

5 Tips for Socially Optimizing Your Online Marketing

As Social Media grows in popularity, members of social communities gain larger and larger voices that reach around the world. Are you curious what people are saying about you?

You basically have 3 options in terms of online marketing:

1. Do nothing
2. Broadcast your marketing messages with a “megaphone” and hope for the best
3. Engage your online communities by creating useful content and interactive dialogue

Although it is obvious that option 3 is the preferred choice for anyone serious about being successful, the other 2 options are widely more commonly practiced. Fortunately for those like you who get it, becoming a part of the social phenomenon will place you in an elite class of businesses with access to much more focused buyers. Here are **5 tips to help you socially optimize your online marketing.**

#1 Determine Your Niche Brand and Your Voice

Many small to mid-size businesses make the mistake of trying to market online like the big brand companies. The problem with this approach is that you create unnecessary competition for yourself.

In order to grow, your goal should be to create stronger connections with more focused groups of deeply engaged clients.

As an example, a real estate agent would benefit from becoming extremely knowledgeable about some select communities or specific types of buyers. There is far too much competition for a single agent to tackle *Atlanta, Ga Real Estate*.

In the process of determining your niche, think about what you want your brand voice to be. Are you a tongue-in-cheek software startup? Are you a serious insurance provider? Maybe an edgy clothing brand? Make sure your brand voice aligns with the niche you are focused on.

#2 Use Listening Tools to “Hear” What People Are Saying

In the age of social media, there are online tools that make it extremely simple to get the word out about your products, opinions and business services. But before you jump into using clever online marketing tactics,

consider listening to what your prospective clients are saying *first*.

Here are some great online listening tools:

Google Alert: You can create a “Google Alert” for keywords that match your niche business, business name and/or industry specific terms. When people use any of these terms on the Internet you will receive an email with links to where they are said: <http://www.google.com/alerts>

Google Reader: You can also set up a Google Reader page to easily keep track of search queries that line up with your niche business: <http://www.google.com/reader/view/>

Paper.Li: With this service, you have the ability to create your own online newspaper that pulls from search terms and resources that you decide. This is a great way to aggregate many resources from around the web into one place: <http://paper.li/>

#3 React Quickly to Online Critics and Fans Alike

Once you have made a habit of listening to what people are saying, you will come to a few conclusions. Either people are saying nothing (gulp), or they are giving positive and negative feedback. If people are saying nothing, apply **Tip #4** (see below).

Successful companies that are marketing online have something in common. They all react quickly to online fans and critics.

Start making a habit of commenting on blogs and forums that mention your business. In the event that people are praising you, use that as a chance to be humble and thank them for their support.

If there are people that are unhappy with your products or services, respond to specific concerns in a professional manner. Never make it personal... there is nothing worse than involving your brand in an online shouting match.

#4 Provide Insight with Focused Content

Creating online impact in your niche community can start in a number of ways, but one of the best ways to quickly earn trust and gain credibility is to establish yourself as an expert in your field.

No one knows your businesses better than you, so share your knowledge to help inform your current and potential clients. An effective method for

providing insight with focused content is by hosting a blog and writing on a regular basis (for more info on starting a website with a blog visit: WebSocial.ly)

What to write?

The best way to decide what to write is to start by establishing the keywords that relate to your business. These words will be integral in how Google and other search engines index your content.

Use your keywords to write about topics that are important to your niche. Here are a few examples to get you started with brainstorming types of content to write:

- Reviews
- Interviews
- “How to” Education/White Papers
- Industry Specific News
- Case Studies

#5 Join Industry-Specific Social Networks and Forums

Know your audience. If you're marketing skateboards to 13–15 year olds, it doesn't make much sense to spend all your time on a business network like LinkedIn.

Online social networks exist for people to share information, learn and be... SOCIAL!!! Don't lose sight of that as you research where your niche communities are contributing to their own networks.

You Don't Always Have to Be Selling

If you join a network and 100% of your communications are sales-oriented, you will fail. Be social and expand your network by providing advice and making deeper connections with your niche.

The connections you make online are so critical because your average client has the ability to reach a large group of people in a short amount of time.

In Closing

You have the power to influence what people say about you by maintaining an online marketing strategy that caters to a focused niche using a consistent brand voice. If you listen to what people are saying

before you speak, the words that follow will be more effective in reaching the niche you intend. If you are genuinely passionate about your business it will shine through in the insightful content that you provide to your community.

*For more information about social optimization or to receive a **free social optimization website analysis**, please contact: connect@websocially.com*