

Information Sheet

Social Media for Small Business

Social Media is a broad term used to describe all the different online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the Internet through sharing information and resources. Methods used include posts on blogs or forums, sharing of photos, audio clips, videos and links, creating profiles on social networking sites, and posting status updates—usually with a feedback mechanism. Although social media started out as a medium for friends and family to share information, businesses now leverage many of these tools to market their small business.

Key Social Media Platforms to Consider for Small Business:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| E-Mail Marketing | Email marketing is directly marketing a commercial message to a group of people using email. In its broadest sense, every email sent to a potential or current customer could be considered email marketing. Examples: Mailchimp Tell'Em Constant Contact |
| Blog | A blog is a regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual, small group or business that is written in an informal or conversational style. It is frequently updated with commentaries, news, articles with images, videos and text, and therefore is an excellent way to share information and expertise with your target audience and engage people. Examples: Blogger Wordpress Weebly |
| Micro-Blogging | Microblogging is a combination of blogging and instant messaging that allows users to create a short message that is posted on their profile. Micro-blogging provides a quick way to communicate with a group of people. Examples: Twitter Tumblr |
| Photo Sharing | Photo sharing is the publishing or transfer of a user's digital photos online, thus enabling the user to share them with others (publicly or privately). Examples: Pinterest Instagram Flickr |
| Video | Video Sharing is one of the fastest growing activities online and involves the process of uploading, publishing and sharing video clips online. Example: YouTube Vimeo |
| Social Networking | A social networking service is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. Examples: Facebook LinkedIn Google+ |

Produced by



Sponsors



Best Practices for Engaging In Social Media:

1. **Listen** and participate in social media conversations to understand the rules and market landscape.
2. **Develop a plan** for what you want to achieve with your social media efforts.
3. Create compelling, high-quality **content** that resonates with your audience.
4. **Contribute, collaborate, inform, educate** but do not sell.
5. **Network with industry influencers** who will share good content and promote you in the process.
6. Optimize your social media efforts by **tracking results** and fine-tuning your strategy accordingly.
7. When responding to a negative comment, don't argue or become personal. **Always reply in a professional manner** and learn from the writer's input or comments.
8. **Always address issues as they arise** within the social media. Don't stay silent as this will cause more challenges.
9. **Don't sell!** Be informative, transparent and authentic. Share quality content.

Valuable links to understanding Social Media for Business:

| Source | Website |
|-----------------------|--|
| Province of Ontario | http://goo.gl/jW3Ltq |
| Yellow Pages Group | http://businesscentre.yo.ca |
| Mashable | http://goo.gl/wvsOFQ |
| Social Media Examiner | www.socialmediaexaminer.com |

Rev. Jan. 12, 2016

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. West, Main Floor
416-392-6646

North York Civic Centre
5100 Yonge St., Main Floor
416-395-7434

Scarborough Civic Centre
150 Borough Drive, Main Floor
416-396-7169

toronto.ca/enterprisetoronto

Produced by



Sponsors

