

Online perception is reality

Social Media can help you manage your reputation and ensure that you control your prospects' first interaction with your brand.

Online Usage Statistics

- More than half of all US residents and more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of all US adults are online.¹
- One third of consumers spend at least 3 hours online every day.²
- More & more of the things we used to do offline, like product research and getting news, we now do online.

The Internet has fundamentally changed the way in which people find, discover, share, shop, & connect.

Social Media & Marketing Statistics

- 93% of US adult Internet users are on Facebook.¹¹
- Marketers who spent 6 hours a week or more using social media and engaging/sharing content on it saw 52% more leads than those who did not.¹²
- Companies that use Twitter average double the amount of leads per month than those that do not.⁹
- Both B2C & B2B companies are acquiring customers through Facebook.
- More than 1/3 of marketers say Facebook is "critical" or "important" to their business.¹⁰

Social media **amplifies** your content, your website and your brand. It allows for you to establish and foster a more personal relationship with your potential customers, and when done correctly, can generate website traffic, inbound links, and leads for you.

Social media has become a major part of consumer culture, and it is time for you to capitalize on it.

Here are 10 Social Media Musts for Today's Entrepreneurs

1) Gather customer insights and competitive info

Know what is being said about you online. Many businesses assume they aren't on social media only to find out there are dozens of reviews about them on Yelp, or Google places.

Use tools like these to follow what customers say about you and your competition

- Google Alerts
- Social Mention
- Monitor review sites – Google Places, Yelp, Rate your MD etc.

Not all businesses need a social strategy, but I can't think of one that wouldn't benefit from knowing what is being said about them online.

2) Social Media works for any size business

Many small businesses feel they can't afford a website or more signage, but social tools give you and Coca Cola a level playing field. A well developed Facebook Page, or Google Place Profile can virtually replace the need for a site for some small businesses. Research now shows that customers would prefer to interact with the brand right on Facebook rather than leave FB to visit the company page (like to print a Michael's Craft Coupon).

Create a winning page in a social network and you can use this to share info if you don't yet have a website.

3) Those companies that offer to get you top on Google Search for \$10 a word may also have some swamp water for sale in Florida
If it sounds too good to be true, well then it probably is. Coming up number one in Google takes time and a well connected website. Various 'tricks' to optimize site have been the flavor of the month for many firms looking to make a quick buck, but Google discovers many of these tricks and can penalize your site – blacklisting it. Do the work to get to the top through a well-written and well-optimized site that both gives your clients and Google what they are looking for.

4) Strategy before Tactics

You wouldn't bake a cake without a recipe would you? Don't jump to launching pages or getting on Twitter without thinking it through. Have a plan. Ask yourself:

- Why do I want to be on this social site (the right answer is because my customers are there, not because the competition is).
- How will you use this site to further your business goals?
- How will you maintain your efforts?

5) Your Totally Cool Teen Daughter maybe a Facebook Guru, but she shouldn't be the go to resource for a business Social Strategy

Knowing how to use Facebook as a consumer and being able to create an amazing Business Page is quite different. Business FanPages have tools that are very valuable and unique to business (coupons, mapping, reviews, newsletter sign up and more!)

6) B2B/ B2C Require a Unique Strategy

Social media opportunities exist for both business to businesses organizations and business to consumers, but they usually require a unique plan.

LinkedIn is an ideal tool for consultants and sales professionals; I can personally attribute business to my LinkedIn presence and activity. Facebook is often the preferred platform for B2C. You must select the right tools, and also the right tone and the right type of posts for your products and your organization.

7) Likes and Follows are great, but it is leads and sales that you are after.

It is not a competition to see if you get more LIKES (or followers) than the competition. The real goal is to have this tool help you reach your business goals....

- Finding people
- Customer Insights
- Testing Products
- Reviews and referrals
- Leads and Sales.

8) Get the basics right first – fix your site, send a client enewsletter, then jump into social media
Social media is hot and it can be THE way to amplify your business, but get the basics right first. eNewsletters still offer amazing ROI (Return on Investment). If you have a list of customers' email addresses, talk to them with an enewsletter – you can even tell them to join you in the social space. Get your site right before you promote it. Check that links are working, that it is easy to navigate and customer friendly.



9) Don't bite off more than you can chew

Social Media can be all consuming, or if well planned, a quick part of your daily business practices. It is tempting to jump in too deep too quickly. Begin your social media efforts one social tool at a time. Don't take on anything new until you are comfortable with one tool.

Not participating in social media is one thing, have old out-of-date profiles or not responding to people in social media is far worse. Make sure you are ready for what you take on.

If it is not your thing, outsource your social media activity.

10) If it's worth doing, it's worth tracking

A famous marketer used to say, half my advertising is not working, I just wish I knew which half it was. Today marketing effectiveness doesn't have to be a guessing game. With tools like Google Analytics you can track your marketing efforts. Leverage these valuable insights.

About me

I'm Melanie Taljaard. I work with business leaders like you in and around Halifax to help you build your marketing castle one smart decision at a time. **Is your Marketing Strategy...**

- Well thought out?
- Relevant and timely?
- Developed from a big picture perspective?
- On brand and on target?

Your marketing can be so much more with More In Store.

If you're like many of my clients, you run a small to medium-sized office with staff. You're dedicated, thorough and careful about the products and services you provide for your clients. You might be a dentist, an educator, an attorney, an accountant or a realtor. You understand the importance of smart, targeted marketing efforts to attract and keep your clients so you can keep doing the work you love and carry out your mission with aplomb.

Could your business go further and faster with me?

I'd say yes, if:

- You're a business owner in the professional service sector, or business services industry.
- Your accomplishments in your field are many, and you still push yourself to grow, improve, and fine tune your business processes — but you don't always have time to explore and implement these new opportunities.
- You give your clients your very best and you expect the same of the creative professionals, suppliers, and partners you enlist.
- You see the value of targeted marketing efforts to increase your client base and sales, but you know marketing dollars need to be invested wisely.
- Your passion for your business is recharged by seeing great ideas take shape. You understand that delegating tasks outside of your zone of genius will free up more of your time and energy to do your greatest work.
- You're ready to see results for your marketing investment and want access to marketing expertise in a way that fits your time and budget.



- You're willing to invest time in conversation and strategy with me in creating marketing efforts on your behalf. You realize the importance of marketing and wouldn't think of handing this aspect of your business off to a staff member or junior partner.

Let's cut through the muddle of marketing options out there and get clear, get real and get going. [Follow me.](#)



Sources

- ¹BLOGHER, APRIL 2011, PEW RESEARCH, MAY 2010, US CENSUS BUREAU, MAY 2011
- ²THE MEDIA AUDIT, OCTOBER 2010
- ⁹HUBSPOT, STATE OF INBOUND MARKETING LEAD GENERATION REPORT, 2010
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- ¹¹BLOGHER, APRIL 2011
- ¹² SOCIAL MEDIA EXAMINER, 2011
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