companies to this day: Listen first. Be ready to act.

We try to remember those fundamentals in all our SM efforts. Here's a summary of our SM efforts 2 years in: http://bit.ly/10EVk4.

Today, proliferation of SM tools and sites mean more conversations in more places. I see this as a good thing—not a threat to blogs

It creates challenges on the monitoring front. But I'm excited to see Google Profiles extending beyond Google: http://bit.ly/77i5M.

What's next for Dell? Blending Dell Community content with Dell.com; From there, Dell Community content in other sites.

Core strategy = Go where the conversations are. We've had ups and downs in our social media efforts and will continue to do so.

> I wouldn't trade a second of it. Why? Because no work I've ever been involved in directly impacts customers the way that SM does.

That's what keeps us going. In my view, we've only scratched the surface. Social Media brings endless opportunity to connect.

Key Concepts: Social Media Provides Multiple Opportunities To Connect With Your Customers

Social media supplements traditional communication and customer service channels. It provides new opportunities to engage with customers and other stakeholders such as employees, media, donors, board members, etc.

1. Social media channels can be used to support traditional customer care. Be sensitive to create consistent experiences across all channels.
2. Social media networks provide easy to use ways for people to be come advocates.
3. Social media provides opportunities to have more conversations in more places. It increases brand awareness and understanding about your product, services and company.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How will you determine where your customers are having conversations on the social web?
2. How will you participate in social conversations when your customers ask for product or service help? How will you scale participation?
3. How will you help your advocates champion your brand in the social web?

Chapter 12 Relationships 1st, 2nd And Last

Man is a knot into which relationships are tied.
– Saint-Exupéry

Tweet Intro

SM - talk, listen, laugh w/ our customers which builds relationships beyond product or brand; irony it is THE brand experience.

The secret power of SM is not in the search rankings or new channel messaging but the ability to build cross cultural relationships.

Organizations that only allow "biz talk" & not the personal give and take w/in SM may actually do their brand more harm than good.

As w/ offline, SM relationships build over time & are nurtured w/ values that create trust & generosity; & give more than take.

SM is "relationship service" where people get to know you beyond the product or problem. We are people doing biz with people.

SM relationships don't stay in the virtual world. SM collapses the off line "build time." "Love online offline." -@richardatdell .

"It's not personal Sonny.It's strictly business." Son of the Godfather was dead wrong. Business is personal. SM makes it happen.

Interviews

Through out this book we've explored many aspects of social media marketing from ethics and transparency to strategy and tactics. However, at the end of the day the sustaining benefit of social media is in the relationships that you build over time. Liz Strauss, Tim Jackson, Lucretia M. Pruitt and Kimberly Coleman share their experiences of how to create authentic relationships that go from online to offline and back again. As Richard Binhammer from Dell said to me, "Love taking online offline."

Kimberly Coleman
www.twitter.com/mominthecity

Question: Can virtual exchanges create value that leads to "real" relationships?

Sharing relevant info (& a little of my life) with moms of young kids is my passion right now. I don't want to waste "mom" time.

With marketers trying to reach "my moms", the core relationship builder (online and off) is integrity. I won't work with liars.

Much of my interaction with experts is done online, but I feel a connection to them because of our shared concern for moms & kids.

Several bloggers that I have met online have become some of my favorite people. They are as smart, warm and talented offline as on!

Lucretia M. Pruitt
www.twitter.com/geekmommy

Question: Can virtual exchanges create value that leads to "real" relationships?

Can virtual/online relationships convert to "real" relationships? Absolutely. We can't define "real" by the origin of relationship

The online world of today is simply one form of communication - relationships are forged by interaction, commonality, and time

Relationships are built on trust, not proximity. The penpal of the 19th century has been replaced by 21st century online friends

Businesses that "went global" in the 20th cent have an opportunity to get back to Mom & Pop shop style relationships using Soc Med

The ability to define relationships online to suit our own availability, interests and time-spent makes it appealing to many of us

Moms don't 'hang out' with only the neighbors, or those in the beauty shop - they go online & find or build communities

Business people are not solely reliant upon 'clubs' or the local chamber of commerce to network with each other or their customers

To forge online relationships, we use the same patterns that have existed for centuries - but technology allows us greater reach

When Walmart started the 11moms program, the idea was to build a community & to tap into the existing ones, not just market

None of the women would've joined the program if she felt that the relationships she already had would be abused or exploited

Along the way, we've all developed strong bonds w/ each other as well. Relationships that will outlast involvement in the program

Today's instant information makes lying, cheating & bad dealings easily Googleable - your actions are your longterm reputation

Now, more than ever, trust and reliability are keystones of a solid relationship. Online relationship bldg is the same as offline

For biz - a coupon, sale, or event is a one time buy. A relationship is multiple sales over time. No brainer - need relationships

Where you build a relationship is less important than actually building one. Build is a verb it means time & effort are involved

Relationships are like gardens - you can't just sow seeds and reap. You must nurture the right seeds or eat only weeds.

Tim Jackson
www.twitter.com/timjackson

Question: *Can virtual exchanges create value that leads to "real" relationships?*

Virtual interaction, in this new digital age, is as real as any face to face relationship- especially for companies.

Co's can choose to employ SM tactics to reach & connect w/ customers, or they can allow their competition to do it instead.

Smart co's will seize the chance to improve the quality of their relationships w/ there customers & SM makes it SO much easier.

Over the past 4+ yrs of my SM work, I have used SM to develop stronger relationships for the brand across the globe– it's easy.

SM has allowed me to connect Masi Bicycles to an ever-growing audience on a personal level that would not otherwise be possible.

Any brand can do the same thing by simply reaching out and engaging and participating- plus it is amazingly fun and rewarding!

Masi' brand recognition is discernibly stronger now thanks to pursuit of online relationships- your brand should too.

In the absence of a big marketing budget, SM is the grand leveler of the playing field. "Personality goes a long way".

Development of relationships DOES require outreach, so brands need to be willing to invest a little time in talking to others.

Truly effective SM relationships are developed thru 2-way dialog & not just "broadcast" of messaging. Go out & share in convo!

As in real life, honest communication builds stronger relationships- trust is very important. No trust = Bad.

Co's benefit most from developing honest relationships thru SM. Simply regurgitating marketing speak is not the answer.

Customers connect to brands by extension through the people they interact with, increasing the need for passionate voices.

Find your brand evangelists within your company to spread the word w/o it sounding like a company brochure. Sincerity is always best.

Customers are more loyal to brands they feel they have a relationship with and will forgive more from those brands.

You get a lot more forgiveness from the community that you are a member of, rather than just an observer.

Since co's can't be in all places @ once, virtual relationships serve as the perfect surrogate & extend brand reach.

Liz Strauss
www:twitter.com/lizstrauss

Question: *Can virtual exchanges create value that leads to "real" relationships?*

I'm afounder of @SOBCon a deeply networked online community. SM is a huge part. Don't we need context to get to meaning? I say yes

We have the ability to build fast context and get on to content. But we have to understand the SM context we're in.

Do you think most folks understand the context of the tools they use? I think we keep overlaying offline constructs.

We forget that the interwebs AND the future are also listening when we type our talk. Maybe are relationships are MORE than real.

Does the nature of recording what we say make it more REAL? Are you more authentic when you write it down?

In the end doesn't it come down to who we are and how we define a REAL relationship?

@coffee_online asks Can we only co-exist via connection? On Twitter? I've often wondered that about the concrete world

@bryanlehner asks What about what we don't say in writing because we don't want it recorded. How authentic is that?

If we won't say it in writing (allowing exceptions) how authentic is it? Maybe we should stop defining REAL & think -> DIFFERENT

Do you have different relationships with the same person online and off? I get a different son online than offline.

@rjsi I'm with you on that. Simple words often best describe what we do.

Online or off, my relationships with you, your biz, or your product is really in MY head. I interpret any info I take in.

The beauty of SM is that we get enough inputs that we can detect patterns about people or groups that could change our views.

So Twitter can allow us to "build up" to a holistic view of a person, a brand, or a customer group. Powerful stuff. If we listen.

To find out about customer loyalties, we ask customers what THEY see, hear, and understand. Then work w. patterns /trends.

SM makes it easier to reach customers with the same question. But the ? is in the context of the tool itself - We're back start.

Key Concepts: Relationships Formed In The Digital World Are As Valuable As Those In The Offline World.

The oxymoron of a social media relationship is what is considered to be cold and unfeeling--the World Wide Web/technology--is the catalyst that brings people together. The benefits of nurturing business relationships range from expanded customer base and increased sales to broader brand awareness and stronger customer loyalty.

1. People want to feel that they matter and you value the relationship.
2. It takes time to develop relationships in the offline world why should digital world be any different? Finding a new best friend in one tweet is rare.
3. People may feel they know you even though they don't actively participate with you in a conversation. Take care what you say and how you say it.

Continuing The Conversation

1. How do you create safe internal and external environments to build and nurture digital relationships?
2. How much of "you" is comfortable for you and your organization to 'give away' on the social web? How will you retain your authenticity while staying true to brand values?
3. Digital relationships do not always live only in the online world. How can you expand and add value in the offline world?

After Foreword

*What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end
is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.*
– T.S. Eliot

David Meerman Scott
www.twitter.com/dmscott

How do you get attention? Buy it w/ advertising. Beg for it from
the media. One at a time w/ direct sales. Or EARN it with SM.

Stop being egotistical. Resist the urge to talk about your products
and services. Create content to help your buyers solve problems.

Get out of your nice comfortable office and meet with your
potential customers. Use what you learn to create valuable stuff
online.

You've got to think of social media as spreading ideas, not
generating leads. If your ideas spread, people will actively seek
you out

To create interesting information online, hire a journalist: full-
time, part-time, or freelance. They are skilled at telling a story.

Social media is like a cocktail party. Do you shout "BUY MY
PRODUCT"? Ask everyone for business cards? Or just meet
people and talk?

Bottom line on social media: You ARE what you publish. (And
what others publish about you.)

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As with any book, there are many people to thank and eBooks are no different. First, must be the guest interviewees who took a risk adding their tweets to this new genre--a business book of interviews written on Twitter. Without your spirit of adventure this book would not have been as rich or as special.

Several years ago, Nettie Hartsock encouraged me to write a book about social media. Her support in this endeavor went miles beyond inspiration and friendship. I will be forever thankful to her. Paul Chaney, my first online/offline friend, challenged me to write a social media marketing book. Who knew that book would turn into an exciting venture using micro-blogging as the major content and distribution platform?

Dana VanDen Heuvel and Bill Flitter our American Marketing Association (AMA) 'road tours' started it all. Shel Israel's wise council and questions helped structure the format. Polli Graham's and Kate Spencer's reality checks and reviews were invaluable.

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Sending tweets to three special people, dancing in the stars – my mother and dad, Anne and Lou Bloomberg and my sister Susan Ellen Porter.

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The Twitter Social Media Marketing Community

The following are the people who added RTs, posted comments, sent DMs and generously offered their support. This is as much your book as is it anyone's. Thank you for your patience, participation and advice.

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Consolidation of Continuing The Conversation Questions:

The Start of Your Social Media Marketing Plan

Creating a social media plan is not a simple task. It is a process that takes an understanding of digital cultures, multiple web 2.0+ tools and the know how to turn them into marketing tactics that support objectives, vision of how the enterprise may be impacted and of course 'new media brand stewardship.' It may also involve helping management consider a different way of conducting business.

To help you create your social media strategy each chapter contains *Continuing The Conversation* questions. These questions were developed to serve as a roadmap that will guide you through issues that impact the success of your plan. The following is a consolidation of the questions from all 12 chapters.

Chapter 1: Why Social Media?

- Who are the people you want to reach through social media? Keep in mind you might have multiple audiences with diverse needs and brand experience expectations.
- Where (what platforms) do your customers *hang out* in the digital world?
- How do your customers want to engage with (the people of) your brand?

Chapter 2: The New Enterprise Direction

- What "gorillas" are your organization challenged to understand and resolve? What have you identified as the biggest risk?
- How is/will social media effect the structure of your organization and what will be the new responsibilities of employees?
- Who should be included in your cross functional social media team? Hint: include both champions and nay sayers.

Chapter 3: Research The 1st Listening Post

- Who will "own" social media monitoring in your organization? Will it reside in consumer insights, digital marketing, public relations, customer service, human resources, etc.?
- What type of information will you track e.g., brand sentiment, competitive product development, customer service, new campaign buzz, industry trends, etc.
- How will the findings from social media support your traditional research program? You do have a research strategy?!

Chapter 4: Ethics

- How does your organization define transparency in the social web? Is it the same for all platforms e.g., Twitter, blogs, Facebook, etc?
- How do you handle ethics in other aspects of your business e.g., communications, advertising, customer service, etc.?
- What processes are in place to ensure that vendors who are involved in your social media strategy adhere to your organization's ethical principles?

Chapter 5: Strategy

- How will using social media support your marketing objectives/goals/business outcomes?
- How will you integrate your social media initiatives into your current master marketing plan?
- What does success mean to you? What do you want the engagement to lead to? What do you consider to be conversion?

Chapter 6: Tactics

Blogs
- How will your blog support marketing objectives?
- Who will be the voice/s of your blog? If you chose an agency or freelancer how will you handle transparency and ensure your brand value/promise is kept?
- What is your high level content direction? Keep in mind it should be sustainable over the long-term.

Twitter
- How will Twitter support your marketing objectives?
- Who will be the voice/s that tweet on behalf of your brand? If you employee an agency or consultant consider how will you define transparency and ensure your brand's value/promise is retained?
- How will you identify the people you should follow and how will you engage with them?

Social Networks
- How will the social networks, you choose to participate in, support your marketing objectives?
- Who will be the voice/s behind social networks? If you chose an agency or freelancer how will you handle transparency and ensure your brand's value/promise is kept?
- What type of engagement do your customers want from you/your "brand?"

Podcasts
- How will podcasts support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
- What will be your high level content direction and the consistent, branded, format of your show?
- How will you engage with your listeners to ensure they feel welcomed and consider themselves to be a part of your community?

Video
- How will videos support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
- In addition to YouTube, have you identified other video platforms and made plans to include on your corporate website and blog?
- If you consider sponsoring a video, have you taken into consideration the match of the host and content direction with your brand values?

RSS
- How will RSS support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
- In addition to social media platforms (where RSS is built into the technology), what other digital environments can benefit from a direct customer/stake holder pull of information?
- Have you built in a monitoring initiative that reviews the number of RSS subscribers, as well as, the number of people who unsubscribe?

Widgets
- How will widgets support your marketing objectives and social media strategy?
- Widgets can range in cost from free to thousands of dollars. What is your budget?
- What type of interaction do your customers want from a widget? Do they want updated information or would an interactive game be more engaging?

Chapter 7: Branding

- How will you use social media to help your customers help you create "the brand?"
- How can you alleviate, or lessen, the fear factor to help your internal brand stewards understand the benefits that can be derived from incorporating social media into branding initiatives?
- How will you integrate social media into the DNA of your brands to ensure it supports customers' expectations?

Chapter 8: Blogger Relations

- What steps can you take to build a long-term relationship with bloggers who are important to your brand and product category?
- What can you do to ensure that your offer to bloggers is a 3 way win for the: blogger, community and brand?
- How will you determine if your blogger relations efforts are successful?

Chapter 9: Sponsored Conversations

- How will authenticity and transparency be maintained through out the campaign?
- How will negative comments from the community be handled?
- What is success and how will it be determined?

Chapter 10: Metrics

- How will you involve other departments in defining metrics that go beyond marketing objectives to include business outcomes?
- What roles will the 'new social media measurements' play in your tracking?
- How will you tie value back to measurement?

Chapter 11: Solving Business Challenges

- How will you determine where your customers are having conversations on the social web?
- How will you participate in social conversations when your customers ask for product or service help? How will you scale participation?
- How will you help your advocates champion your brand in the social web?

Chapter 12: Building Relationships

- How do you create safe internal and external environments to build and nurture digital relationships?
- How much of "you" is comfortable for you and your organization to 'give away' on the social web? How will you retain your authenticity while staying true to brand values?
- Digital relationships do not always live only in the online world. How can you expand and add value in the offline world?

Toby Bloomberg is passionate about helping people (not companies) create initiatives that leverage the power of social media communications to build and nurture "digital corner grocery store relationships." From 2004, when she chaired the American Marketing Association's first national workshop on blogs, Toby has been speaking, teaching and consulting on the topic at conferences and for a diverse range of client organizations.

She is a recognized for her expertise in combining social media with traditional marketing values (strategy, customer insights, segmentation, etc.) while maintaining the authenticity of digital conversations.

She not only understands social media marketing but is an active participant in the conversation. Toby's blog *Diva Marketing* www.divamarketingblog.com is included in the *Forbes list of 20 Marketing and Social Media Blogs By Women*.

Toby is a Yankee from Boston living in Atlanta with her YouTube "rock star" http://is.gd/e1aO Westie pup Max, who occasionally finds his way into Diva Marketing.

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This book is available at Diva Marketing for download. The format was developed to be easily viewed in digital readers. I cordially invite you to share the link and the book with people in your network who might enjoy an innovative approach to social media marketing.

Let's continue the conversation! I'd love to know your thoughts about this new genre, your ideas about social media and your concept of other "tweet-interview" books. Follow me on Twitter @tobydiva, #smgps or drop me a note at tobyb1@gmail.com

Warmly,
Toby