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Incorporating Social Media In A Marketing Plan

Audience: Traditional Marketers, Inbound Marketers, Business Owners

If you're creating your company's marketing plan for the next year, think of incorporating social media into this plan. Social media is not “the latest fad that will go away in a couple of years”. Social media is the latest method of communication and engagement from your business to your customers, and it's here to stay.

Start with “Why”. As part of both your Positioning Statement and Sales Strategy, ask yourself, “why does my company need to be on social media?” The answers that should be included are:

1. **Extend my reach.** You will reach more people through social media than traditional advertising, and it will be on your demand – not the demand of a printer's schedule. (Promotion Strategy) **TIP:** Identify each of your buyer personas – your ideal clients – and craft your messages directly to these personas to make your reach more targeted, less spray-and-pray.
2. **Brand awareness.** Because you will reach more people through social media, you will educate more on your company's brand and what solutions you provide. Keep in mind, however, that this is NOT a numbers game; this is a membership acceptance. (Offerings to Customers)
3. **Being a solutionist.** Many people use social media to complain about the shortcomings or failures of a company. Being proactive with social media, including encouraging customers to write a testimonial on their favorite site (i.e., Yelp!, Google Places, etc.), will help boost positive positioning and show a resolve to potential customers you are willing and empowered to solve problems online as well as in person. (Service Strategy)

End with “Why”. Sounds a bit strange, but yes – end with this question. As you develop the answer to the question “Why should our company be on social media”, the key concentrations to ask yourself now are: “Why should prospects buy from me?”; “Why should they engage with me on social media?”; “Why should social media solve this problem?”



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With this in mind, here's some tips on including social media into your new marketing plan:

TARGET MARKET

Identify each of your buyer personas and what platforms they are/may be using. Send a very short survey to your current customers via Survey Monkey and ask them what top three platforms they use.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Why you are in business; possibly answering, who you do serve.

OFFERING TO CUSTOMERS

Your products or services; may be broken down to reflect individual products and services. Ties in to the Target Market when developing the buyer personas, and ties in to Sales Strategy and Promotion Strategy.

PRICING STRATEGY

How much you are selling your products/services. Ties in to Sales Strategy and Promotion Strategy.

TIP: Do NOT use “pricing by competition” as your end-all solution. Find out what the market will bear on average, how long it will take to deliver the product or service from start to finish, and price accordingly.

DISTRIBUTION

How you will deliver your product or service to the customer. This may include a social media platform, email or text messaging when communicating to the client (i.e., how to notify client of delivery and follow-up after the sale).

SALES STRATEGY

How you will approach your buyer personas and qualify them as a prospect, lead, and customer. This strategy should include your chosen social media platforms (based on the survey you sent to your existing clients).

TIP: Don't join a social media platform to expect a sale. Instead, join a social media platform to inform and educate prospects and engage/problem solve with current customers.

SERVICE STRATEGY

How you will make your products or services available. Can include this strategy with your Distribution Strategy.



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PROMOTION STRATEGY

How you are going to market your products or services. Included in this strategy should be a budget for the chosen social media platforms, level and length of engagement, time to be spent on each platform doing status updates, answering questions of prospects, and troubleshooting issues with customers. Ties in to Engagement Strategy.

TIP: Break this down to the individual methods – traditional advertising (i.e., brochures, magazine ads, radio commercials, etc.) and social media marketing (i.e., chosen platforms, blogging/vlogging, content creation, updates, and who/what team, etc.).

TIP: Set aside budget time and dollars for content creation. The person responsible for creating the content should be very familiar with your company, operations, sensitive/confidential information, and should know or be willing to learn how to write for your buyer personas – not the numbers – in your company's voice.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

How you will communicate with your buyer personas and prospects. This should include smart phone/tablet apps as well as the individual social media platforms. Break down each method, how communication will be used for the customer's benefit, length of posts, and proposed length of time to be spent on each platform. ***Focus solely on making the customer's experience delightful and extraordinary.*** Ties in with Sales Strategy and Promotion Strategy.

Thank you for downloading this whitepaper! I hope your questions have been answered. If not, please call me at 602.423.2106, email me at lisa.visiblymedia@gmail.com, or connect with me on Facebook at [lisajraymond](https://www.facebook.com/lisajraymond).

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