

Mixing Business With Social

Thank goodness for social media! Business is now more fun and more personal.

Small Business in Australia is proving to be slow, in general, in jumping onto the new trend in marketing: online marketing through social media networks.

The emergence of groups such as MySpace, Facebook and Twitter, to name a very few, has opened up a whole new world of opportunities for small business to reach a world market and connect more personally with their clients. And here's the kicker: it's virtually FREE!

If you think that social media is for those lonely at-home introverts who don't have a real life, think again. The strategy of short, sharp, frequent bites of information works in today's world where people are bombarded with data.

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Most people today are time-poor. If asked to spend time reading lengthy technical or sales documents, they're going to weigh that activity against the multitude of other tasks with higher priority.

While we must veer away from traditional methods to grab their attention, there are some principles that still work. The old sales adage of AIDA, for example, still applies:

1. Grab their Attention
2. Capture their Interest
3. Stimulate their Desire
4. Motivate them to take Action.

However, it needs to adapt for the new media. Consider the power of key messages, backed up by referral through someone's personal network.

There's no doubt that social media has changed life as we know it. It's:

- Changed the face of the web
- Changed the way journalism functions
- Turned the power of sales and marketing over to consumers
- Enabled small voices to be heard on a big scale.

It enables business to interact directly and more personally with clients and prospects.

For businesses, it facilitates the dissemination of information on a massive scale but more importantly, it enables a business to interact directly and more personally with their potential customer – anywhere in the country, anywhere in the world.

The downside? It can be time-consuming (and addictive). To do it effectively, it requires frequent attention and commitment. Once

started, it needs to be continued, maintained. It's not a job for the novice although it's easy to get into the swing of it in time. However a lot of time – and opportunities – can be wasted while the novice is figuring it out. For most businesses, it makes cost-effective sense to outsource the task or employ the skills internally.

Shortly, we'll have a checklist of online do's and don'ts available to our visitors. In the meantime, if you haven't explored the potential yet, then get clicking!

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