



Beyond social media: Building your business online

Ellie Becker and Bernadette Nelson | Jan-29-10, 01:02 PM |

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How many of you have attended a Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook for Business presentation in the past year? How many have a clue as to how any of this fits into your business or marketing plan? If we were all together in a room, our bet is that most of the hands would go up on question one – and many fewer on question two.

We're here to help you figure it out. Social media is getting all of the buzz, but that's only one part of it. Every month in this space we'll be talking about how the rapidly growing, high-speed Internet is changing the way we do business.

We'll explain some powerful new "big picture" ideas that your company should know about – like inbound marketing. And we'll show you how an array of interactive technology tools (Web 2.0) can help you put those ideas to work for your business.

First, we should make the case that we're all in a different marketing environment than ever before. And we're not talking about the recession. As longtime public relations/marketing communications and graphic/web design pros, in the past two years we've seen this new, web-driven environment create more functional changes in our professions than in the past two decades.

We've had to make an investment in time and resources to get up to speed on these changes to keep our businesses growing. We strongly suggest you do the same. Like we said, we'll help.

Here are a few facts for background:

- Media is fragmented and trying to figure out how to survive, as eyeballs – and advertising – migrate to the web (does your daily paper look anemic?).
- Consumers have ultimate control of the advertising message (think TiVo).
- Purchase decisions begin with Google search (not the Yellow Pages).
- The Cable Guy has rehabbed his image on Twitter (Google "Comcast customer service case study").
- Your potential customers are already online looking for products and services like yours (you just need to help them find you).

If your company's website is still only an online brochure, you're losing opportunities – and revenues (compare a monologue to a conversation).

Speaking of conversations, we want to have one with you. As we address the evolving world of marketing, what would you like to know about? Please ask questions or share your experiences.

The revolutionary inbound marketing approach is all about attracting and engaging audiences by creating remarkable (i.e. very useful) content. Engagement is about building relationships that inspire trust. Hopefully this column will be a lab – and a model – for how to do that.

Continued

Please email us your suggestions and take advantage of commenting on the Business Journal website. Comments are crawled by search engines and can help you begin to get found online. Really get in the Web 2.0 spirit by sharing if you think others would like this. See you next month!

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Editor's note: We'd like our New Media section to be socially acceptable to all types of business people – from tweeters to technophobes. So, to complement our staff's news stories, we turned to the pros for tips on how businesses can use the web to max. Each month, PR pro Ellie Becker and graphics guru Bernadette Nelson will offer strategies and suggestions on all things web-related. And they want to hear from you – contact them directly at their emails below.