

A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR BUSINESS

**A
WAY TO
MAKE YOUR BLOG,
FACEBOOK & TWITTER
WORK TOGETHER SUCCESSFULLY**

ZACH OLSEN 2010

There are a lot of "how to's" for doing social media out there including lots of ideas and suggestions but not very many concrete strategies. So instead of another "how to," here is a "do it this way" strategy guide to social media for your business.

Assumptions

1. With a strong enough why you can accomplish any how. I'm assuming you already get why blogging, Facebook and Twitter for business is important and worthwhile. If not, I put the why down at the bottom so you can check it out there if you want.
2. This strategy is assuming you already have a website that includes a blog. You sell something or provide a service. You have gotten into blogging, Facebook, and twitter to help your business and now you're trying to figure out how to make it all work together.

The Objectives of This Strategy

By implementing this strategy, your blog, Facebook and Twitter will work together to:

1. Allow your business to become more responsive to your customers and potential customers online. This means answering individual questions and solving problems about your product/service, kind of like an extension of customer service.
2. Incorporate your target audience's feedback into your business more quickly and effectively. Which in turn creates more customer loyalty and customer evangelists.
3. Give your brand personality and life that people can relate to.
4. Increase awareness of the solutions your product/service provides. Pretty much like marketing online. A lot of people out there don't know/care about you. This strategy will help to educate them as to why your business matters and invite them to make a purchase.

10 Steps Behind a Successful Blogging Strategy

1. Your blog is home base. Its the hub for all of your social marketing endeavors, it's where everything starts. You get to decide exactly how it will look and feel. Take advantage of that.
2. Choose a niche or core competency for your blog. Your business should already serve some niches, focus on those niches even more in your blog. Jim Collin's [Hedgehog Concept](#) is a good tool for defining your niche. Your niche should align perfectly to the kind of customers you want to attract. This means it won't be perfect for most people. But that's OK if the few people you do reach are the people who are looking for you. Don't be a blog for everyone or else you will be a blog for no one. Be unique and passionate. A couple of things to keep in mind:
 - "It's usually a small percentage of the tribe within the larger tribe who spread the word—usually about 1 percent. They are the One Percenters. The One Percenters are not the usual suspects of namebrand tech bloggers, mommy bloggers and or business bloggers. The One Percenters are often hidden in the crevices of niches, yet they are the roots of word of mouth." (Jackie Huba and Ben McConnell, [What Matters Now](#)).
 - "Many bloggers seem to be on a perpetual hunt for the front page of Digg. Sure, it brings you hordes of eyeballs, but then they turn around and leave. What's the point of that, really?
I think that are plenty of tips you can follow to optimize your offering for this fickle mass group. But it's still a crap shoot. Doesn't it make more sense to incrementally earn the attention of a smaller, less glitzy but far more valuable group of people who actually engage with you? And the best part is, your odds of success are a lot better." ([Seth Godin](#))
3. Put [links](#) to your Facebook and Twitter accounts on your blog. You may want to include a [widget](#) showing you're latest tweets or a Facebook [fan box](#) or [page badge](#). Include a link to subscribe to your blog via RSS. The point here is to let your audience choose which way they would like stay connected to you.
What to write?
4. Your blog doesn't have to say everything at once. You can add a new idea every day, piling on a thesis over time. A long post, anything more than 4 big paragraphs, is better chopped in two and served in two different posts.

5. Don't be afraid to include links to other sites or reference other places the reader could check out because they'll come back if what you had to say was interesting.
6. Answer specific questions, solve specific problems and add value.
 - The other day I was trying to figure out what kind of cycling shoes to buy, not realizing how confusing the differences in pedals, cleats and shoes are for a first time buyer like myself. In my search I found [this article](#) from REI that gives an explanation of the different kinds of cycling shoes and which ones would be right for me. Not wonder it was the first result on in Google search. In fact, REI has an entire [section of their site](#) dedicated to answering these kinds of questions. It's not interruptive, it's informative and just what I was looking for, when I was looking for it. Answer similar questions about your products/services one post at a time. After a while you will have a thousand solutions for the thousands of people searching for them every day. Try [this tool](#) for discovering what kinds of questions you could answer.
 - What need does your product/service fulfill? Does your floor shine product make floors shine better or cheaper than anything else? Write posts about how to solve this need with a title that starts with "How To [enter your business solution here]". (You'd be surprised to know that even with all the floor shine products out there vying to be your next floor shine purchase, the search query, "how to make floors shine," retrieves not one result from a brand. Do a search for a solution that your business provides, are any of your competitors in the results?)
 - What is your target market into? Are they busy business travelers looking for ways to be more efficient? Post about the best airports bars, best practices for getting onto the plane sooner, best way to keep your toiletries organized while traveling, p-card maximization tips, do you see where I'm going with this? Add value to your target audience with supplemental information, even though it's not exactly about your product, that they would want related to your product/service.
7. Get the wisdom of the crowd on business decisions and ask for their feedback and suggestions. Don't do this unless you can actually implement their feedback.
Comments
8. When someone leaves a comment that asks a question, answer them in those same comments.
9. Don't delete negative comments, that hurts trust. Instead post your own comments that try to help. Don't be afraid to state that you're wrong sometimes and your working on it, make fun of yourself and be human.
10. Set up [Google Alerts](#) for your business name and other related terms. Every time something in the news comes up related to your industry, write some commentary about it in your blog. Leave comments on the blogs where this news comes from.

One last thing: Don't forget about Search Engine Optimization. SEO is really easy. Focus on making sure the [meta titles](#), titles of the posts and content of you posts include the words that people would use to search for that content. In other words, don't be vague or too clever.

10 Steps to Behind a Successful Facebook Strategy

1. When people become Fans of your Facebook page they see your status updates in their news feed. They can easily block your updates from their feed so don't be spammy. So just like the blog - post content that adds value, answers questions and solves problems.
2. Whatever you post on your blog, put a link to that post on Facebook.
3. Post what your target audience is into. For example, [Red Bull](#) doesn't post information about Red Bull, they post North Shore surfing updates and B-Boy competitions.
4. Post promotions, sales and product news.
5. Use those other tabs on your Facebook page to talk about your product offerings and details.
6. Don't delete negative comments. See if you can make those people happy. Leave supportive comments under their negative ones.

7. List events your business is putting on and invite people to them.
8. Use [polls](#) to engage fans with questions about changes in products or services. See what they would want. Use polls for fun topics within your product theme, for example, if your business sells wine, ask when is the best occasion for wine, etc.
9. Post pictures of your staff at company events and parties. Show your Facebook fans that real people work at your business.
10. Segment your status updates [based on location](#) for better targeted updates.

10 Steps Behind a Successful Twitter Strategy

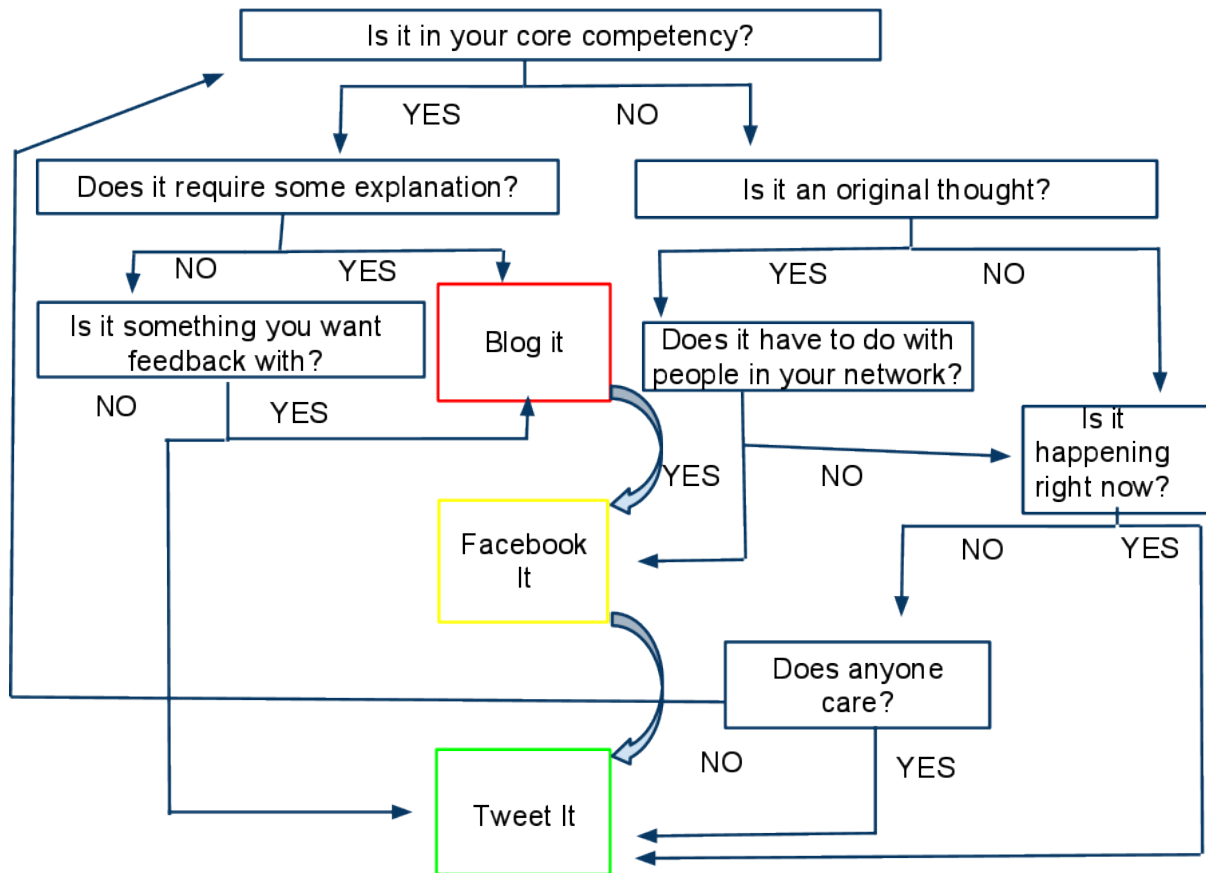
1. Put your blog posts and Facebook status updates on Twitter. Use [this](#).
2. The power of Twitter is in it's search. Use [Tweetdeck](#) to monitor your twitter account. Set up columns in Tweeddeck that allow you to monitor searches for tweets that include keywords that are important to you such as your brand name, industry you're in or related keywords.
3. Follow people who are a part of discussions related to your business. The hope here is that they will follow you in return if they find your content worth following.
4. When you see people asking questions related to your business, answer then directly with @theirname included in the tweet.
5. Re-Tweet when you see a tweet that you like or find informative related to your business.
6. If you see a conversation, chime in with value added content when it looks appropriate. Don't push your brand, be helpful.
7. Twitter is the least personal, shortest attention span of the three. A lot of people follow upwards of one hundred people or more which means your tweet has a short life span before it gets burried underneath everyone else's tweets. This is why a lot of businesses give incentives for their followers to retweet (RT) certain important messages, like a sale or promotion, so that they are seen by more people. Here are some different ideas for competitions, contests and giveaways when you have a message that you want to spread.
 - 30th person to RT this gets a free something.
 - RT this and we will pick a winner randomly by the end of the day.
 - For every 30th new follower, another random RT will receive something free.
8. Follow those who follow you
9. Set up a daily deal. [Moosejaw](#) gives away a T shirt to a random follower daily.
10. Use [Twuffer](#) to schedual news or promotional tweets that you know about ahead of time. This is a big time saver.

Extra Considerations

1. People talk to people, not logos. Give the names and personalitys of the people who run the show, something like, "Since our logo can't tweet, Steve is in the drivers seat. He digs that Chinese place on 6th, drives a Volkswagon, and listens to Black Sabbath." Let Steve be himself as a community organizer for the brand.
2. There are a lot of other social networks out there, Myspace, Flickr, Linkedin, Youtube, but instead of spreading yourself too thin, focus on these three and get good at them first.

With all of this in mind, do some brainstorming sessions weekly and come up with as many ideas for posts and tweets as you can. This may be part of your marketing, PR and promotions brainstorms. Use the below flow chart to determine which ideas go where. You'll notice that anything posted to the blog should also be posted on Facebook which also flows down to Twitter.

A Social Media Strategy For Business - Blog, Facebook & Twitter Working Together



WHY?

1. Blogs are good for SEO. Search engines like freshly updated content. And if you have things worth saying that means people will link to you and the more links to your site, the higher you rank.
2. Every blog post is like another chance at reaching someone who is searching for something you wrote about. This means every post has the potential at being discovered by more and more people looking for your business's solutions.
3. If your brand is well known at all, people are already talking about you. [A study](#) found that 46 percent of social media users have recommended or talked about a product or brand on Facebook, and 44 percent have done the same on Twitter. Social media allows you to direct, be a part of, correct and initiate more of these conversations.
4. Go where your audience is. If everyone read the newspaper it might be a good idea to put an ad in there, but since no one does, that would be stupid. People are on Facebook and Twitter so go there.
5. [Online reviews sway shoppers](#). 61% of respondents to a survey said they had checked online reviews, blogs and other online customer feedback before buying a new product or service. You can try to make sure that what they find is positive.
6. [From Seth Godin](#) again: "I can watch a video. I can engage in a conversation. We can connect, transfer knowledge, engage in a way that builds trust... all of these things make it more likely that I'll trust you enough to send you some money one day. I can contribute to a project you're building, ask you a difficult question, discover what others have already learned. But send you money on the first date? No way. The question then, is how much time and effort does your non-profit/consulting firm/widget factory spend on pre-purchase transactions and how much do you spend on trying to simply close the sale?"
7. As people engage in an experience, it becomes part of their daily thinking and behavior. Not only that, but experience enhances memory, adds to credibility, reveals

hidden attributes, holds attention and influences preferences; all of which lead a person to buy.

8. Instead of promoting to more people, which is expensive and wasteful, with social media you can promote to people who are more interested.

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