

Why Being An 'Expert' Is Making You Useless On Facebook

Introduction

WHY BEING AN 'EXPERT' IS MAKING YOU USELESS ON FACEBOOK

This may be a surprising headline from someone who teaches you how to become know a though-leader in your field. After all, isn't Facebook *the* social network and isn't being know as an expert what we're all after?

You could spend your entire marketing budget on billboard space, radio spots, and magazine spreads, but you still wouldn't come close to reaching 500 million potential customers. Enter Facebook. Suddenly, your entire online market — and then some — is within your virtual reach for free.*

That's a pretty massive audience. Sure, it represents an amazing opportunity...but it can also be a little daunting. With so many people watching, even the slightest mistakes are magnified.

As many businesses have learned (the hard way), Facebook marketing isn't just a matter of throwing up a few posts and waiting for the "likes" and accolades to start trickling in . Here's some straight talk; most of the advice you hear about Facebook is junk... Not just useless but advice that can actually hurt your reputation and drive paying customers and clients away.

The good news is, you can learn from them without committing them yourself.

Read on for some of the most common blunders that could turn your business' Facebook page into a deadly weapon – and why your well-meaning mistakes could be making you useless on Facebook.

1 out of every 8 minutes online

is spent on Facebook.



Notes

**Of course Facebook isn't really free since there's time and energy that you have to devote to making it work for you, but it does pack tremendous bang for the buck.*

1: You Focus Every Post On Creating Value

PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY KNOW, LIKE, & TRUST.

You make sure that every update is valuable - helpful tips, industry updates, and inspirational quotes. Your strategy is to provide high-quality, useful info and nothing else.

This seems like a great idea (as you'll soon learn, tactics that appear totally reasonable have a surprising backfire rate on Facebook). But the truth is, only writing "quality" updates can make you sound more like robot than a real human being.

Facebook is a SOCIAL network, and that means getting down with some socializing. Think of it as being akin to an open house in your business where you've invited potential customers to come mix and mingle.

Think about how your current dialogue sounds.

Potential customer at your mixer: Hey there. Glad to meet you.

You: Laser hair removal special offer for Summer!

Potential customer: Uuuuh OK, I didn't know that. Anyway, what brings you here?

You: Restylane is growing in popularity report.

Potential customer: Fascinating. So anyway, I don't want to monopolize your time. Nice to meet you.

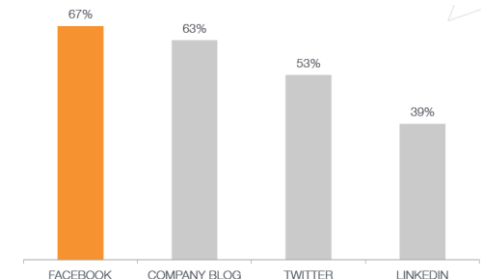
You: Botox is for men too!

Facebook FAIL!

Just focusing on 'expert' information will push you right past the human relationship. Whoops!

I'm not saying that you need to eliminate the tips and quotes from your news feed, but what is all this posturing really doing? To be seen as a true expert, it takes a bit more than a few nuggets of wisdom. So drop the act - stop announcing 'stuff' and start engaging people.

Facebook generates **the most conversions** for business to consumer companies.



2: You Avoid Adding Your Personality

A DASH OF REAL PERSONALITY GOES A LONG WAY

I understand, you want to be seen as a pro (as you should). So when people start posting pictures of their cats you turn up your nose and leave.

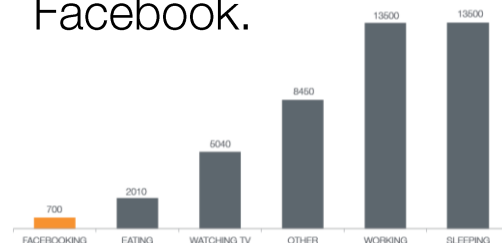
When you first start using Facebook it can seem mundane, trivial and downright silly (and at times it certainly is). What are all these people doing, wasting their time on the internet talking about pets and what they had for lunch?

But these are what human beings talk about.

It's called small talk and it's how you build relationships. In "real life" (AKA not on Facebook) we engage in this type of conversation constantly. When you chat with a new patient or customer where do you usually begin? Ever talked about the weather, sports, your favorite local restaurant or your kids? Hmm those "tedious" updates suddenly seem strangely familiar, don't they?

The big opportunity here for you is that injecting your personality into your network is perfect Facebook marketing. This is an opportunity to show that there's a person behind the page. Be funny, be sarcastic, be friendly, and you'll build a reputation that will result in sales.

The average user spends **more than 11 hours a month** on Facebook.



3: You're Trolling For Customers

PEOPLE WANT TO BUY. THEY DO NOT WANT TO BE SOLD.

This is a big one and a mistake that most businesses make. After all, you're on Facebook to get new customers and make sales. Don't misunderstand me - you can absolutely get new clients and customers through Facebook. But the way you're going about it is likely fundamentally flawed.

You sell doll houses. So you do a search on Facebook for "doll houses" and start telling everyone who has mentioned doll houses about your products. Hey, you're hitting up customers! Going straight to the source! Right?

Wrong.

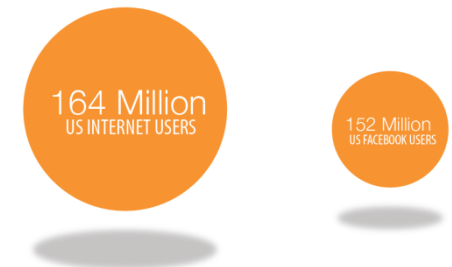
Let me give this caveat - if you have someone employed or outsourced to work Facebook full time this is not necessarily a bad strategy. You will get some traffic, brand awareness, word of mouth, and even a few sales from it. (This strategy works for Dell.)

But if you're a small business looking to leverage your Facebook time - this is NOT the way to do it. Think about this - would you rather connect with someone who has the potential to make you one sale or chat with someone who has the potential to promote your business to dozens or hundreds of others? No brainer, right? It's the same on Facebook.

This is a large shift in the way most people use Facebook. Stop going for the one-to-one sales and start spending your time connecting with the hubs of your customer community. This could be blog owners, customers who refer you over and over again, other businesses or even the person who runs your local chamber of commerce.

Stop trolling for customers.
Start looking for connectors.

93% of all US adult internet users are already on Facebook.



4: You're Boring My Socks Off

THE VERY WORST THING YOU CAN BE IS BORING.

Too often, businesses err on the side of caution with their Facebook posts, winding up with dull, lackluster pages. Granted, you don't want to offend anyone in your audience, and appealing to multiple demographics in one forum is no easy feat. But if you dilute your messages too much, you'll commit one of the cardinal sins of social networking: boring your fans.

Your Facebook page is a marketing vehicle, but it's also an opportunity to showcase your business' individuality and personality. Remember: this is ultimately a SOCIAL site. Post interesting, unexpected messages that will make your fans laugh, raise their eyebrows, respond with comments of their own, and share your page with their friends. Don't be afraid to be funny, intriguing, and sometimes even irreverent.

And don't drown them in words. In addition to text updates, regularly post content and multimedia that will keep your page from becoming predictable. Show your daily work flow. Give your Facebook friends a back stage pass. Make your posts as diverse and varied as possible, and keep your customers on their virtual toes.

It can be tempting to save time by automating Facebook posts. That's fine, but make sure they're not in the majority. If you automatically populate your page from your blog content or from other social networking sites, your stream will feel much less personal and your fans will quickly catch on and drop you like a snotty bagel. (You don't want to know.)

Social media **conversations** actively influence purchases.



5: You're Perched Up On A Pedestal

COME OUT FROM BEHIND YOUR VELVET ROPES.

You know how VIP areas work right? (I lived in Manhattan so I'm well versed in this.) The chosen few sit behind velvet ropes and bouncers while everyone else admires from afar. You can try and talk to the VIPs but they sure aren't talking to you!

You're not be trying to be a snob but you may well be coming off as aloof and uninterested.

Every find yourself thinking that you don't know what to say or that everything you write sounds forced or you're scared of that input box? If these are the thoughts that are going through your head every time you sign on Facebook I can diagnose your problem right now – Facebook isn't working for you because you aren't talking enough!

If you're in any social situation, how much traction are you going to get if you stand in the corner all by yourself? Most of the "business juice" on Facebook comes not from sending out updates but from talking (also known as building relationships) with real people.

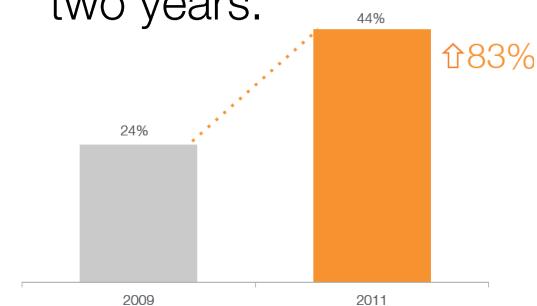
Staying silent can make you come across like you don't care about engaging with others - like you're only interested in what they can do for you: not a way to start a relationship.

If you have trouble thinking of what to fill that little box with here's the good news - you don't have to think of anything brilliant. You just have to reply to what your fans are saying.

If you check out businesses with large followings, you might be surprised to find that the vast majority of their interactions are replies. They spend less time announcing, and more time engaged in conversations.

Just talk to your fans and start a conversation as if they were in your business making small talk. Simple.

The number of businesses who say Facebook is 'critical' to their business has **increased 83%** in just two years.



6: You're Not Opening The Toolbox

IF YOU ONLY HAVE A HAMMER, EVERY PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE A NAIL

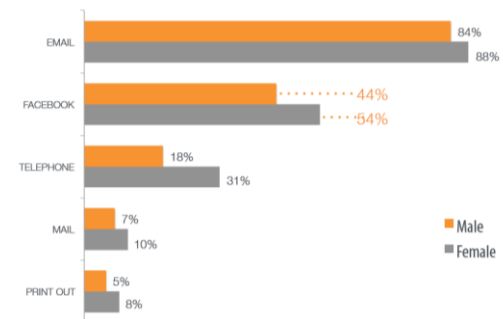
You wouldn't launch an email campaign or billboard ad without monitoring the results—so why spend your time and effort cultivating a Facebook page without gauging its effectiveness?

Many business owners aren't aware that Facebook offers reporting and analysis capabilities that keep track of how friends and fans are using their pages. If you don't advantage of these tools, you're not getting the maximum benefit of using the site—and doesn't that defeat the purpose of establishing a social networking presence in the first place?

Facebook Insights is an intuitive, built-in application that helps you monitor and interpret your fans' behaviors, motivations, demographics, and more. You can identify trends, pinpoint likes and dislikes, and tailor your content accordingly.

Why network in the dark when Facebook offers a flashlight and compass for free?

Facebook has become **the preferred way of sharing content**, second only to email (for now).



7: Time x Effort = Results

UNFORTUNATELY, FACEBOOK IS NOT AN ATM.

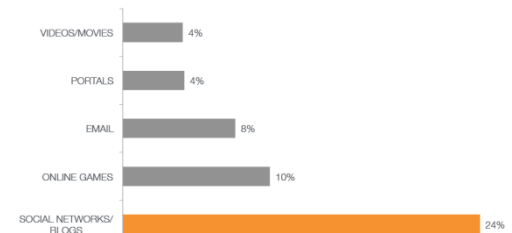
Facebook provides the most value to small businesses as a relationship building tool that allows you to get real recommendations and positive word of mouth. Of course that means every time you post an update, a sale is not going to come out the other end.

Everyone SAYS that they understand this. Yet, I see a lot of business owners sign up for Facebook and hook up their blog RSS feed or post a stream of 'special offers', then get frustrated when they don't see an immediate spike in sales. (Even better is when the complaining starts after they've only sent one update and haven't told anyone they are on Facebook.)

If this is you – time to get real and actually start using Facebook as a real marketing channel that requires attention, and effort. Facebook IS an incredibly effective channel for growing your bottom line - but that will not happen in a day.. or a week... or a month. (Well, maybe a month.)

Using Facebook to create sales will take some time and effort, but the results can be spectacularly effective, especially for a local business that understand how to utilize this incredible marketing vehicle, and devote real effort resources to it over time.

US internet users spend **3x more** minutes on blogs and social networks than on email.



Learn More

READY TO ADD FACEBOOK TO YOUR MARKETING?

Frontdesk specializes in online marketing (including Facebook).

<http://frontdeskseo.com/facebook-twitter-marketing/>

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