



Social Media: A Must, Not a Maybe

By Rosemary Waldrip, Marketing Manager

Unless you've been living under a rock for the last 10 years, you've heard of the phenomenon known as social media. It's hard to believe that our beloved Facebook was launched just 7 short years ago, and Twitter is even newer than that! Initially, these websites were created for social networking between friends, classmates, etc. Who could have imagined the impact they would have - not only on how we lead our personal lives, but on how we run our businesses?

As an early adopter of social media, I am an avid user and advocate. And I can tell you right now...social media is not just a bandwagon trend. This is the future (and really, the present) of marketing as we know it. No longer does the marketing mix solely consist of expensive, relatively independent components: a newspaper advertisement here and there, maybe a magazine ad once every few months, a 30 second radio spot once a week. Now you can maximize your exposure and build your brand for a fraction of the investment required for traditional media outlets. Social media has literally revolutionized what it means to connect and interact with your customers - and other than the time required to plan and maintain your social media presence...it's FREE.

Facebook

Let's start with the obvious front-runner in the social media scene: Facebook. Launched in February of 2004, Facebook lets businesses create a "page" to post information about their

company, products/services, videos, photos, discussion boards, etc. Individuals who become "fans" of a business's page will then see any updates posted by the business in their daily "news feed".

In 7 short years, Facebook has become the 3rd largest U.S. Web company (after Google and Amazon). The website has gained over 600 million users since its launch. Over 200 million users are accessing the website from their mobile phones, and these mobile users are 2 times more active on Facebook than their non-mobile counterparts. According to www.digitalbuzzblog.com, 48% of 18-34 year olds check their Facebook right when they wake up, and about 28% check it on their smart phone before even getting out of bed.

So basically, MOST of your customer base is engaging in activity on Facebook, and one of your most frequently shopping age demographics is logging into Facebook before they even brush their teeth. Do you see where I'm going with this?

Twitter

Soon after the creation of Facebook, came the launch of a different type of social media: the micro blog, AKA "Twitter". Launched in July of 2006, Twitter's social media model limits all entries to 140 characters, making the Twitter homepage quickly and easily scannable for information relevant to the "follower". With 190 million users and over 65 million "tweets" per day, Twitter is one of the 10

most visited websites in the world. There are 800,000 search queries every single day, which makes it even more important that your company be available and actively participating in this network - your customers are likely searching for YOUR company.

Twitter has recently introduced a new feature called "retweeting," which allows [your] followers to repeat tweets originally posted by another user (you) - and if your message is relevant, there is the potential for your followers to retweet the message, whereby THEIR followers would then see your message, and so on and so on...you can't afford NOT to be in on the conversation.

YouTube

While some people might not consider YouTube a form of social media - it most certainly is. Launched in May of 2005, YouTube allows registered users to create a "channel" and post videos for FREE. Viewers can then watch your videos, share them via email or other social media sites, post comments, and if they REALLY like you, they'll subscribe to your channel.

YouTube's daily video views exceed 2 billion per day - nearly double the prime-time audience of all 3 major U.S. broadcast networks combined. Over 3 million people are connected and auto-sharing videos from YouTube to at least one social network; YouTube video

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Going Viral: A Social Media Case Study

consumption across Facebook exceeds 24 million minutes of videos watched every day (that's over 46 years' worth of video watched in one day!).

For those of you who think YouTube is just for dancing babies and talking animals - did you know that 94 out of Advertising Age's 100 top advertisers have run campaigns on YouTube? This is a FREE advertising outlet. Even if you don't have a high production budget - be creative. The most successful viral campaigns started on YouTube. Be funny. Give people a reason to want to share your video with everyone they know. Build your brand.

How do they all tie together?

While there are many other social media networks out there, I personally consider Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to be the top 3 necessities for any business looking to enter the social media world. They are the most-used networks, have simple user interfaces, and most importantly - they all interconnect. No other form of media can provide the kind of real-time benefits as social media. Here's what these outlets can do for you:

- Provide real-time, 2-way communication with your customers
- Drive sales and increase brand awareness and loyalty (post in-store promotion details, fuel price roll backs, coupon codes, etc.)
- Drive traffic to other media outlets

(link to your company's website/ Twitter page/YouTube channel, LinkedIn page, etc.)

- Keep you aware of customer feedback - both positive and negative. Whether or not you're involved in these various social media networks - your customers could still be talking about you... and wouldn't you rather KNOW what they're saying and have the opportunity to respond?

Your customers WANT to exchange information with you, and they want to do it through a convenient media platform that they already use on a daily basis. So, join in the conversation. Give them incentives. Share videos. Post photos. Ask for feedback. Show your customers that you value them. If you don't, your competitors will.

Some Uses for Social Media in the Convenience Store Industry

- In-store promotions
- Coupon codes
- Fuel price roll backs
- Store events
- New store openings
- Links to other social media pages, company website, press releases ©

The Old Spice® Campaign

Company:

Old Spice, a Proctor & Gamble brand

Product:

Men's grooming products (body wash, deodorant, etc.)

Original Campaign Concept:

"The Man Your Man Could Smell Like," starring Isaiah Mustafa

If you haven't seen any of the 180+ videos created for this campaign, you really should tune into Old Spice's YouTube channel and check them out. The videos feature former NFL player, Isaiah Mustafa, delivering a witty, confident monologue in a variety of unusual situations. Amazingly, there is no camera trickery - which certainly adds to the impressiveness of these videos. At roughly 30 seconds each, these videos deliver HUGE entertainment.

Many of you may have seen the Pinnacle video that parodied this campaign - we submitted it to the NACS Show Expo to Go Video contest in September 2010. There's a reason we chose this campaign to parody. Here are some of the highlights of Old Spice's viral video campaign:

- Day 1 - the campaign received almost 6 million views
- Day 2 - Old Spice had 8 of the 11 most popular videos online
- Day 3 - the campaign reached over 20 million views
- After the first week, Old Spice had over 40 million views
- The Old Spice Twitter following increased 2700%
- Facebook fan interaction was up 800%
- Oldspice.com website traffic was up 300%
- The Old spice YouTube channel became the all time most viewed channel
- The campaign has generated over 1.4 billion impressions since launching the ads
- The campaign increased sales by 27% over 6 months since launching (year on year)
- Old spice is now the #1 body wash brand for men

Source: www.digitalbuzzblog.com