

Blips, Snips & Tips on advertising

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Is Social Networking Not Working for You?

The good news is that it is “Social” not “Business” networking. The bad news is that everybody, including the business world seems to be caught up in it. Should your company engage in social media for the good of your business?

Generation landslide

Only 1% of people over 55 years old use social media. Move the timeline and the numbers are overwhelming for those using Yahoo Groups, tribe.net, or blogging to their hearts' discontent.

The person making the final decision to buy your products may not know what a “connection” on LinkedIn is, but the generation that grew up on the Internet will be calling the shots soon enough.

They are already forging the paths of social networking to interact with business. They are listing their places of employment and in that context, representing their companies.

This may be an unsettling development for some, but considering what baby boomers did to their parents in the sixties, it's not so bad.

Financial model

There are three ways a website typically makes a buck: charge for subscriptions, which is tough to get away with; sell stuff, which only

goes so far for non-retailers; and run ads.

Advertising is the engine of the economy because it is the most efficient way to connect buyers and sellers. Can social media deliver a targeted audience (with minimal waste) at a fair price to a B2B company? Will the ads be considered a welcome part of the experience (like in a magazine) or a nuisance?

Although the “marketing mix” has grown increasingly fragmented during the past decade - more to do with fewer resources - social media cannot be ignored. Social networking sites will need and work with advertisers.

Which tables are the cool kids sitting at?

It's hard to know which social media will thrive and which will fall into oblivion. This is not a new phenomenon. Print journals, trade shows, directories and yes, blogs, have risen and fallen over the years. The ones that adapt to the technology but remain true to their customers' needs tend to stick around.



80 years of social networking

Trade shows have been bringing people together for generations in a high-impact environment where companies meet their customers, prospects, the media, competitors, vendors, and industry influencers **face-to-face**.

At the recent National Plastics Exposition, Neutrex filled the back of a 1929 Ford Model A Express Truck with its PurgeX purging compounds and held a contest to guess the weight. Contest clues were offered, such as how much money a processor would save using that amount of PurgeX to clean its injection molding machinery.

A contest attracts people to a booth; however, Neutrex went a step further by tying the contest into product benefits and making bold statements about today's economy compared to 1929 and the future of a major application, automotive plastics. This made their presence and interaction at a crowded trade show more memorable. And yes, we “Tweeted” on Twitter about it.

Less than 8% of all people in the US are registered on **Twitter** and just 60% of those are regular users. Celebrities, politicians and news organizations are embracing it -

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perhaps three good reasons to avoid Twitter.

But as trade media find it useful to connect with their “followers,” on Twitter, B2B companies will have opportunities to leverage these connections by belonging to networks and providing timely, relevant information (in 140 characters or less).

It is easy to get the impression on **LinkedIn** that all 40 million registered users are just looking for a job.

Nevertheless, LinkedIn is the leading social networking site for business professionals and it provides a host of learning and self-promotion tools.

Fast Pitch is challenging LinkedIn with services and advertising venues better designed to promote businesses and the professional expertise of individuals. Basic membership is free. To take advantage of the features, a membership subscription of \$9 or \$14 per month is required.

Ryze is a social networking site targeting new entrepreneurs, and **Talkbiznow** is a new site targeting business executives. If you have video that you want to post on your website, host it on **YouTube** for free.

Facebook has more than 200 million active users worldwide and overtook **MySpace** in April 2008 for more unique visitors per month. The

fastest-growing demographic on Facebook is the 35-and-older crowd (not otherwise engaged in senior softball leagues). Facebook actively promotes businesses setting up their own pages and advertising. Trade publishers are posting comprehensive pages for their magazines.

Your experienced B2B ad agency can help you sort out the media and prepare the materials to present your company at its best.

Predilections and predictions

Social media will develop more business-oriented applications. Trade journals will tap into social networking sites and build their own social groups to connect with readers and expand their audience.

B2B companies will utilize social media - not to the extent that consumer companies are forced to - but to the level that it helps them understand and engage their “community” in appropriate forums.

To this end, it is critical that B2B marketers present themselves professionally in terms of graphic design and strong copywriting. The messages they convey must remain consistent with company strategy and brand positioning.

The Buffalo Bills will win Super Bowl XCVII.

Our Clients Mean Business-to-Business

W.T. Hight (Weymouth, MA) - Leveling mounts, carts, casters, wheels, and other material handling products

WSF Industries (Tonawanda, NY) - Autoclave pressure vessel systems

Wanner Engineering (Minneapolis, MN) - Positive-displacement pumps

Vent-A-Kiln (Buffalo, NY) - Source-capture fume ventilation systems

VanDeMark Chemical (Lockport, NY) - Specialty chemicals and custom phosgenations

Unidex (Warsaw, NY) - Manipulators, work positioners, mobile tables, workbenches and lifts

Ttarp Industries (Buffalo, NY) - Die cutting presses, laminators, band saws and splitters

Titan Tool Supply (Buffalo, NY) - Microscopes, borescopes; micro-finishing tools

Strong Forge & Fabrication (Batavia, NY) - Machined forgings, weldments and fabricated parts

Revo Caster (West Seneca, NY) - Casters and wheels

Polymer Molding (Erie, PA) - Plastic caps and plugs; custom molding

Phinney Tool & Die Co. (Medina, NY) - Custom tools, dies and fixtures

Pentalift Equipment (Guelph, ON) - Lift tables and loading dock equipment

Niagara Transformer (Buffalo, NY) - Power and distribution transformers, rectifiers and reactors

Niagara Fiberboard (Lockport, NY) - Fiberboard panels and products

Neutrex (Houston, TX) - Purging compounds

Milward Alloys (Lockport, NY) - Aluminum, copper and custom alloys

Kee Safety (Buffalo, NY & Concord, ON) - Safety railing components and systems; steel-to-steel clamping systems

JTM Foods (Erie, PA) - Baked snacks and treats

Infinetex (Clarence, NY) - Wastewater filtration systems

Envirospec (Getzville, NY & Mississauga, ON) - Paver stone pedestals

Emblematic Co. (West Seneca, NY) - Decorative magnetic emblems

Buffalo Metal Casting (Buffalo, NY) - Non-ferrous metal castings

Batavia Engineering (Batavia, NY) - Foundry ladles and skimmers

Contact us for a free marketing analysis.

Whether you need a fresh new look at your strategic approach or have a project that requires sound planning from an objective point of view, contact us today for a no-cost, no-obligation analysis and estimate. Call (716) 852-4410 or email: extra@haroldwarner.com.

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