

Pump **UP** Your Profits



Using Social Networking to Market Your Business

By Deborah Richmond

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
CHAPTER 1 – Why Should You Use Social Networking?	5
What is Social Networking and Web 2.0	6
Why is Social Networking So Effective for Marketing?	8
Relationships Instead of Interruptions	9
Preparing Your Buyer to Take Action	5
CHAPTER 2 – Who are Your Buyers?	12
CHAPTER 3 - Facebook	14
Marketing Strengths	15
Your Profile	15
Build Your Community of Friends	16
Build Your Friend List	16
Interact with Friends	17
Fan Page	17
CHAPTER 4 – LinkedIn	19
Strengths	20
Profile	20
Build Your Connections	20
Join Groups	20
Interaction with "Answers"	21
CHAPTER 6 – Twitter	22
Profile	23
Build Your Community	23
Tweets	23
Interact	24
CHAPTER 7 – Blogs	25
Strengths	25
Linking	26
Email List	25
Driving Traffic	26
CHAPTER 8 – Design Your Strategy	27
My Strategy	28

Blog Website	28
Facebook	28
LinkedIn	29
Twitter	29
Now It's Your Turn	30



Introduction

Entrepreneurs are busy people. There are a thousand tasks that need to be done each day in order to get and keep a business running. Many business owners do not have time to spend hours on the computer keeping up on the latest trends. In my consulting business, I do that for you. Every day I read books and blogs and listen to podcasts, all focused on the subject of social networking. I pull out the best practices and strategies for businesses to use in their marketing efforts. I coach entrepreneurs on how to market their business using the internet. And now I want to teach these strategies to you.

I've owned three of my own small businesses over the years; a court reporting firm, hand-dyed wool wholesale business, and now TekkBuzz Internet Marketing. I love the world of the entrepreneur. I love getting my hands dirty, working for the success of my own business and the success of my clients' businesses. I've chosen to work with small businesses because they are fast moving, energetic, passionate and innovative. Entrepreneurs are genuinely excited about what they are doing and where they are going. That enthusiasm is infectious and makes working with entrepreneurs exciting for me.

My mission is to always keep on top of the latest trends in internet marketing so I can bring them to you. Internet marketing changes quickly. That's one of the reasons I love this field. I love watching, reading, learning how to best move your business forward by using the Internet. I'll share with you everything you need to know to get into the game of internet marketing and pump up your profits!

Who should read this book?

If you are an entrepreneur, a solo-preneur, or a small business owner or manager, this book is for you. Social media is perfect for the entrepreneur. You will be able to see results from your efforts. While you are working these strategies, you will have fun and meet lots of interesting people. You will begin to see more traffic coming to your website. More traffic means more sales if you follow the strategies I outline for you here. Get ready to jump into the new game of internet marketing!

How is this book arranged?

This book focuses on four main areas of internet marketing; Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and blogging. We will focus on these four because they are the areas where you will receive the most return for the time you spend with them. I include a section on websites as well. Most of you have a website already, and I will show you changes you may need to make with your website to make sure it is working well for you and your business.

I will explain strategy and give you pointers on what you need to think about as you read about the four most popular networks of social media. I will show you my strategy and show you how to create your own. When you have finished this book, you will know which networks are best for you, and you will have a plan for using social media to pump up your profits.

CHAPTER 1

Why Should You Use Social Networking?



The internet is a game changer. Marketing is being completely transformed. The days of traditional advertising are numbered. Every year newspapers and magazines close or move online. Last year the newspaper industry advertising revenues declined by 16.6%. Why? Because placing ads in newspapers is no longer as effective as it once was. Newspapers are closing as more people get their news and current event information from the internet. Television commercials are slowly becoming less effective as more and more people spend time on the internet and less time watching television. No longer can we buy an ad on one channel and reach the number of viewers we once did.

The new way of marketing is not just a different set of rules; it's an entirely different game. It is now possible to reach the entire world from your computer for the cost of internet service. This game changer, the Internet, has created many different avenues for reaching customers. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogging, just to name four, are all new avenues to engage customers and make those valuable connections that lead to sales.

Social networks are places we go to interact with each other. We can now create our own community around our business and our services or products. No longer do we shout out sales messages that interrupt our customers as they watch television or read

magazines. Now we are able to speak directly to customers and, most importantly, our customers are able to speak back to us.

This new way of interacting holds great opportunities for entrepreneurs. Larger corporations do not dominate this game. Previously, a company with millions to spend would make the largest impact on customer attention. This is not always true in social media. Large corporations are hesitant to place themselves in social networks. They have not figured out yet how to use the social networks to their advantage. But small businesses are grabbing the ball and running with it in creative ways that bring attention to their products and services. Your business is perfectly poised to engage customers on a much more personal level than the big corporations. You are able to make a real impact on your market while only spending minutes a day. You can forge real relationships with your customers, getting to know them and they get to know you. You are in the perfect position to drive traffic to your website and pump up your profits with social networking.

What is Social Networking and Web 2.0?



Social media and Web 2.0 are interchangeable terms that are used to describe interactive environments and communication strategies applied on the Internet.

Web 2.0 is a general term applied to any website that reacts to the input and activity of its users, such as a blog or your Facebook profile. Any website where the users get to contribute to content as well as the creators is a Web 2.0 site.

Social networking is best defined as the regular interaction of people for some common cause. Of course, there is really nothing new about social networking and it's something many of us do every day offline. But, as a marketing trend, this concept of networking online is growing more and more popular and effective. This is because the Internet is filled with millions of individuals who are looking to meet other Internet users and develop both business and personal relationships.

There are many portals for social networking on the web. Social networking websites are a community of Internet users that can range from small and tightly focused groups to enormous groups of people who all have different backgrounds and interests. I will show you what I consider the most effective networks to join and how to build your own community of friends, followers and potential customers.

The social networks I am going to show you are networks that anyone can join and find people with common interests. I will show you how to get inside of these networks and create your own network of friends who have interests in line with you and your business.

Why is social networking so effective for marketing?



The goal of business is to sell products or services and make money. To sell products or services, you need to alert your target audience of your existence. Customers cannot buy a product or a service if they do not know about it. Social networking websites will, not only allow potential customers to meet you, get to know you, and most importantly trust you. By joining social networks, you will attract people who have an interest in the information, products or services you want to share with them.

There is nothing new about networking as a means to grow your business. This is exactly why people join the Chamber of Commerce and similar organizations. But the fact that the practice is now becoming so popular on the Web is why it's important that you make the jump into online social networking so that you can take advantage of this shift. Because social networks are easy to use and understand, even for those who are not technically inclined, people are joining social networks in large numbers and will continue to do so. This trend is not going away, it is gaining momentum. As more and more people get involved in social networks, the number of people you can market to through these systems grows. I will show you how to find your audience inside the most powerful networks.

And here's what I think is the best part about using social networking for marketing your business. The networks I will show you are free! The only cost involved in these sites will be your internet connection and the time you spend interacting with your communities.

I will show you how to use the networks effectively in a manageable amount of time. You will not spend hundreds or thousands of dollars like you would with traditional advertising. To join these networks, you simply register and get started. For a small business, this is extremely important because you do not have a huge budget for marketing and advertising. And because small businesses are more successful at making an impact on social networks, you will have a huge advantage over larger corporations who are still having a hard time figuring out how they can use the networks effectively. You can take this free access to buyers and run with it!

Relationships Instead of Interruptions

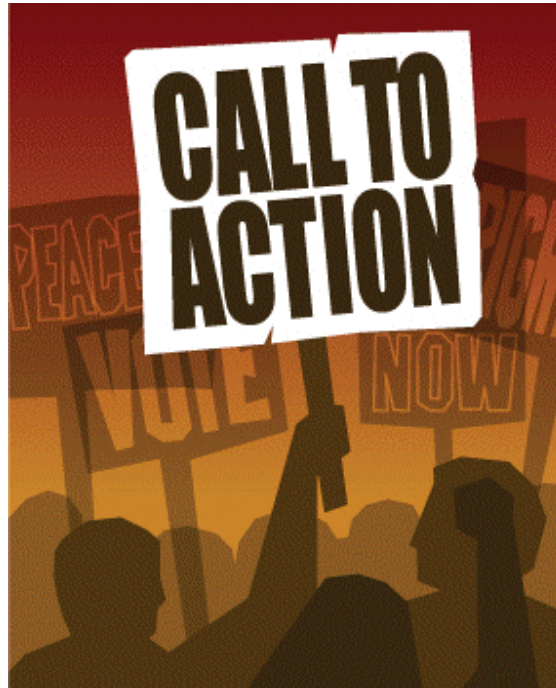


Before talking about specific strategies, it is important that you understand the new medium in which you will be engaging. Because the vehicle is so different, our behavior needs to be different than our old marketing behaviors.

In the old world of interruption marketing, we were required to interrupt and shout. Television commercials are always louder in order to grab our attention and interrupt what we are doing. That behavior is no longer necessary and, in fact, will repel your community. Your community wants real conversation from you. Your community wants valuable information that only you can give. They do not want to be shouted at. The relationship is the focus of your new marketing efforts. This one shift in thinking is what

is necessary to really take advantage of the marketing opportunities that are waiting for you.

Preparing Your Buyer to Take Action



Social media prepares your customers to more readily take action once you have established a relationship. You may have heard of the concept of the sales funnel. If not, think of the shape of a funnel. At the wide top of the funnel are people who have just come in contact with you and your product. They are mildly interested and so they join your community. They do this by signing up for your email opt-in list or maybe becoming your friend on Facebook. Each time you engage these interested individuals, they get to know you a little better. If they continue to be interested in you and your product, they will move further into the sales funnel, step by step, until they are ready to buy. Some customers are ready to buy right away. Some need a little more time.

Think of your own buying habits. Sometimes you have thought about a purchase and know exactly what you want and buy it right upon entering a store. Other times you need to make several decisions. Do I need it? Can I afford it? Is this something that is

right for me? The interactions you have with the product and the company selling the product allows you to build a relationship. You step further into the funnel.

Some people will not move all the way through your funnel. That is okay. In fact, that is what you want, because those who leave are no longer interested in buying. They separate themselves from those who are still interested. Those who are still interested, remain in your funnel. So as you network and interact with your community, you are now only interacting with members of your community who are interested in you and what you have to say. Every person in the world is not interested in your niche. The funnel allows you to sort out those who are interested from those who are not. This process brings a stream of qualified leads to your community, potential customers who are interested in you and your product. You now have a community of potential customers who surround you every day in your online activities. This process of building relationships and bringing customers further into your funnel makes it easier for your community to say yes when you ask them to take action.

For a buyer to buy, they need to (1) Know you (2) Like you and (3) Trust you. Social media makes all three of these not only possible, but easier. Your buyers will meet you on the networks. You will interact with them so they get to know you. And once they've interacted with you for a while in a non-threatening way, they begin to trust you. Your only job is to interact with them and be yourself. And here is a secret we will talk about in more detail later; you don't even have to make sales pitches. In fact, it's better if you only occasionally do so. All that is required of you is to invite people to your community and get to know them. That's it!

CHAPTER 2

Who Are Your Buyers?



Before you spend time working on your marketing strategy, you need to take time to answer the question: Who are your buyers? You want to define who your buyers are so you can focus on finding the right people for your community. You will be actively seeking new members to join your networks. When deciding which networks to use in your strategy, you must think about the people who are your target audience. Understanding what they want and need is critical to deciding who to invite to your community.

For instance, a travel agent may observe her customers are between the ages of 30 to 70 years old. In recruiting community members, she will not focus heavily on teenagers or people in their early 20's because these are not her buyers.

There are questions to ask yourself when thinking about your buyers. Make a list of the answers to the following:

- Who are your major audiences?
- What characteristics do your audience members share?
- Who can you invite that falls under these categories?

Our travel agent might answer the questions this way:

- My major audience members are between the ages of 30 to 70 with discretionary income to spend on travel
- My audience members love to travel and are adventurous. They often hold professional positions at work.
- I will invite people who hold professional positions between the ages of 30 and 70.

Now our travel agent can look for groups of people on the networks who fit these criteria. She will find professional groups on Facebook and LinkedIn where she can begin to network and invite people to join her network community.

Another way to identify your buyers is to ask your customers about themselves. When you are on your network and interacting with your community, ask a customer, “Why did you buy? Did you get what you were looking for?” Their answers will provide information about characteristics of your buyers. A quilt shop owner might receive a response such as, “I want to make gifts for my family for Christmas because I can save money.” Our shop owner now knows one characteristic of some of her customers is frugality. Here are some other characteristics our owner might discover:

Emotions:	Fun-loving Passionate
Interests:	Creative Frugal Learning
Demographics:	45 years – 75 years old Female

Once you’ve identified characteristics of your customers, you are ready to find people who fit these descriptions. In later parts of this book, I will tell you how to find these potential buyers on each of the social networks.

CHAPTER 3

Facebook



One of the fastest growing social networks online today is Facebook. You can find friends on Facebook who are from every industry, age group, and demographic group. Because so many people have joined, this is one of the most effective places to start your online marketing.

Facebook began as a social network for college students. You could only join if you had a college email address ending in .edu. Once those college students began entering the workforce, they wanted to keep their communications with friend. Eventually Facebook changed the rule and opened its doors to everyone. Since that time, the network has exploded in size making it one of the most useful places to start your online marketing activities.

This network is a place for you to share information about yourself with your friends. You may share as much or as little information as you like. You will invite friends who also have Facebook accounts. Once you have added a friend to your page, they can see all of your information if you set your privacy settings up in that way. You can regularly

post a status update that leaves a short message for friends letting them know what you are up to or telling them anything you like.

Marketing Strengths

Facebook is a great way to brand yourself and your product. You get to control the information you put out for your community to see. It also allows you to further relationships you have with customers and potential customers. Facebook is a great place to start if you are new to social media.

STRATEGY Your Profile

The screenshot displays a Facebook profile for Deborah Richmond. The top navigation bar includes 'facebook', 'Home', 'Profile', 'Friends', 'Inbox', and user options like 'Emmanuelle Gomez', 'Settings', and 'Logout'. The profile header shows the name 'Deborah Richmond' and a recent status update: 'Met some very nice people at Manufacturers Supply Company tonight.' with a 'Share' button. The left sidebar contains a 'Send Deborah a Message' button, a 'Poke Deborah' button, and a bio section stating 'Deborah owns TekiBuzz, a communications firm that helps businesses market using social media. http://tekibuzz.com'. Below the bio is an 'Information' section with 'Birthday: September 30' and a 'Friends' section showing '60 friends' and three profile pictures (Laura, Brian Cole, Tara). The main content area shows a 'Write something...' text box, an 'Attach' button, and a 'Share' button. Below this are two comments: one from Steve Hilger saying 'Won chocolate too!!!!' and one from Deborah Richmond saying 'I won LOADS of chocolate. It's like they had it there just for me!'. The right sidebar features two advertisements: 'God Likes You' and 'Mafia Wars'.

When creating a Facebook account, the first thing you will be asked to do is create a profile. Facebook makes it easy to share information about yourself and your business. You can include any information you like or you can skip items you would prefer not to share. For instance, I choose not to answer the question regarding “Relationship Status”. I simply don’t feel that question is appropriate for my purposes of connecting with friends in my online community. Other people may have no problem sharing such information. It is up to each of us to decide what we will share.

Use your real name when signing up for a profile. Would you buy something from a person you know only as coolguy55? Not likely. Using your real name helps build trust between you and your buyer. It lets them know you are a real person.

Be sure to include a photo of yourself in your profile. A photo is very important in establishing a relationship with your community. Let your audience get to know you through personal information.

Build your Community of Friends

Once you have created a profile, now it is time to invite friends to your community. Start with your existing customers, friends and family members. Use the search field to search for your friends. If you find a friend who already has an account, invite them to your page. Your friend will receive an email invitation. If they confirm you are indeed a friend, they will have access to your profile and you will have access to theirs. Your goal is to build a friend list that includes friends, family, existing customers and other people who may become your customers.

Build Your Friend List

For your Facebook strategy, you will want to continue to build your friend list. One way to do this is through your face-to-face networking. When you receive business cards from people at face-to-face networking functions, follow up by inviting them to be your Facebook friend. Look at the friend lists of all your friends. If you know any of their friends, you can immediately invite them to your list. Spend a little time every week building your list. Remember these are people you are gathering for your sales funnel.

Interact with Friends

It is not enough to collect friends. Now you will need to interact regularly with friends. Here are some ideas on how to continually stay in touch.

Facebook allows you to send a status update to your friends. When you enter a sentence or two about what you are doing, all of your friends will see this update. You should send updates a few times each week to stay active in your community.

Updates can be about anything you like. When marketing your business, I recommend that the updates should fall into three categories.

- Personal
- Informative
- Business related

Personal messages can be used for one third of your updates. These would be updates about you, your hobbies or your family. One third should be informational. You can provide tips on how to use your product, or provide links to articles you've recently read that relate to our industry. The last third of your updates can be related to what you are working on in your business. These types of updates will remind people what your business is about without sounding like a sales message. For instance, an interior designer might mention that she is helping a client choose countertop materials today. This reminds her community of what line of business she is in and lets them know a little about her services and day-to-day work activities.

Fan Page

Once you have your Facebook page up and running, you will want to create a Fan Page. This is a page that is focused entirely on your business and products. You can use your company logo for the page image rather than a photograph, if you like. Fill the page with lots of marketing copy about your products and services. Be sure to include your website URL. Once the page is developed, you can invite all of your friends to become fans of the Fan page. Many will be happy to join you.

The Fan page provides a place for you to send messages regarding the business to your fans. This is where you can send notices of sales or upcoming events. With one click, all of your fans will receive the message. It is acceptable to talk directly about the business and your services and products from the fan page.

Because of the huge number of people on Facebook you won't want to miss this opportunity to grow your community. Make sure you plan on spending a few minutes to interact with your community on Facebook several times a week. With this consistency, you will build trust. This trust will further your relationship with potential customers and move them closer to becoming your direct customer.

CHAPTER 4

Linked In

The screenshot displays the LinkedIn homepage for a user named Tim Sullivan. The interface includes a top navigation bar with the LinkedIn logo, navigation tabs (People, Jobs, Answers, Companies), and a search bar. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Home:** A sidebar on the left with navigation options like Home, Groups, Profile, Contacts, and Inbox (41).
- Inbox:** A central section showing a list of messages with details like sender names (Jason Mesiarik, Tom Ortez, Doug Scott, Steve Bistriz, Jill Konrath), subject lines (e.g., "RE: What networking or...", "RE: Invitation to connect on LinkedIn"), and dates.
- Sales Performance International News:** A section with a "Recommend news to your co-workers" prompt and a list of news articles with "Start discussion" links.
- People you may know:** A sidebar on the right showing suggested connections like Richard Janezic, David GuruConnector Hall, and Jennifer Ferguson.
- Connect Your Brand To:** An advertisement for LinkedIn's professional network.
- Profile Views:** A section indicating that the user's profile has been viewed by 20+ people in the last 3 days.
- Answers and Jobs:** Sections at the bottom right showing no results for the specified categories.

LinkedIn is a social network that is known for its use by professionals. In its early days, it was used primarily by the tech industry as a place to post resume' information and make contacts while looking for a job or looking for new employees.

The way the network is being used has evolved over time. As more and more people join the network, it becomes more useful to a wider variety of industries. LinkedIn is a great place to connect to others in your industry who may be able to help you with information or referrals for services you might need. If your business provides services to other businesses, this is a great place to build a community of potential customers.

Strengths

LinkedIn gives you a great place to demonstrate your experience in your field. It allows you to connect with people in your industry both in your geographical location and from all over the world. You can join groups that have formed around specific ideas or fields. For instance, I belong to several groups. Some are groups of general business people in my city. Others are marketing groups that have members from across the county.

Profile

With LinkedIn, you can create a very full profile with lots of good information about you and your company. Be sure to take full advantage of all of the profile areas. Many people put information in just as they would a resume'. Since you are here to promote a business, you will want to be sure to really highlight what you and your business are about. In the summary section, use some of your best marketing language to catch your visitor's attention. Include your photo so your audience can start getting to know you. Don't forget to include your website URL so readers can visit your site to see what you are all about.

Build your Connections

The strength of LinkedIn is the ability to, not only gather connections, but also to be able to see your friends and their networks. You will be able to quickly find people in all industries with whom you may want to do business.

Once your profile is complete, you can begin to connect to people. Search for friends and existing customers and ask them to link to you. Once they accept, you will be able to see their entire profile and their list of connections. Look through their connections to find other people you know. Invite them to connect with you.

Join Groups

Joining groups is an excellent way to build your community and find potential customers. When choosing groups to join, look for groups that share some of the characteristics of your buyers. If your business is a specialty golf store, you'll want to join golf groups. You may also want to join professional groups. Professionals often conduct business during a game of golf. These are your potential customers and you want to get to know them. Once you are a part of a group, look for members that you might like to invite to connect to your LinkedIn profile.

Once you join some groups, look at the discussions tab to find topics group members are talking about. Comment frequently and even start a discussion of your own. If

members have kept the default settings that come with their profile, they will receive email notices when someone opens a discussion. This is a way for you to add value to the group and allow members to see your name and comments while checking their email. Be sure the discussion is truly adding value, and not a sales pitch for your product or services.

Interaction with “Answers”

LinkedIn offers a cool feature called Answers. Ask any question at all and you will have people answering you with good information, and they do it almost immediately. Many professionals and experts hang out in the Answers area and try to answer you quickly. Their answers are good and those providing answers can earn special status for answering questions.

What makes this a super effective way to interact is the fact you can have your question sent to all of your connections as well as sent to the main Answer section. I highly recommend you choose this feature. It will put your name in front of your connections and remind them you are there. Many will take the opportunity to say hello to you when they receive a question, even if they do not know the answer. I ask a question about once a month so I can make myself accessible to my connections.

You can truly ask anything. Some people ask for referrals for goods or service they are searching for. Some ask questions about topics not generally known in their industry. Check out the Answers area and read some questions to see what types of questions people are asking about. If you see a question you know you can answer, by all means do contribute your expertise.

LinkedIn also has a place to update your status. You can contribute the same mix of topics as you do on Facebook, that is one third informational, one third business related, and one-third personal subject matters. This will keep the interest of your audience and allow them to get to know who you are and what you are about, furthering your relationship with them.

CHAPTER 6

Twitter



One of the fastest growing social networks is Twitter. When I first tried Twitter, there weren't too many people using it yet and I didn't see how this network was going to be of value to me. Now that so many people are using Twitter, there are great ways to connect and gather useful information.

Strengths

Twitter is fast and easy to use. The search feature allows you to find, not only people, but you can also search by subject and find your target audience members. Twitter can also be used to drive traffic to your blog or website.

STRATEGY

Profile

The Twitter profile is the easiest to create. Be sure to include your website URL and a photo of yourself to create a more personal experience for your followers.

Build Your Community

With one click, you can become a follower of anyone you choose. They receive an email informing them you are following them. Many will come to your profile and follow you in return. Search for friends and customers by name using the search feature. Once you are following a friend, check out their follow list to see who else is following them.

When building your follow list, be sure to include others in your industry. Many people share links to great information they have found on the web. People in your industry will be interested in the same things you are and will pass on useful information that you can use.

Tweets

In Twitter, you receive only 140 characters to compose your message. This means all messages are short and to the point, making it easy to follow a large number of people. You will want to send Tweets several times a day. Again, send the same types of entries as you do in Facebook and LinkedIn.

There are many great ways to use Twitter. One is to use it to drive traffic to your blog or website. When you put information on your website about a new product or service, be sure to include tweets about the product or service. Include a link to the page on your website which discusses the new item. When you publish a new blog post, write a Tweet telling your followers what the subject is and include a link. The more followers you have, the more likely that some will be interested enough to click the link and check out your new information.

Interact

On Twitter, there are a couple ways to talk directly to others. One is to respond to followers in your Tweets by using the @ sign. If you use the @sign followed by a user's name, this is a signal to the person you've named that you are talking to them. For instance, if someone sends a Tweet that begins with @DeborahTekkbuzz, I know that the message is intended for me. You can also send direct messages to your Twitter followers. These are seen only by the person you send it to. These two types of interactions are great for building relationships and carrying on a conversation.

Twitter users often retweet information they see from other users. By retweeting someone's information, you are allowing their content to be seen by all of your followers. Allowing more people to see one Tweet is valuable for your follower. Followers are excited when you retweet their content. Retweeting is a good way to interact and help others.

To get an idea of how to Tweet, spend some time reading many tweets. You will start to see different styles of messages and will begin to find a style that works for you.

CHAPTER 7

Blogs



One of my favorite types of social media is the blog. A blog is a place to write about your field or industry and share valuable information. I write a blog filled with tips on how to use social media to market your business. My goal is to share useful information in small doses that will not overwhelm my reader.

Strengths

Blogs are a fast way to establish your expertise in your field. By writing frequently about your topic, you begin to develop a body of information surrounding your topic. If you continue to submit blog posts, this body of work continues to grow, making your blog site a valuable place to find good information.

Blogs are also very good at bringing traffic to your site by raising your placement on search engines. Search engines like blogs because you are creating fresh new content on a continual basis. Again, the large body of work that you will accumulate is looked upon favorably by search engines.

Strategy

If you like to write or at least don't mind writing, this medium is for you! Blog posts should be kept short. Readers are looking for fast information in smaller pieces. I only write a couple paragraphs in most of my posts. You will fall into an easy rhythm of creating short posts for your readers, the more that you write.

Wordpress, in my opinion, is the best online blog tool. It is free and, if you download it to your domain, there are all kinds of SEO plugins that you can use to boost your page rank by bringing visitors to your blog.

STRATEGY

Linking

You will want to write posts about subjects that surround your product. Occasionally you will want to write posts that mention your product directly. When you do, you should create a link to the page where your product is sold. This will send interested readers directly to the place where they can learn more about the products and purchase it.

Email List

Your opt-in form should be near the top of your blog page. You want to encourage your readers to join your list. Your email list is one of your most valuable sales tools. Don't miss the chance to add interested readers to your sales funnel. Once you collect email addresses, you can now send notices about new products or special sales to your members.

Driving Traffic

Once you begin establishing your presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or your blog, your next step will be to let all of your friends and customers know how to find you. I highly recommend that you add links to your network on to your email signature. Every time someone reads an email from you, they will have the opportunity to check out your pages and to enter your sales funnel.

CHAPTER 8

Design Your Strategy



Now that you have a good overview of some of the most useful tools in social media, it is time to design your strategy and put it down on paper or a text document on your computer. A strategy will allow you to follow an organized path as you build your communities. Following a plan and setting goals gives you a way to track your progress. For instance, if you set a goal to increase your community by 5 people each week, you can easily measure whether you are on track each week. If you are not, then you know you need to spend more time building your list of friends.

Decide which tools will work for you

I recommend that you spend a little time with each of the four tools I've outlined for you before deciding which you would like to use. Sign up for accounts on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook so you can move around and read what other people are writing, view how others are using the network. Blogs are even easier to view. You simply search

in Google for blogs pertaining to your interests. Read what people are writing. See the different styles they are using.

My Strategy

To give you an idea of what your strategy should look like, I am including the list of tasks I work on throughout the week to keep consistent and make my marketing plan work for me.

Blog Website

My website is my blog. In my blog I give useful information to my readers about strategy and specific actions they can take in their online marketing efforts

When you arrive you see my latest blog post. In the sidebar is my email opt-in list. I want it to be one of the first things you see since I want you to sign up for my email list.

In the sidebar I also post information about my next speaking engagements, my most recent Facebook entries, and links to Twitter and LinkedIn.

I include my photo in the sidebar. Since I am a solopreneur, my photo often works as a logo for developing my brand.

Time: I spend 30 minutes three times a week writing and publishing posts.

Facebook

I update my profile at least three times a week. I include updates about my personal life and about what's happening in my business.

I have a fan page for my business, TekkBuzz. I include links to my website from there. I place information in the sidebar about what my company does. I post updates about upcoming events I am involved in and any new services I am offering.

I invited all of my Facebook friends to also be members of my fan page.

Time: I spend at least 10 minutes a day adding updates and commenting on my friend's updates.

LinkedIn

I post updates once a week.

I have joined several groups and I check the discussion boards three or four times a week. Whenever possible, add comments to the discussions so that I can continue to interact to members.

Whenever I'm part of a discussion, I invite the other people who participated in the discussion to be my connection. Since we usually have a lot in common, they usually agree and add me to their list.

I post a question in "Answers" once a month. I read Answers several times a week to see if I can answer any of the current questions other users are asking.

Time: I spend 10 minutes three times a week on LinkedIn.

Twitter

I review the tweets of the people I follow at least once a day. I reply using the @ sign when I have something to add to a conversation. I spend 10 minutes a day on Twitter reading, responding and tweeting.

I tweet four or five times a week. I tweet about my personal interests, what I'm working on with work, and good articles I'm reading on other blogs that relate to social networking.

I periodically search for particular industries, such as bakers or travel agents, and follow several. This way I keep up on what's happening in their world as well as my own. I target groups that are similar to my buyers. Many have followed me as a result.

Time: I spend 10 minutes a day on Twitter reading, responding and tweeting.

Now it's Your Turn

As you've read this e-book, I hope you've found good information you can use now to get started creating your own online marketing strategy. With a little planning, you can create a plan that is easy for you to fit into your busy schedule, and one that will produce results by driving traffic to your website. Social networking will make your sales efforts easier by creating relationships with potential customers who have expressed an interest in you and your product. You will create your own community of potential buyers who will be moving through your sales funnel toward buying your products and services. And when they do, you will see how social networking can Pump Up Your Profits!

Are you ready to build your social marketing machine, but aren't sure where to begin? Then you will want to check out:

[My Social Marketing Class](#)

We will delve deep into the steps you need to take to that help you pump up your profits.

Introducing My Social Marketing Class E-Course! *You will be able to...*

- **Generate more leads and prospects with less effort**
- **Eliminate cold calls and Crush your Competition**
- **Create a Killer Marketing Strategy**
- **Reach customers and prospects directly**
- **Build your reputation and create raving fans**
- **Pump Up Your Profits**

[Make this the year you really get started using social media to pump up your profits!](#)

<http://mysocialmarketingclass.com>
