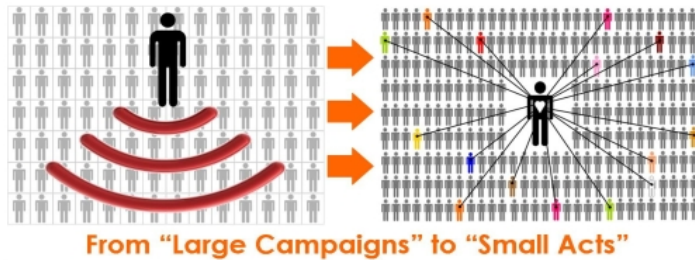


A Roadmap For Social Media

Easy-to-use ideas to build your social footprint



Social Media is Changing Business



Source: Mashable.com © Mark Smiciklas, New Marketing & Social Media Strategist, IntersectionConsulting.com

Why should social media really matter?

We all turn to Google and social networks to get information when we want to buy something, to go to the theatre, to book a flight or read a book.

Companies, people can get information about you, your products, your CEO and your competitors with just a few clicks. They trust other consumers' opinions, not your PR release. So go meet them exactly where they are, show that you understand their socializing needs and accept their power to choose and give feedback.

Do you know who your audience is? Or do you keep mixing them up in your efforts to grasp the meaning of social media? Start monitoring and you'll soon have a brighter picture of what all this means.

How will social media help you?

You'll be able to reach people you didn't have the possibility to get to before, and even if you did reach some of them, you weren't able to talk to them and find out more about their needs. Social media helps your network grow exponentially, which means any member is a potential advocate for your brand. And the content you share can spread virally fast, more than you could achieve through traditional media.

First rule:

Know what you want from social media!

Social media is the easiest way through which you can talk directly to people and affect them in a way that wasn't possible before.

Start slowly by reacting to what people are saying about you. Grow your social audience by offering them stuff they can get just by being your followers. You'll show them it pays off to be a fan of your brand.

The Six G's of Social Media Marketing

Do be ...

1 Genuine

2 Generous

3 Grateful

Don't be ...

4 Greedy

5 Grandstanding

6 Grabby



Here are a few starter points you have to follow when building a strong online presence.

First, you'll want to **register your brand name** on the most important social networks, like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube – even if you still need time to grasp on how they are to be used, it's better to own the profiles. Also buy a domain with your company's name.

Start a blog – if it's frequently updated, it will get indexed by Google easier than a static website. Your blog will be the primary resource hub for your business; its content will travel through social networks once you social-media-optimize it to **dynamically increase exposure**.

Fit social media into your every day activities – or at least be consistent! You won't pull it off if you tweet then and now, customers & fans need to know you're there and they can talk to you when needed.

There's no business hours in social media.

Start listening! Particularly if you're new to this, you'll learn better by watching how other people do it. After that, you'll get your chance to add your own opinions to the mix of ideas. Remember that **your brand is being talked about, whether you know it or not.**

Being genuine, trustful and sincere can work wonders for your company. Just start small, but be a believer!

Build a social media plan – there's no ROI without a strategy, so start planning a social media program to help you grow your business. Community building, reputation management and brand awareness – all these sound pretty well, but they are objectives that simply strive for guidelines and tactics.

Measure and monitor – another key factor to get ROI from social media is to constantly observe, track and report upon changes in your social media presence. For this, you will need to use specially-designed **social media monitoring tools** that will help you skim through loads of information on the web and sort out the relevant mentions.

Build your own community of customers and fans, it will get extremely useful for popularising your brand across various networks and work together with your **brand evangelists** to successfully promote your products or services.

Don't hide behind your brand! You need to be as human as possible. Stop thinking corporate! What's beautiful about social media is that you don't have to be a big company to benefit from its advantages, even if you might think that time and budget restrictions can slow you down.

What's with all this social noise?

It's true, you might get overwhelmed at first, but because they have to skim through endless streams of information, **your customers** will only stay with you if they are true fans (there's so much to listen to, that they won't clog their feeds with unwanted stuff). So you'll know they're there because they want to.

And as for **your business**, with the proper monitoring tools, you can search for keywords that are connected to your industry to see what the trends are, who are the influencers in your market and what you should take into account when building your social media strategy.

Gain satisfied customers by answering their questions and showing there's always someone there (yes, social media can make a great **customer service tool**), and then your reputation will grow naturally, through **trust** and **competence**.

Be grateful for your customers' input – after all, you are working together in building your brand. It's not just you blasting messages at them, it's you and your evangelists sharing good and interesting stuff that you care about (**Example**: if you're an email marketer, people follow you because they want to know things about your industry, so share information about newsletters and marketing trends in your niche).





This is all nice and good, but **how do I get ROI from my social media activities?**

Yes, we know, a questions that's still unanswered and that bugs a lot of you. Many of social media's benefits are intangible, that is why we don't have a general framework that can fit everywhere. But let's try and break it down a little.

What you need to be able to justify ROI for your business:

A clear understanding of the objectives you want to accomplish by using social media. Start small – you don't need to think exclusively in terms of sales or customer retention; when it comes to social media, you should have in mind mostly intangible metrics. A [few things](#) you could track are:

Quantitative

Qualitative

Number of contributors to your community

Number of C-level executives and subject-matter experts who are sharing their knowledge with the organization

Number of comments

Number of research pieces and other data that is accessible to the organization

Number of ratings

Number of ways the organization shares knowledge

Number of documents circulated/shared

Percentage of employees' days spent working in a team and collaborating on a project

Number of days a new employee is up and running

Percentage of cross-functional groups accessing/sharing data that was otherwise siloed

Number of days a new project is completed

Percentage decrease in e-mail, in favor of collaborative social tools as a means of communication

Number of days/minutes a customer support issue is identified and solved

Use the proper tools – you will need to monitor the buzz around your brand, watch the sentiment, compare yourself to competitors, and also get a picture of what your customers and influencers want. Brand perception and market analysis will also benefit of the social media measurement tools, as you will have a powerful source of consumers insights at hand.

What a good tool should do:

- **Alert** you when something is being said about your brand, products and services, your industry and your competitors in social media;
- Allow you to have a great **overview** on all the social talking – like a huge dashboard to maintain all your accounts and interact with people at the same time;
- Increase your online performance and boost your social media results – it's like having a **personal assistant** guiding you through all the noise;
- Help you not to waste your time by using **relevance** as a criteria for measurement;
- Analyze the **sentiment** around your brand.

Correlate data – link information from your social media activity to marketing numbers to get a nice overview of your efforts (also try to break down the effects by department: customer service, support, sales, marketing, PR) – this way you can convince even the most intolerable boss that social media does work.



Check out some [tips](#) for generating positive ROI:

Example 1 – what can a restaurant do:

Twitter followers receive a daily code which gives a 10 percent discount if used in a certain time period to order lunch. Regulars will avoid waiting to be seated by coming before or after the lunch rush, while walk-ins have a better chance of getting seated right away.

Example 2 – how to use business brochures to decrease costs:

To reduce costs a smaller number is printed and an electronic version can be downloaded from the internet. It helped to save costs, but it also increases diffusion of the information.

What **NOT** to do when getting social

Trying to replicate other people's success and not making your own

– social media activities need to be tailored around your business and your brand.

Focusing on just one social network – of course, that doesn't mean you should go for all of them either. Sure, you can start with Twitter and Facebook, because these are the main attractions in Social Media City, but listen to your users and see where they spend their time; also craft your presence according to your business' specific needs – if you're a hotel, use TripAdvisor.

Thinking that having the tools will exempt you from **drawing up a cohesive strategy** – they do help, but just measuring results and not having the bigger picture won't get you too far.

Not growing together with your customers. Don't expect your online community to instantly give you increased sales and reputation, just like that. Things will happen organically, once the community grows as a result of its members' sustained efforts.

Being too afraid of negative opinions – although you might perceive them as attacks, complaints are a great way of improving perception if properly handled. So try to solve the problem, and if you can't, be courteous and let people know that you will do your best to not let it happen again. An angry and reluctant answer will only show that you're not cooperative and willing to improve. It's also a great way of identifying opportunities.



About uberVU



uberVU helps small businesses and agencies take advantages of opportunities from social media - be it generating leads, managing reputation or engaging with customers and fans.

Get more from social media, [request a personalized demo now!](#)

The uberVU Social Media Dashboard helps individuals and teams

- connect with influencers or leads,
- stay on top of relevant conversations and metrics or
- gauge buzz sentiment and trends in real time.

<http://www.ubervu.com>

[hello \[at\] ubervu.com](mailto:hello@ubervu.com)

twitter.com/ubervu

facebook.com/ubervu