



Social Marketing Exposed

The Truth About Effective Social Marketing

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Social Marketing Exposed Introduction

One of the fastest, easiest and cost effective methods of generating insane cash and ongoing profits is with social community sites.

You've heard of Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and the previous giant, MySpace, all of which were absolute "*lead magnets*", drawing in millions of visitors every day, all looking to connect with like minded individuals who shared interests, passions, hobbies and lifestyles.

For the Internet Marketer, social community sites changed the game forever. Marketing costs plummeted, as entrepreneurs no longer had to rely on costly pay per click marketing to draw in leads and recruit fresh business.

Start-up businesses could finally level out the playing field, bolstering business, establishing their presence and building a recognized brand – all from their social media activity.

And while Facebook and Twitter have been around for a few years now, their popularity and activity continues to grow, with thousands of new members getting involved every single day. So even if you haven't yet joined the ranks of some of the most successful social marketers, there's still plenty of room in these bustling communities.

Social Marketing Exposed focuses on helping you develop a solid and

indestructible marketing strategy that will instantly maximize your income, while helping you gain the competitive advantage you need to dominate your markets, and secure your market share.

Whether your business involves Internet Marketing products, or you're a service provider – you can quickly exploit the popularity of social community sites for maximum profits – instant traffic – and unbeatable brand exposure.

Let's begin.

Social Magnets

Looking for potential customers who are interested in dog training products, work at home ebooks, or gamer guides? What about health topics, relationship and financial problems, or the lonely guy who needs a quick fix to a rather stagnant lovelife?

Regardless of your niche, social community sites are a breeding ground for long-term business, and loyal customers. You can penetrate markets faster than virtually any other form of marketing, including paid advertising!

Think of social marketing as the “White Pages” of your phone directory, but rather than finding people by name, you can quickly locate groups of **CUSTOMERS**, who you can easily target with tailor-made campaigns.

But before you begin to build a massive following within the top social community sites online, let me make one thing crystal clear:

Social marketing – rather, **SUCCESSFUL** social marketing is NOT about building a “following” of random people. It’s about *directly connecting* with **TARGETED** customers in your market.

One of the biggest mistakes that new marketers can make is jumping into the social marketing scene with one objective: **To build a massive following base.**

Focusing on quantity rather than quality will get you nowhere. In fact, creating a list of jumbled contacts will actually DEFEAT the entire purpose! You'll hinder your chances of building a successful social marketing campaign, and you'll end up spending more time trying to filter and segment your contact list than you ever spend on actually making money!

You need to take a very direct approach when building your following, or "contact base" within these social media sites. Build targeted lists of contacts that will respond to your offers, products and services.

Focus only on quality – paying no mind to quantity, because in the end, you can make more money with a small list of hungry buyers, than you would ever make with a gigantic following base of people who are not, or ever will be, interested in your offers.

Thankfully, building a targeted contact base within social media sites is extremely easy, in fact, you can siphon leads and potential customers from pre-built community networks and directory sites.

There is even a complete community built around twitter profile accounts, all segmented by demographic, and readily available to you absolutely **FREE!**

Consider just how valuable this information is to marketers like us. We

can build countless social accounts based around specific niche markets, so that every broadcast and every message we send out receives a **tremendous** response from those who follow our updates!

I'll show you exactly how to start building targeted contact lists within the most popular social media sites online, but before we get to that, there's a critical component to every successful social marketing campaign.

Your “**Money Site**”.

Your Social Profit Funnel

In order to make any kind of money with social marketing campaigns, you **NEED** to funnel visitors to one *centralized location*.

This could be a full featured website, squeeze page, landing page or blog. The idea is to **exploit social communities** so that they are fueling your website with fresh, targeted traffic 24 hours a day – while the money is made on the “*backend*”.

The one thing you do **NOT** want to do is send a fresh prospect directly to a sales page. If you do that, you’ll minimize your chances of turning that visitor into a long-term customer.

The objective is to build a targeted mailing list of prospects. Social community sites are a goldmine for relevant leads, and when you focus your efforts on list building rather than direct selling, you’ll **TRIPLE** your results.

Why? Because rather than forcing a potential customer into making a decision, such as purchasing your product on your sales page – you are building relationships with those who follow you.

You’re not out for the sale, at least not visibly, but instead, are offering clear value by providing them with the option of becoming a subscriber, a member of your team, part of your “inner circle”.

Social media sites are about connecting, and people who focus 99% of their marketing efforts on building a list of prospects rather than direct selling, see far greater results than those who push out offer after offer, without doing the “footwork”.

Unless you have a recognized brand or a “big name” already, you need to approach social media sites quite differently, focusing first on establishing *contacts* – that **later** turn into customers.

One of the most valuable tools that you will ever have in your marketing arsenal is a targeted and active mailing list.

Not only will a mailing list maximize your profits but it will seriously cut down on the amount of work that you need to do because with a mailing list at your fingertips, you can broadcast your offer out to thousands of hungry buyers instantly – and absolutely **FREE**.

No successful marketer or business is able to build lifetime wealth without a mailing list. It should be the very core of your business, and the primary focus of all of your marketing campaigns.

This is where social media sites become so incredibly valuable. You could literally grow a mailing list of thousands within a couple of weeks just by communicating with potential customers via regular updates and messages.

With absolutely no upfront costs involved, social marketing can literally transform your business with very little work involved.

Are you ready to exploit popular social media sites? Are you excited about the possibility of furthering your brand exposure and maximizing profits quickly and easily with an insanely profitable mailing list that responds to your offers?

I'll show you exactly how to get started.

Point of Entry: Payload System

Relationship marketing facilitates the process of transforming ordinary subscribers into extraordinary *customers*.

“Relationship Marketing”.

You’ve heard of email marketing, and relationship marketing involves the same process, except rather than building a list of generic leads, or grouped prospects, you are developing powerful mailing lists of highly targeted, relevant and active customers.

How responsive your mailing lists will be depends on HOW you promote your newsletter, and for many new marketers, this is where they make their first big mistake.

You want to design a squeeze page so that it *clearly* targets ONE specific audience, or segment of your market. Since you can set up as many squeeze pages as you wish, you should never convolute your lists by creating generic squeeze pages that attract the masses.

Just like when building your contact lists within social media sites, you always want to focus on quality over quantity. This means that every mailing list you ever create should address, cater and communicate to a ***specific audience***.

Fail to do this and you’ll ultimately struggle to generate a response from

your offers because you won't know WHO you are communicating with on the other end, or WHAT they are interested in!

Before you begin to create your mailing list profit funnel, you need to have a very a clear focus and direction.

Write down *every* niche market you intend on targeting, as well as what each demographic is most interested in. This requires a bit of market research because the better you know your target audience, the easier it will be to develop campaigns around what it most important to them.

To start, identifying your market or niche goes far beyond defining it's actual title. For example, while "weight loss" is a broad niche, odds are you wouldn't want to target the mainstream market because of just how much competition exists within that particular niche.

Instead, we would explore the niche a bit further to identify exactly **WHO** we are targeting, rather than **WHAT** the niche is , and by doing this we can easily find a niche market that is not only profitable, but easier to market to.

For example, if I were considering creating an info product on weight loss, I would want to focus on a segment of the market that targets a **very specific** customer base rather than trying to design a product that caters to the *entire* weight loss industry.

Once you have a better understanding as to what your niche is, and what the majority of that niche are interested in, you can create a squeeze page and newsletter around that specific topic. Then, by offering incentive on your squeeze page (in the form of a free offer or giveaway), you can begin to capture leads and build a targeted and active subscriber base!

In order to build your squeeze page, which serves as the 'entry' into your sales funnel, you'll need a handful of important tools and resources, including:

1) Professional Autoresponder Account

With autoresponder services like www.GetResponse.com and www.Aweber.com, you are able to set up an unlimited number of mailing lists, each one featuring customized code that serves as your opt-in box.

By segmenting your lists, you will be able to tailor your emails so that they directly communicate with targeted groups of subscribers who are interested in specific information or topics.

2) Targeted Squeeze Page

A squeeze page encompasses your opt-in form and provides a place for visitors to go in order to become a subscriber of your mailing list.

A squeeze page has ONE function: To funnel traffic from your social media campaigns into your mailing list.

That means that a call of action is essential in creating high performance squeeze pages. You must place emphasis on the benefits of joining your list, so that visitors are motivated into entering their name and email address to become part of your mailing list.

Keep in mind that with a squeeze page, you are not asking your visitor to make a decision to purchase or commit to anything other than to subscribe to your mailing list. In return, they are rewarded with free content, a valuable incentive or giveaway offer of some kind.

When it comes to offering an incentive on your squeeze page, you'll need to thoroughly evaluate your market, as well as competing offers (and squeeze pages) so that you can create an in-demand, relevant product that your visitors will respond to.

To summarize, your list building funnel consists of three major parts:

- 1: Squeeze Page With Opt-In Form
- 2: Compelling High Quality Offer or Incentive
- 3: Follow Up Emails And Broadcasts

Your giveaway is essentially, the most important element on your squeeze page. If your offer doesn't motivate visitors into subscribing, all of your marketing efforts will be lost. The higher the quality of your giveaway as well as the more relevant your offer is to your market, the

easier it will be to turn visitors into confirmed subscribers.

To start, consider the different types of products that are being successfully sold in online marketplaces and create a shorter version of a popular product, and offer it for free to anyone who subscribes to your list.

If competitors are successful in selling a similar product and you are giving away a high quality product based on the same topic, imagine just how easy it will be to recruit visitors and subscribers to your site!

You could also offer:

- Free Short or Mini Reports
- Free Chapter of an ebook
- Free Tutorial Guides
- Free or Trial Access To a Membership Program
- Free Weekly Newsletter Subscription

The key to creating a successful giveaway product is in its overall relevancy and existing demand. You want to make sure that your target audience is *actively* searching for this information, and that they are likely to respond to your offer.

If you plan to promote an ebook or e-course of some kind, a very powerful method of building a massive mailing list while generating new business for your product is by offering a *leaked chapter* of your main info product.

By offering this free chapter, you are able to provide new subscribers with a sample of the quality of your work, as well as generate interest around your upcoming product launch.

You could also consider using private label rights material to create your initial giveaway incentive offer, as well as to fill your autoresponder sequence with emails that go out automatically to your subscribers.

Here are a few recommended private label content developers:

<http://www.WhiteLabelReports.com>

<http://www.CompleteStartups.com>

The key is to offer incredible value to every subscriber. You want people to feel that their subscription to your newsletter is valuable, informative and beneficial to them.

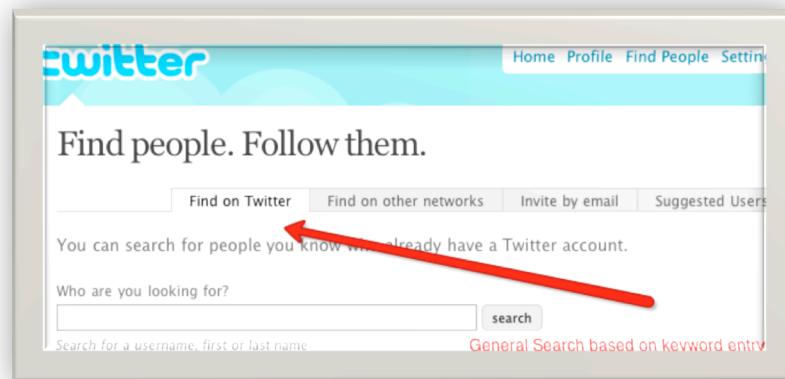
Developing relationships with potential customers is the most important thing you can do for your business, and your brand.

Laser Targeted Campaigns

This section of **“Social Marketing Exposed”** is all about building and growing a targeted contact list within social media community sites.

To start, each social community offers a different way for you to connect with other members, with sites like Twitter and Facebook giving you the option of importing contacts, or finding active members based on people you already communicate with.

Beginning with Twitter, you have a few different options when



searching and adding contacts to your Twitter account, including by using Twitter's on-site search function:

Beginning by entering in a username or a first and last name, you can quickly locate people that you know, or you can choose to invite contacts to Twitter by entering in their email address.

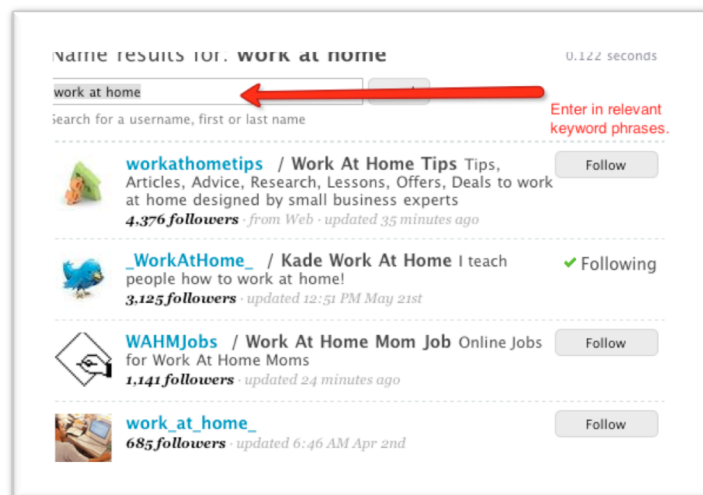
You can also find people by entering in specific keywords based on your niche market. For example, if I were interested in building a Twitter

contact list around the work at home market, I'd begin by entering in 'work at home' and browsing through available profiles:

Whenever you find someone of interest, click "Follow" to begin following their tweets. You'll quickly find that those you follow will begin to follow you in return.

Another way to locate followers is by choosing the second option in your profile area, "*Find On Other Networks*".

What this will do is allow you to enter in your email address and password, and Twitter's system will sort through your contact list, looking for people who are on Twitter. You can search through Gmail contacts, Hotmail, MSN, and even Yahoo.



An effective method of finding targeted leads within the twitter community is by taking advantage of the free directory available at

<http://www.Twellow.com>

Another great way to maximize your exposure within the twitter community is by adding your own profile to multiple twitter directories and networks.

One of these is available at <http://www.WeFollow.com> where you can assign yourself into existing categories where people can easily find you based on keyword searches.

With Facebook and other social media sites, you can start by finding one contact that you know from within your market. Consider adding an authority figure, or established marketer in your niche, and then start following other relevant contacts from their list, and so on.

If you have an existing website or blog, you can integrate social media plugins into the sidebar of your template, inviting visitors to become part of your network by following your tweets or adding you as a Facebook friend.

The more you interact and engage the community, the easier it will be to find relevant contacts, and to build a loyal and responsive following.

In the next chapter, we'll take a closer look at how you can maximize exposure on Facebook and the latest social network to pop up on the scene, Google+!

High Response Social Marketing

In order to maximize exposure and profits, it's important that you fully understand the options and features available within each individual social networking site.

For example, with Facebook you can create what are called “**Fan Pages**”. A Fan page provides you with **FREE** advertising space directly within the Facebook community, and best of all, you can create as many different fan pages as you wish!

A fan page is similar to creating a new Facebook profile, where you can add notes, messages, download links, and images to your fan page, while managing your fan pages all directly from within your main Facebook account.

Here's how to set up a fan page:

Log into your Facebook account and click on the “Account” link from the top navigation menu. Then choose “**Manage Pages**”.

Subsequently, you can just enter the following URL into your browser:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>

You can choose to create a business page or a community page. If you are developing a fan page to market your business, monetize your

campaigns and grow a list, you will want to create a business page.

Enter in a name for your page, utilizing your primary keywords.

Once your page has been set up, you can customize the look and feel as well as begin adding in your content.

Tip on Monetizing Fan Pages:

One of the ways that I monetize my Facebook Fan Pages is through CPA offers. To start, you will need to create a CPA account with

<http://www.CPALead.com>

Then, you can choose CPA offers that target your niche market, choosing from a wide variety of formats, including surveys or “content blocker” (where your fans will not be able to download or access specific content until they have filled out a form). You are paid every time one of your fan page members completes the CPA offer.

Another great way to begin your social marketing journey, is by getting involved with Google+.

With Google+, available at <http://plus.google.com> rather than adding friends into one community base, you can segment your contacts by adding them into ***"circles"***.

Circles house different groups, or segments of people, so if you wanted to

communicate with family members, you could create a circle primarily for members of your family. The same goes for Networking, Partners, Customers, and Friends.

Each time you create content or post information into a “stream”, you can choose which circles can view it, making it easier than ever to tailor your content, and updates towards specific groups of people!

Consider just how much easier it will be to target your content around your market, partners and customer base.

You can call your circles anything you wish, such as "Friends", "Network Partners", or even



"Customers". You can also have as many circles as you wish.

The best thing about your circles is that they are kept private, so that even when you add someone to your circle, they only see that you've added them as a connection, not what circle you added them into.

When I first joined Google+, I set up four different, individual circles. One circle was created for friends, one for partners, one for family and finally, one for customers.

By doing this, I can post content that goes out only to **specific** circles, allowing me to "tailor" my content and updates based on segmented groups of contacts.

This is VERY powerful, because instead of posting an update as you would on Facebook or Twitter, and your entire following base being able to see it, you can create content around specific audiences, which gives you the opportunity to connect in a very different, and far more personalized way.

You could create a circle around existing customers and post updates about various niche markets, or even run a newsletter straight through your Google+ contacts! You also want to take the time to customize your Google+ account, so that you are able to tweak your search engine ranking data.

Your Google+ profile is very important as it helps Google identify you as a content developer, and author, as well as website visitors who view your profile listing within search results.

The first thing that you want to pay attention to is the actual headline/title of your profile page, as it becomes a part of your search engine listing.

Consider important keywords that will capture attention and speak directly to your target audience. Keep in mind that Google+ only displays a few characters from your link so make sure that you choose keywords

carefully so they aren't truncated.

You should also customize your Google+ profile to include direct links to your website or blog. You can add links to your profile by clicking on “Edit Profile” and clicking the globe icon. One thing to keep in mind that you should create an “About Me” page on your website or blog that you can then feature inside of your Google+ profile.

When adding links to your Google+ profile page, you’ll be given the opportunity to choose a single link that represents who you are, and provides more information about you. This link will appear inside of your search engine listing for your Google profile and again, helps to determine who you are, and what you’re all about.

In addition, Google+ brings a new way of recommending content and highlighting material on the web. Once you have activated your Google+ account, you will notice a “+1” featured next to every search listing, as shown below:

When you click the +1 icon, you essentially store this website as part of your Google Profile, and all recommended web links appear under the +1 section of your Google account. If you “+1” your own content, or Google detects it as yours, they will list that content on the +1 tab of your profile.

This takes place automatically, as soon as you have added at least one page of content to your +1 listing!

You can also choose to add a link to your Google Profile on content pages, websites and blogs that you own, further encouraging interaction and helping Google to identify your content.

You can easily create a Google+ button for your website or blog at:

<http://www.google.com/webmasters/profilebutton/>

Monetizing Your Social Connections

There are many other ways to monetize your social media activity, and reap the benefits of a targeted following base apart from building a targeted and active mailing list.

This includes:

- Generate interest in your products and services quickly and easily – and at absolutely NO cost to you! You can quickly jump-start the launch of a new website or blog just by posting an update to your stream or public profile!
- Generate feedback and testimonials from your following base prior to a full scale product launch! This will give you the social proof you need to boost sales page conversion rates!
- Offer pre-release access and beta testing invitations to a select group and iron out bugs before it goes “live”.
- Build brand awareness in countless niche markets, faster and easier than ever before! Create a social media account for each market segment that you wish to target, immediately placing yourself in front of a crowd of potential customers.

- Establish or build relationships with potential Joint Venture partners, and other like-minded individuals for possible partnership and cross promotion! You'll find an abundance of networking opportunities just by reaching out and contributing to your niche market!
- Poll and survey potential customers instantly! Post questions relating to product ideas currently in development, or generate fresh, new ideas from open conversations, and even your competitors!

Extending Your Profit Funnel

Traditional social networks like Twitter and Facebook have tremendous amounts of traffic, thus many people flock to them for marketing. Google+ is also rapidly increasing in popularity.

However, there are many other useful networks that will allow you to get more traffic and reach a broader audience, and you should not neglect these important sources.

Friend Feed >> <http://www.FriendFeed.com>

FriendFeed is a social aggregator that consolidates updates across a variety of social community websites. FriendFeed will retrieve data from all of the microblogging and social networks that you are a member of, and automatically update your FriendFeed account with this information, providing an easy-to-use centralized location for all of your social media updates!

Squidoo >> <http://www.Squidoo.com>

Squidoo is one of the most popular social content networks. Using their quick and easy wizard, you can have a web page online in just minutes. These pages are not only incredibly simple to create, but they can also rank very well in search engines.

Squidoo has many rules you must follow. Many webmasters grow frustrated with these rules, however you must realize that these rules were put in place to protect the integrity of the system.

A few years ago, Squidoo was flying high. The site was ranking on the first page for an unbelievable number of competitive keywords, and marketers jumped on the site as a way to rank well very easily.

Of course, this also inevitably brought out the spammers. Spammers flooded to the site in droves, slapping up garbage content, duplicate content, and content Google doesn't like such as adult content (like pornography) and prescription drug spam.

Because spammers flooded the site with useless pages, Google cracked down. Squidoo lost a large number of their rankings, and everyone lost money. Thus, Squidoo had no choice but to impose strict rules to protect the integrity of the site and possibly improve their Google standing.

Read the rules carefully, and understand that they change often. No longer are you allowed to promote eBooks, for example. It was a big blow to a lot of people, but they made the change for the good of the site.

Once you read the rules and understand how you can use the site, you can start creating Squidoo lenses. Remember to use the site socially. As other lensmasters to visit and rate your lens, for example.

HubPages >> <http://www.HubPages.com>

HubPages is very similar to Squidoo. It used to be that HubPages was much stricter than Squidoo, but now the tables have turned. HubPages still has a lot of rules, however many people feel their rules are not as restrictive as those of Squidoo now that Squidoo has added so many new guidelines.

The best thing you can do is raise your HubScore. The HubScore is an internal quality indicator that is used to decide how good your content is. The higher the score, the more the system promotes your content. This, obviously, leads to even more traffic.

The HubScore is computed by these factors:

- How much traffic you receive from sources other than HubPages
- Your overall reputation on HubPages
- How many comments you receive, including feedback
- How unique your content is

For this reason, you should make sure to create the highest quality content you can. You'll receive more traffic in the long run, and it's well worth the extra effort.

InfoBarrel >> <http://www.InfoBarrel.com>

InfoBarrel is another site similar to HubPages and Squidoo. You can use the site similarly, but remember to follow their rules.

You must wait for your articles to be approved by a manager at Infobarrel. You can get pre-approved status so your articles will go live immediately after you submit them, but you must:

- Have at least 10 approved articles
- Be a member for at least 14 days
- Create quality content, not just content for backlinks
- Content must be unique, and not regurgitated or all on the same subject
- Content must display adequate grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

Once you have followed these guidelines, you will receive an upgrade to pre-approved status. It may take a few days, as they review accounts manually, but regularly. There is no way to apply; you must simply wait to be chosen.

Tumblr >> <http://www.Tumblr.com>

Tumblr is a type of blogging platform. It's almost like a cross between Twitter and WordPress, but it allows for a high degree of social interaction, and it has a lot of extra features.

You'll have to comply with their content policy, which includes:

- No redundant content. This means you cannot copy content, nor can you use Tumblr solely as an aggregator. You must post unique content.
- You cannot post copyrighted material you don't have the rights to.
- You cannot (obviously) do anything like spam or illegal activities.
- You cannot post sexually explicit material.

Other than these few restrictions, Tumblr is pretty relaxed with regards to what they allow, and pages tend to rank well in the search engines.

Posterous >> <http://www.posterous.com>

Posterous is a site that allows you to create pages based on aggregation. You can automatically post your content to sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Flickr. You can also upload photos, videos, documents, and more. It's a very flexible system.

Posterous makes it very easy to update your status from a central location, making it a very efficient use of your time.

LinkedIn >> <http://www.linkedin.com>

LinkedIn is a social network that is specifically grounded in business. It allows you to build a list of business connections in order to generate leads for business related activities.

Your LinkedIn profile will allow you to generate organic search engine traffic, which is another major benefit. The site tends to rank very well, so it has the potential to bring you a significant amount of traffic.

You can add website links on your profile, as well as your blog's RSS feed to get additional traffic that way. You can connect RSS feeds from most major blogging platforms, including Bloglink, Blogger, WordPress, Moveable Type, LiveJournal, and Vox.

Xanga >> <http://www.Xanga.com>

Xanga is another network that is very flexible. It allows you to post updates such as blog posts and articles. If you wish, you can make specific posts private so that only those users who join your contact list will be able to view it.

Flickr >> <http://www.Flickr.com>

Flickr is not always considered viable for marketing, but it's a lot more effective than you might think. The site gets a tremendous amount of traffic, and the images you post may be seen by thousands of people.

If you think you can't use Flickr, think again. Let's say you're marketing in the cooking niche. You could post pictures of ingredients and dishes you've cooked. In the gardening niche, you could post pictures of vegetables you've raised, or those you'd like to raise.

Flickr makes it easy to build a fan base that will view your photos whenever you post them. This social aspect allows you to get a lot more traffic than you would otherwise. Additionally, some people may post your photos in their groups, which will get you even more traffic.

YouTube >> <http://www.YouTube.com>

Many people seem to forget that YouTube is a social site, but it is. You can post videos and then build a list of friends and followers who will view your videos, recommend your videos to others, favorite your videos, and add comments.

Remember, the more people who favorite your video and comment on it, the more often your video will be promoted by the site. It will appear higher in searches, as well as the recommended videos shown on other people's videos.

Important Notes about Social Marketing

Social marketing isn't as simple as most people seem to think. You cannot just join dozens of social networks, add a bunch of people, and start spamming your links. There is an intricate process you must follow in order to see results.

This chapter is going to teach you some of the most important things you should observe if you want to get results from your social marketing efforts.

Don't Spam

If you spam, people will automatically tune you out, and nothing you can do will make any difference whatsoever.

Many marketers jump right into social networks and start posting link after link. Not only could you run the risk of being banned if you do this but you will also upset the very people you are trying to market to.

I know it sounds strange to refer to spamming when you “technically” have permission to post your links. After all, these people knowingly confirmed you as their friend. However, that doesn't mean they're giving you permission to flood them with link after link.

In fact, it's highly counterproductive to continually spam your links. You're only going to make people ignore you – and they might even get you banned. Just don't do it!

Instead, spend most of your social marketing time posting useful links, informative articles, and helpful advice. Post self-serving links only occasionally. You'll get better results.

Interact with Followers

Don't just talk. Listen! Interact with people. Let people feel like they're getting to know you on a personal level.

Let me ask you something. Who would you rather take advice from if you were in the market to buy an HDTV – the sales guy at the store who works on commission, or a good friend who just bought a new HDTV recently?

More than likely, you'd rather take the advice of the friend, right? Why do you think that is?

It's probably because you know the friend has your best interests at heart, and you assume the sales guy is only out to get your money. Right?

Well, guess what? People feel the same way about strangers on the internet. People will automatically assume that, as a marketer, you are only out to get their money.

You have to turn that on its ear. Make people see you as a trusted friend, or at least an unbiased expert. If you do this, your income will increase exponentially!

Get Personal

Interacting with your followers is important, but don't forget to do so on a personal level from time to time. Don't go overboard, but it's nice to post information about your personal life now and then.

Post a cute picture of your pet. Let people see what you had for dinner at your favorite restaurant. Show people a picture of yourself on vacation. This will show people you're a real person, not just some nameless, faceless marketing machine.

Avoid Controversy

Although you should interact on a personal level occasionally, make sure you keep your posts professional. In other words, don't start rambling about subjects that might offend your core audience.

Don't post about potentially offensive topics. Save those for your personal account, if you must. Stay away from discussions about politics, religion, drugs, alcohol, sex, and other potentially offensive topics.

The exception, of course, is if you're marketing in these areas. If you're specifically targeting a market such as Christians or the LGBT community, obviously you can post about such topics. However, make sure you understand your market well so you don't inadvertently offend them.

It's not true that any publicity is good publicity. Bad publicity most certainly **can** have a detrimental effect if you're selling something!

Avoid Arguments

While it's fine to engage in friendly banter with your followers, be sure to avoid getting into all-out brawls with them. Trading barbs is never a good idea. Allow people to disagree with you, but keep your responses polite and professional.

Let's say you have particularly strong feelings about a particular subject and someone posts an inflammatory statement that upsets you. What should you do?

First of all, don't ignore them. This could actually make them angrier, because people don't like being ignored.

Instead, defuse the situation by posting something like:

“I personally disagree with you, but I respect your opinion. Thank you for posting your thoughts on the subject. 😊”

It’s a good idea to put the smiley face emoticon in your post to let people know you’re being friendly. Sometimes words can be misconstrued online, because you can’t see someone’s facial expressions to tell in what context they made their statement.

Keep your responses polite and professional at all times. If you have to, step away from your computer for a while to give yourself time to calm down and think rationally.

Complete your Profile

Let’s say someone wearing a ski mask showed up at your door trying to sell you a car for a dollar. He refuses to tell you his name, and won’t produce any kind of identification. He refers to himself only as “Bob.”

It’s a strange picture, I know, but bear with me for a moment...

What would you assume in this situation?

You'd probably assume the guy was a scammer or a thief. You'd probably think the car was stolen, or that the guy was trying to get into your house to harm you.

That's an extreme example, but it illustrates my point...

When you try to add someone to your friends list on a social network and you don't have a complete profile, you're nothing but a nameless, faceless stranger.

To some, you may be frightening – like a stalker. To most, you'll only be a potential spammer, nothing more than a mere annoyance to be swatted with a single click of the “decline” button.

Either way, you're not likely to receive a positive response.

As soon as you join a new social site, fill out your profile! Make sure you include the following, at minimum:

- **A profile picture, ideally your own.** If you feel you must use a stock photo, try to choose one that isn't obviously stock. Find an average looking person who is casually dressed and is on a very normal looking background.
- **Your date of birth.** You don't have to put the year if you'd rather not, but at least put your month and day.

- **Your hometown.** This isn't absolutely necessary if you're a private person, but it can help people trust you more if they feel they know the general vicinity of your location.
- **Your website.** Don't forget to include a link to your blog or website! Not only will it show you've filled out your profile, but you may get some traffic from it.
- **Basic personal information.** Here, you'll want to include a little information about your hobbies, interests, and passions – especially those that relate to the niche in which you're marketing. Be sure not to include anything that might offend your core market, though.

A complete profile will instantly boost your trust level, and you'll have a lot more people willing to accept your friend requests.

Use Hash Tags

Like using keywords in SEO, you should remember to use hash tags on sites that use them.

A hash tag is like a keyword or phrase proceeded by the # symbol. It looks like this:

#internetmarketing

The hash tag makes it easy to get more followers, because people will search for these keywords to locate information about subjects they are interested in.

Whenever you post something on a site that uses hash tags, be sure to include them in your post like this:

“Have you seen the new Home Flower Gardening show on HGTV?
#homeflowergardening.”

Lifestreaming

Lifestreaming is a new phrase for a relatively old concept. Basically, it's the use of aggregation services to pull together various media in one central location.

Some websites (like Posterous.com, which I mentioned earlier) make this simple to do in on location. You can also do it on your own blog by using a plugin like Lifestream.

Why use lifestreaming?

Because it provides a central location for all of your updates. This makes it easier for people to find out what you are up to.

Lifestream Plugin for WordPress

(<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/lifestream/>)

(<http://www.enthropia.com/labs/wp-lifestream/>)

The Lifestream plugin allows you to:

- Add unlimited feeds and extensions to your blog
- Store feed history
- Group events to minimize spam

- Summarize your activities at a glance

If you don't have a WordPress blog, there are plenty of other services you can use instead. I mentioned Posterous and Tumblr earlier, but here are a few more:

<http://www.catch.com>

<http://www.collectedin.com>

<http://lifestream.aim.com>

<http://flavors.me>

<http://chi.mp>

<http://www.sweetcron.com>

<http://www.yiid.com>

<http://www.alternion.com>

Remember, the more of these you use, the wider your reach will be. You can attract the users of these services, as well as additional organic search engine traffic.

Finding Followers

Obviously, the crux of any social marketing system is finding followers. But you shouldn't focus solely on gaining large numbers of followers. You need targeted followers.

How is this accomplished?

First, you need to figure out where the people who are interested in your niche congregate.

Forums

Forums are a great place to find followers, because they are usually very well targeted to specific niches, and people who visit forums are already predisposed to socializing.

Join the forum and add a link to your social networking profiles in your signature. (Read the rules to be sure this is allowed!)

Look through the forums to see if there is already a thread for social networking. If not, you may consider starting one.

(NOTE: Only do this AFTER you've been a member for a while! Otherwise, people will assume you only joined the forum to spam your social networking pages.)

A good thread title might be something like:

- Are you on Facebook or Twitter?
- The OFFICIAL Social Network Thread
- Post your Social Profiles!

Pick a thread title you think would fit well with the forum you're posting on and start the thread. Post links to a couple of your major profiles like Facebook, Twitter, and/or Google+. You can use these accounts to send people to your other networks, if desired.

Be sure to ask people to post their own links. This will make it more likely that your thread will stick around instead of being deleted.

Fan Pages

Obviously, it's a great idea to start your own fan page, but did you know you can poach users from other fan pages, too?

You have to be careful about how you do this. If you're too blatant about it, you'll find that you offend a lot of people. You have to be subtle.

Log into Facebook using the account you want to add followers to. Ideally, this will be the account you have a fan page set up on.

Remember, you can only have 5,000 friends on a personal account, but you can have as many fans as you want on a fan page!

In the menu on the left, click “More” to expand your options if you can’t see the “Pages” link. Click “Pages.”

Locate your page and click “Switch” beside the page’s name. This will allow you to start using Facebook as your fan page.

Now, use the search box at the top of the screen to find fan pages related to your niche. Click the “Like” button at the top of each page to join them. You can see how many followers a page has in the menu to the left. You’ll want to join pages that have at least 100 followers or so. Smaller pages aren’t usually worth the effort.

Now, make useful posts on those fan pages. People will notice your fan page’s name posting, and they’ll click it if the information you post is interesting to them.

You can also try to get the owners of other pages to promote your page. Simply link to those other pages using a “shout out”.

Type this into your page’s Facebook status:

“Shout outs to @Pagename, @Pagenametwo, @Pagenamethree!”

When you type the @ symbol followed by a name, Facebook will give you a drop down under your status window that will show the profiles of the people or pages you mention. If you click those, it will make a link to the pages.

Not every page owner will automatically return the favor, but some probably will. This is especially true if you become friends with the owners. Cross promotion is a great way to benefit you both!

Directories

I spoke earlier about using various directories to find followers, but you should be certain you're using them correctly. Don't just start adding everyone you come across!

Look for targeted followers. Search by keyword. Locate people who are already showing an interest in your niche.

Hash Tags

Hash tags are popular on Twitter. Have you ever seen someone type something like “#keyword” in their post? That's a hash tag. It's like a keyword that lets people find your post when they search.

It's an excellent way to uncover potential followers, especially if you can find trending tags in your niche. Just use the search box to search for keywords related to your niche and follow people using them!

Conclusion: Final Words

You now have all of the information you need to create a high powered social marketing campaign!

Focus on branding yourself as an expert in specific markets. Create a focused, **direct** marketing campaign for every niche you are involved in, and start engaging your audience directly through a variety of social media outlets.

The more you establish yourself as a credible source for information, the easier it will be to maximize your income, increase your brand's overall influence, and fully monetize your social media activity!

It's important to keep your social media accounts updated. You want to engage your audience, by posting frequently and remaining consistent. Try to *consolidate your updates* by connecting various social accounts so that when you update one – you update all others within the same market.

For example, you could use <http://www.Ping.fm> to connect all of your social media accounts so that when you schedule a post or update, Ping.fm will automatically re-post to all other social media accounts!

In addition, you also want to automate your activity as much as possible.

Here are a few tools to help you get started:

HootSuite – <http://www.HootSuite.com>

Automates your twitter updates, as well as providing you with the opportunity to monitor multiple social accounts including LinkedIn, Facebook, Ping.fm and Wordpress based blogs!

Twitter Feed: <http://www.TwitterFeed.com>

Monitors your RSS feed and updates your Twitter and Facebook accounts each time you post a new update on your blog.

To your success!