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Social Networking for Professional Services:

How to Add Social Media to Your Networking Plan

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How to Add Social Media to Your Networking Plan

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and Mary Flaherty, Director, Content Strategy & Development

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Introduction

What Is Social Media and Social Networking?

Social media are the tools that help build, extend, and maintain relationships via the Internet—that is, they comprise the toolbox we use to conduct *social networking* or *online networking*. Much as association meetings, conferences, events, and coffee shops are venues where we conduct our face-to-face networking, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and similar social media sites are the venues where our social networking occurs.

While the tools may be different, the underlying principle is very much the same as in face-to-face networking: **givers gain**.

Be generous, share, add value to the relationship, and become a trusted advisor. Do so, and you create a network you can draw on for new business, research, recruitment, employment, and much more.

For more on *how* to create a networking plan, see RainToday's guide [Networking for Professional Services: A Primer for Relationship Building](#), which covers topics such as creating your networking strategy, relationship-building tips and tactics, and keeping your network active.

And thanks to our friends at [Batchbook](#), the CRM system for small businesses and professionals, for graciously allowing us to adapt their *Social Media Blue Paper* for section 2 of this guide.



Adding Social Media to Your Networking Plan

Social Media Toolkit

While the tools of social media allow us to extend the web of our network far beyond our local, regional, and national boundaries—it does take time and an ongoing commitment to build your social media profile. The purpose of this guide is to provide an introduction so you can incorporate social networking into your overall networking strategy.

Social Media Defined

Social media is loosely defined as the websites and applications where users are publishing content such as news, photos, videos, and audio clips. In general, this content is uploaded by someone and made public so that other people can learn from it, share it, and/or comment or vote on it. The “social” in social media refers to the participatory nature of these sites. People are encouraged (expected even) to contribute; present their viewpoints in a respectful, constructive way; and engage with these virtual communities in much the same way as if they were happening at a local coffee shop or at a dinner party.

As the social media toolkit has gotten better and the tools more numerous, they’ve proven to be valuable for networking and marketing your business.

Explore and Experiment

Because social media is continually evolving, the rules of how and when to use it are always changing. We've created this guide in hopes that we can introduce professional services providers to the tools they can use to incorporate social networking into their overall networking or marketing plan.

In order to add social networking to your plan, we suggest the following approach:

1. **Take a look** at what other professional services providers are doing. (We provide some examples on the pages that follow, but also look at what your competitors and industry leaders are doing.)
2. **Explore** the various social media tools that are available.
3. **Uncover** which social media networks your clients and prospects use and how they use them.
4. **Identify** the tools that are a strategic fit with your networking and marketing plan.
5. **Get started** by experimenting with just a few social media venues to understand how they work and what you can accomplish.

We've broken the social media tools down into categories, although admittedly a few of the websites span categories or defy categorization. The tools we cover in this guide include:

- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Google+](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Podcasts](#)
- [Slide-sharing sites](#)

Social networking is a rapidly changing arena. The tools and applications are evolving, new tools are introduced all the time, and some may be discontinued. (And that reinforces the caution to not rely too heavily on any *one* social media tool.)

How Social Media Is Being Used by Professional Services Providers

Marketers and consultants were among the early adopters of social and new media tools. However, today, even in the tradition-bound worlds of accounting and law, social networking is strong among professionals.

While making a sale directly from a post on a social media site is rare, if not impossible, social media definitely helps you develop and nurture relationships with potential buyers. And that can lead to not only a single sale, but a longtime relationship with someone who could become an advocate for you and send business from other buyers your way. *(Read Mike Schultz's article [8 Ways to Successfully Sell Using Social Media](#) published by Social Media Examiner to learn more about how social media can help with sales.)*

How are service professionals using social networking? In section 2 we cover the individual tools in detail, but first let's take a look at how some professional services firms of varying sizes and in different industries are networking online.

Below are just a few examples, mini-cases if you will, from a CPA firm, law firm, consultancy, and marketing firm. These snapshots will give you an idea of how professionals are engaging in social networking and ways in which you too might participate.



Industry:
Accounting

Firm: Wolf &
Company, PC

Profile: Wolf & Company, P.C. (www.wolfandco.com) is a certified public accounting and business consulting firm founded in 1911, with offices in Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts, and Albany, New York. As a regional firm with more than 180 professionals, it provides comprehensive assurance, tax, risk management services, business consulting, and WolfPAC Integrated Risk Management®. Contact: Sam Sexer, Marketing Coordinator, ssexer@wolfandco.com.

What are they doing?

Since 2009, Wolf & Company has used social media as a tool to help increase the firm's visibility, promote events, and disseminate thought leadership and other relevant information to a variety of industry niches such as financial institutions and investment management, family business, technology, and venture-backed companies. Wolf & Company's strategy includes the use of

various social media platforms—Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Vimeo, and Google+.

Why are they doing it?

1. Position Wolf & Company professionals as experts and thought leaders within the industries they serve
2. Increase awareness of Wolf & Company’s hosted events and events at which the firm’s professionals participate or attend
3. Drive attendance at Wolf & Company’s hosted events and events at which the firm’s professionals participate or attend
4. Create additional avenues to drive traffic to the Wolf & Company website, and to increase search engine optimization (SEO)
5. Support the firm’s recruitment efforts (LinkedIn and Facebook are two of the top referring sites to Wolf & Company’s website)

How are they using social media to network?

Facebook – Wolf & Company uses its [Facebook page](#) to support recruiting efforts and provide a snapshot of the firm’s culture, offerings, and philanthropic and event involvement.

For instance, Wolf posts its upcoming career fair schedule and pictures at the career events, along with posting new thought leadership pieces and who the author is, pictures from volunteer days and information about the organization Wolf supported, and pictures from industry events.

The Facebook page also serves an internal purpose—it enables employees to keep up to date with firm news and events. It’s especially valuable for employees who are frequently out of the office at client locations.

LinkedIn – The firm has a [LinkedIn company page](#) and two groups—“Wolf & Company, P.C. Employee and Alumni” and the “WolfPAC User Group.”

The purpose of the company page is to increase awareness about the firm. The “Employee and Alumni” group serves as a way for the almost 400 members—current and past employees—to reconnect with one another for business development purposes and stay informed of Firm news and activities.

The “WolfPAC User Group” serves as a way for Wolf & Company’s WolfPAC Solutions Team to communicate with WolfPAC Integrated Risk Management

(WolfPAC) client contacts (users), and for the users to communicate among themselves. WolfPAC is a secure, web-based enterprise risk management solution used to automate the identification of risks, threats, and control gaps at companies of varying industries. The LinkedIn group discussion topics often regard recent and upcoming WolfPAC product releases, webinars, events, and relevant thought leadership pieces.

Twitter – The firm has a Wolf & Company account ([@bostoncpafirm](#)) that has grown to over 800 followers, in addition to a separate account for its WolfPAC division ([@wolfpacsolution](#)). Both Twitter accounts are used to share news, articles of interest, recently attained accolades and awards, and event updates. The goals are to build awareness for the Wolf & Company and WolfPAC brands and increase referral traffic to their respective websites. Additional goals are to be seen as thought leaders, to connect with people, and to help followers differentiate between the Wolf & Company and WolfPAC brands.

For both Twitter accounts, followers include financial institutions, banking associations, investment advisors, technology companies, and IT security firms among others. Twitter also helps the firm foster relationships with other companies. For example, it is used to help promote events at which the firm attends, sponsors, or speaks.

Google + – Wolf recently created a [Google+ profile](#). The profile was created to help increase SEO and stay competitive with other firms in the industry.

Insights from Wolf & Company:

- ➔ It is crucial to have an understanding of the importance of social media for your organization. What is the justification for social media efforts? What is the impact on your organization, i.e. the bottom line, SEO?
- ➔ The support of senior management is absolutely key. At Wolf & Company, senior management monitors the firm's social media activity and supports social media efforts, so they are very aware of how the firm is portrayed.
- ➔ Educate your professionals on the benefits of social media and how to use social media tools effectively. Wolf & Company provides a basic how-to document for new hires, which informs them how they can participate on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. In-depth training sessions are also conducted for groups, as well as individuals.

- ➔ Participation of employees is very important. Their support will help boost your social media reach and thus awareness of your organization and its efforts.
- ➔ A social media program requires an internal coordinator to drive efforts and analyze results on a consistent basis.
- ➔ Before joining a platform, research and evaluate it to make sure it's the right move for your organization. If it is, develop a strategy. Determine who will be responsible for driving the efforts, what kind of content will be posted, what tone is appropriate for your organization, etc.
- ➔ Post quality content regularly. To serve as a reminder, consider setting tasks in your email calendar or creating a production schedule.
- ➔ Make it easy for employees and website visitors to share your content by adding "Share" icons to your emails, blog posts, etc.
- ➔ Determine your performance indicators and consistently measure and analyze the results. This will help you understand which types of content resonate better with your target audiences. It will also help you see the impact that posting in a different tone or at a different time has and whether you should alter or continue your approach.



Industry: Law

Firm: Flaster/
Greenberg,
P.C.

Profile: Flaster/Greenberg (www.flastergreenberg.com) is a business law firm of 70 attorneys that provide comprehensive legal services from seven offices in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware. Clients include public and privately held companies, start-ups, family-owned businesses, governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and individuals. Contact: Molly O'Leary, Communications Manager, marketing@flastergreenberg.com.

What are they doing?

Flaster/Greenberg sponsors a podcast series for a quarterly forum presented by Rutgers University School of Business-Camden and the South Jersey Chamber of Commerce. The forum features business leaders speaking on

topics related to the regional economy. Flaster/Greenberg's sponsorship underwrites the production of the podcasts by [Lubetkin Communications LLC](#), as well as provides support for the in-person events. Additionally, the firm maintains active LinkedIn ([linkedin.com/company/flastergreenberg-p.c.](https://www.linkedin.com/company/flastergreenberg-p.c.)), Twitter ([@flaster](#)), and Facebook ([Facebook.com/Flastergreenberglaw](https://www.facebook.com/Flastergreenberglaw)) accounts and uses them to distribute news and information.

Why are they doing it?

1. Build relationships
2. Increase visibility among broad audiences
3. Drive website traffic

How are they using social media to network?

Podcasts – The podcast sponsorship enhances the firm's image while creating high-quality content for their website. Because the podcast is recorded at a live forum event, the firm and its attorneys gain additional visibility among the 200-300 business leaders who attend each of these quarterly forums. As an added benefit, the attorneys also gain access and visibility to the panelists, which are frequently CEOs. Sponsorship benefits and all marketing efforts are supported and enhanced via the firm's Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts, utilizing additional forms of social media to reach a variety of audiences in different ways.

Insights from Flaster/Greenberg:

- ➔ View social media as tools to enhance overall marketing strategy that includes conventional methods as well as new wave techniques.
- ➔ Explore and experiment. We don't know where social media is going to take us or which vehicle will work best for us. Keep an open mind.
- ➔ You can't do it all. Prioritize your online efforts as you do your face-to-face networking.



Industry:
Consulting

Firm:
Marketing
Mentor

Profile: Marketing Mentor (www.marketing-mentor.com) provides mentoring and coaching in marketing and business development to help consultants and small business owners learn the tools they need to market their services, get their ideal clients, and create the work/life balance they need. Contact: Ilise Benun, founder, ilise@marketing-mentor.com.

What are they doing?

Ilise Benun, founder of Marketing Mentor, uses LinkedIn—and to a lesser extent, the [company's Facebook page](#) and the company's Twitter profile—currently 21,000 strong—([@MMToolbox](#))— to be everywhere her clients are, to connect with her network, and to enhance her credibility.

Why are they doing it?

1. To distribute their content marketing, including [Quick Tips from Marketing Mentor](#)
2. To be visible in front of target prospects and participate in discussions they are having
3. To respond and satisfy referral requests
4. To collect information of use to her target market

How are they using social media to network?

LinkedIn – Benun promotes her LinkedIn presence by including the LinkedIn icon on her blog and frequently updating [her profile](#). She also moderates two LinkedIn groups populated by her target market: creative professionals and consultants. She initiates discussions in those groups and feeds her blog posts into the discussion stream as well. All of this interaction allows her to find out what questions they have, which in turn gives her ideas for articles to write, webinars to offer, and products to create for her online store.

She also has a robust referral network for companies who need creative resources (designers, writers, photographers, and more) but don't have time to vet them. She considers LinkedIn her Rolodex and searches her network for the perfect fit.

LinkedIn is also an excellent lead generator. Benun has secured several clients and speaking engagements through her high visibility on this business-oriented network.

Insights from Marketing Mentor:

- ➔ Keep your profile up to date. One of Benun’s clients updates their profile every time they add a new client. Because the client’s network receives an update when the profile is updated, it helps keep this firm top of mind.
- ➔ If you don’t have any recommendations, it’s OK to ask a colleague or client to provide one. Benun has 30-plus recommendations, most provided without asking, but she has also asked for and received them. One effective technique is when someone spontaneously offers a verbal testimonial, she asks them to post it on her LinkedIn profile, thereby capturing something that would otherwise disappear into thin air.
- ➔ Participate in relevant groups, ask questions, and answer questions. But be selective of groups you join—go where your prospects are and find the ones that are most active. If you don’t participate in a group, you aren’t adding value.
- ➔ Your title—that tiny one-liner underneath your name—is the most important element in your profile. Unless someone clicks on your full profile, your name and title are the only things visible on LinkedIn lists, such as the list of “People Also Viewed” and “People You May Know,” as well as when you accept someone’s invite to connect. So, your title had better do a good job of saying what you do.



Industry:
Marketing

Firm:
KoMarketing
Associates,
LLC

Profile: KoMarketing Associates (www.komarketingassociates.com) is a marketing firm that specializes in B2B search engine optimization, search engine advertising, social media marketing, content marketing, and website analysis. Contact: Derek Edmond, Managing Partner, derek@komarketingassociates.com, or Steven Wells, Managing Partner, steven@komarketingassociates.com.

What are they doing?

One of the biggest challenges in the B2B online marketing space is the ability to generate the content required to achieve success. Content development is a core component of all KoMarketing SEO, PPC, and social media marketing solutions for clients. Their team of content marketers collaborates with search and social teams to generate high-quality, valuable information. This includes blog posts, web page assets, and articles based on client keyword targets and market analysis, ultimately meant to establish a connection with the client's target audience. With established trust and relationships in place, KoMarketing's clients can demonstrate expertise while satisfying the interest of their readership base.

As a B2B online marketing firm, KoMarketing continues to be actively engaged in social networking. They incorporate a number of tools into its social networking, including blogging, social networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook, as well as social news and bookmarking. They're also exploring the integration of Google+ and the growing impact of Internet browsing behavior on the mobile device. At the same time, they're also sticking to tried-and-true marketing strategies such as forums and blogger outreach. There is a lot to do in a finite period of time.

Why are they doing it?

1. Build and distinguish their brand
2. Have a dialogue with customers, partners, and prospects
3. Generate links to improve website traffic
4. Reinforce and broaden the impact of owned and earned media

How are they using social media to network?

Twitter – Derek Edmond's and his colleagues' interactions on Twitter have created valuable networking opportunities, speaking engagements, and business leads. The company profile ([@komarketing](#)) helps broadcast the company message and provides an alternative way to subscribe to content from the blog and news feed. They also actively engage with industry influencers and those related to the organization directly and indirectly. Twitter's biggest benefits are the ability to have conversations with people, share information, and build professional relationships online.

Blog – KoMarketing’s blog (komarketingassociates.com/blog/) is the firm’s number one source of web traffic overall, generating most of their Google traffic and links. Says Edmond, “I know for a fact that if we didn’t have the blog, we wouldn’t have some of our biggest clients.” Because of the blog’s content, the firm’s website was ranked highly for the search term “B2B SEO”—the same keywords a client searched on Google to find KoMarketing’s website. The client went on to generate five figures in billings in just six months. Other prospects and clients have been found in similar fashion.

LinkedIn – Members of KoMarketing’s team actively use LinkedIn to maintain communication and relationships with partners, clients, and professionals in the firm’s direct and related industries. Activity is much more one-to-one, but invaluable for gaining new introductions, understanding organizational details, and finding news and information. Their LinkedIn company page is built to demonstrate the organization’s thought leadership in the B2B online marketing space, through regular status updates on blog posts, industry news, and third-party bylines and references. Each week they also try to select some of the best third-party articles to highlight.

Facebook – If LinkedIn demonstrates the organization’s professional expertise, the KoMarketing Facebook page is meant to demonstrate the personal side of the company. KoMarketing leverages their Facebook page to allow clients, prospects, and prospective employees to learn a little bit more about the talented people behind the organization. Why? Because it’s the hard work and dedication of the KoMarketing team that fuels the success of client online marketing programs.

Insights from KoMarketing Associates:

- ➔ Twitter and LinkedIn are two of the better social media tools for professional services providers. You can make real connections by just being yourself. Don’t forget [SlideShare](#) as well, which is an underrated way to distribute content and generate leads in the B2B space.

- ➔ If you don’t put effort into it, you won’t get anything back. So, Edmond encourages people to participate in the social media they enjoy, otherwise it’s much harder to make the commitment to participate.

- ➔ Explore by asking your customers and partners. If you are seriously considering newer platforms such as Google+ and Pinterest, ask your customers what they think about them through blogs, newsletters, and direct communication. If you add a platform, make sure to provide suitable visibility to it in site navigation, marketing collateral, and promotional efforts.

- ➔ Each platform presents an opportunity to offer unique perspective and ties to business objectives. While KoMarketing does distribute some of the same content across platforms, they also try to maintain a unique value proposition across platforms as well. For KoMarketing, LinkedIn is professional expertise, Facebook is about the team, Twitter is professional networking and thought leadership, and Google+ is for SEO.

- ➔ Choose your spots wisely. It's enough to keep up with a small set of social sites; don't take on too many.

2

The Social Networking Landscape

At the most basic level, a social networking site allows you to identify your contacts (or “connections” or “followers” or “friends,” depending on the service) and establish a link between you and each of your contacts. The two main ways social networking sites differentiate themselves are (1) what you can then do with those connections (sharing updates, socializing, asking questions, etc.) and (2) what the demographic of the sites are (in other words, which sites your contacts are likely to be members of as well).

Benefits of using social media for networking include:

- Connecting with colleagues, clients, and prospects
- Generating website traffic, enhance search engine optimization
- Getting prospects interacting with your brand
- Becoming known as a thought leader/creating a following

Social media works best when the connection is person to person. People like to communicate with people, not businesses. Given that, the people within your firm should have individual social media profiles. Those profiles will get more followers and interactions than a business profile.

That doesn't mean a business profile on Twitter or Facebook is bad. A business profile is a great supplement to your other social media activity, and people will look for it and interact with it if they need help or want to get in touch with someone at your company and they don't know who specifically to contact. Just don't rely on it as your sole social media presence. You will get more bang for your social media buck if your firm's partners, marketers, and salespeople have active social media profiles.

The social media tools we explore here can help you achieve the above goals to different extents. For a quick preview of the social media tools we cover, along with our assessment of the pros and cons of each, review the *Social Media at a Glance* table on the pages that follow.

Word of Caution: Your Followers Don't Belong to You

Unlike with your client, prospect, or email lists, you do not have full control of your follower lists on social networks.

The networks ultimately have the ability to control who of your followers see your posts (as we've seen recently with Facebook business pages and the network's new algorithm) as well as your access to the names and contact information of your followers. (If you think you can get the full list of followers to your Facebook page, thing again.)

Plus, if the network shuts down, access to followers on that network disappears with it.

Given that, one of your goals with social media should be to direct people back to your website or blog and get them to join your list there.

Sharing content on social media is a great way to spread the word about your expertise and how you can help businesses, as well as develop relationships with people. But if you want to sell to those people, you need to get them onto your company's list.

Social Media at a Glance

TOOL	PROS	CONS	RAINTODAY RECOMMENDATION
Blog (web log)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Strong relationship-building tool ➔ Free (or inexpensive) platforms available ➔ Two-way communication via comments ➔ Publish thought leadership ➔ Content (when SEO-optimized) can drive traffic to your firm's website and increase its search engine ranking ➔ When used with Twitter and/or Facebook, can see increased traffic & interaction with readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Requires time commitment to write posts ➔ Requires time to participate in the blogosphere (commenting on other blogs) ➔ Needs marketing support (linking, keyword optimization, etc.) to get the most benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Definitely consider
Twitter (public micro-blogging site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Easy to use ➔ Advertising options, including promoted tweets and promoted trends ➔ Strong relationship-building tool ➔ Excellent way to share blog posts and new content, driving up traffic ➔ Conversational ➔ Devote as much time as you want 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Can be a distraction or time-waster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Definitely consider

TOOL	PROS	CONS	RAINTODAY RECOMMENDATION
<p>LinkedIn (social networking site)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Targeted toward professionals → Free → Interactive features (Polls, Recommendations) can help build your network → Ability to create your own Group for discussions → Can create business page → Ability to post products and services on business page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Premium profiles have more features and capabilities. You have to pay to get those. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Definitely consider
<p>Facebook (social networking site)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Largest social networking site with more than 1 billion users → Free → Can create a business page → Supports multimedia (RSS feeds, photos, videos, discussion threads) → Low-cost advertising. Includes sponsored posts → Can create Groups to segregate professional “friends” and share only professional information with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Takes time to continually monitor and update Facebook business pages → Difficult to track how many people are converting to a sale → New algorithm for business pages limits reach and views of posts. Companies must “boost” or “sponsor” posts to ensure followers see posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Definitely consider

TOOL	PROS	CONS	RAINTODAY RECOMMENDATION
Google+ (social networking site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The Google connection gives posted content a boost in Google search results ➔ Small group of users makes it easier to find and connect with potential buyers ➔ Can create a business page ➔ Mobile app makes it easy to use regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ A lot of people stopped using it after the initial buzz died down ➔ Takes time to post and monitor activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Maybe, depending on your service/audience
Slide Sharing (websites such as SlideShare, SlideRocket, SlideBoom, authorStream)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Excellent way to get more mileage out of PowerPoint presentations and enhance your content marketing ➔ Easy to share SlideShare presentations on LinkedIn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Takes time to optimize and upload presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Definitely consider, especially if you give presentations
Podcasting (audio files posted online for subscription)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Relatively easy to produce ➔ Low cost ➔ Alternative for those who don't have time to read or want to multi-task (i.e., drive & listen) ➔ Number of podcast listeners expected to grow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Needs frequency & continuity to be effective ➔ Requires time commitment to develop content such as interviews ➔ Requires time commitment to line up interviewees, guests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Maybe, depending on your service/audience

How should professional services providers get involved in social networking?
 There are really two questions:

1. How should **I** get involved in social networking?
2. How should **my business** get involved in social networking?

The answers are very different depending on your business and the social networking service you are considering. We'll start by covering the most popular social media vehicle: blogs.

Blogs

Blogs are great relationship-building tools. They allow a company or an individual to communicate, and comments provide for two-way communication. A blog allows you to share your persona with an audience of clients and prospects—posts can demonstrate your thought leadership, provide value, and encourage a dialogue.

Corporate blogging is used by firms to communicate with internal or external audiences. An internal blog can be hosted on a firm's intranet to communicate about policies and projects with employees. An external blog is used to expand a firm's reach and build its brand by communicating with a readership that may include prospects and clients. On a corporate blog, employees or firm spokespeople share their views about topics related to the firm's area of expertise. It can be used effectively as a platform to publish thought leadership for firm leaders and associates.

Some corporate blogs feature posts from one person (for example, the CEO or managing partner) such as Bill Marriott, CEO of Marriott International (www.blogs.marriott.com), and Mark Toth, Chief Legal Officer of Manpower Group NA (manpowergroupblogs.us/employment_blawg/). While others include posts from many people within the firm, such as RainMaker Blog (www.raintoday.com/blog/), WhatCounts (www.whatcounts.com/blog/), HubSpot (blog.hubspot.com), and Batchbook (batchbook.com/blog/).

Blogging software such as [WordPress](#), [Moveable Type](#), [Typepad](#), and [Blogger](#) makes it easy for even a non-techie to publish his or her musings on a favorite topic. How does a service provider start a blog, how can it be useful, and is there really that much to say? The short answers are: it's easy, lots of ways, and yes!

How to Get Started

Read blogs: The first step in starting a blog is to begin reading other blogs. Use Google or [Technorati](#) to find a topic that relates to your business or interests, or find out if someone in your industry writes a blog and check in on a regular

basis—either by visiting the blog or subscribing to its RSS feed and having the posts delivered directly to your email.

Participate in the blogosphere: Commenting on someone’s blog post is a good way to establish connections with other bloggers, as well as gain exposure for your blog. So, if you have something to say, feel free to add your voice to the discussion. There’s a definite protocol around commenting, though, so before you leave your first comment, you might want to check out this post from the blog Bare Feet Studios: [How and When to Leave Blog Comments](#).

Even if you decide blogging is not for you or your firm, consider participating and networking in the blogosphere by joining the conversation on others’ blogs.

The trick is to keep it going: Blogging is definitely a commitment, and if you don’t update your blog on a regular basis, you risk not only losing readers, but appearing unprofessional. Do not get discouraged if traffic is slow or you receive few comments. It takes time for that to happen—often several months. Too often people give up right before the tide is about to change. If you stick with it, you will be ahead of your competitors who dropped out and very well could be the only one writing about a subject.

Publish helpful, useful content: There’s a ton of horrible content out there. And with prospects being more self-serve and researching issues and services before contacting a provider, you have to make sure your content is easy to find and is useful. Offer advice and tips to solve common problems prospects deal with. Stay away from sales-like posts that promote you, your service, and your company.

You want to drive readership: The more people you have reading your blog, the more people get to know you and your company. Blogs can be a great low-cost marketing tool. By providing content that is interesting and relevant, you get people not only coming back but also telling others to check it out. At the same time, your content—when optimized for search engines to include keywords and inbound and outbound links—can also drive traffic to your main website.

You cannot, however, post content and expect people to find it. You must use other vehicles to spread the word: share posts via your Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn updates; include posts in emails to clients; and add sharing

functionality to your blog, such as Retweet, Facebook Like, Google +1, and LinkedIn Share buttons.

There is a cost: Note that in the above paragraph we said a blog can be *low-cost*; we didn't say *no-cost*. The human resources required—not only to develop and launch a blog, but also to maintain an ongoing stream of high-quality content—comes at a cost, and depending on who within your firm is responsible for developing that content, the cost can be quite high.

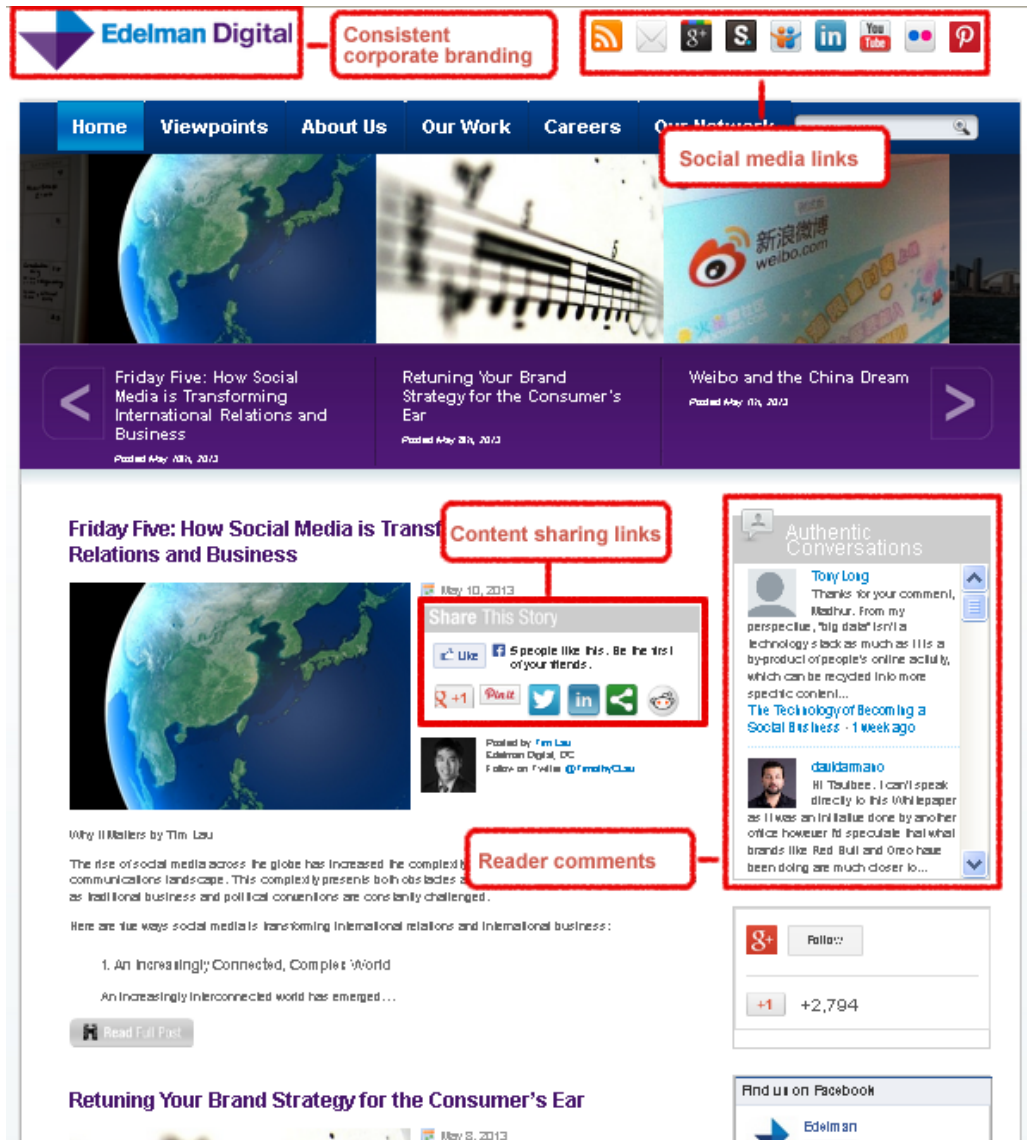
It's not too late, new blogs are published daily: The growth of blogs being published by law firms is a good case in point of how one group of professionals are beginning to embrace the use of social networking. According to LexBlog's State of AmLaw 200 Blogosphere report (2012), 78% of the AmLaw 200 law firms have blogs, with many having more than one blog.

Here are some steps you can take to use a blog effectively:

1. **Identify an owner.** Even if several people will post blog content, make sure one person on your staff “owns” the blog. This person will be responsible for making sure your editorial plan or calendar is implemented and any policies you've established are followed.
2. **Create an editorial plan.** This doesn't have to be overly detailed or specific, but it should indicate the mix of types of content you'll post (how-tos, trends, research, behind the scenes, etc.), length of posts (your average post length, briefs, longer thought pieces, etc.), frequency of posts (daily, three times a week, weekly), and who will write the posts.
3. **Host your own blog.** There are blogging services available that will host your blog for free (Blogger or WordPress.com are two), but we recommend a business host its own blog. Pay for a hosting service (inexpensive), and register for your own domain name or URL (again, inexpensive). WordPress.org (not WordPress.com) offers a free software download that you can upload to your web server. With a hosted blog, you gain control of your blog (you can move it if you want), and you determine the domain, i.e., batchbook.com/blog/ instead of www.myblog.bloghost.com.

4. **Brand your blog.** Make sure your blog carries branding elements that are consistent with your other marketing communications channels.
5. **Consider enabling comments.** Your blog offers an incredible opportunity to create a community with your readers (prospects, clients, partners, etc.). You can interact with readers and begin to develop online relationships with them. However, spammers have been known to take advantage of this feature and flood comment sections with bogus comments. If you decide to enable commenting, be sure to use a spam filter. If spammers figure out a way to get through, and you don't get many legitimate comments, you might want to disable commenting. Dealing with spam comments takes more time than the commenting feature is worth.
6. **Mix up the content and the length of your posts.** Sprinkle in some longer thought pieces (which will also take more time to compose) with your usual shorter pieces (200-400 words). Some posts can be lists; some can be how-tos. A series of posts on a topic for which you want to be known can attract return visitors, as well as improve search engine optimization.
7. **Include pictures, charts, or video.** Images enhance the appearance of posts and attract readers.
8. **Include a call to action (CTA) at the bottom of every blog post.** You want to direct the readers to something that benefits you. It could be to sign up for your enewsletter, download an ebook, or register for a webinar you are presenting. If you don't have a CTA, you lose the opportunity to continue interacting with the readers.
9. **Include social media share links.** You want as many people as possible to read your posts, so make it easy to share them. If you don't, no matter how good a post is, people will abandon it. With everyone so busy, the manual process of sharing a link is often too much for them.
10. **Add a blog roll.** This is a list of blogs you read and recommend. Adding a blog roll helps to define your community. In essence, with a blog roll you are saying these are the blogs with which you want your blog associated. Likewise, it says to other bloggers, "Hey, I'm recommending your blog to my readers," and it puts your blog on the radar of these other bloggers.

Blog Screenshot: Edelman Digital Blog Page



Above is an example of a multi-author blog published and hosted by Edelman Digital (www.edelmandigital.com). The annotated screenshot above demonstrates how one firm incorporates features such as text and video posts, commenting, content subject tags, social bookmarking, RSS feeds, and a Twitter feed.

What should you write about on a blog? Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Industry trends
- An association meeting or conference you attended
- A speech you delivered
- A white paper or article you published
- New research
- Current industry news/laws/regulation
- Book review
- A critique
- A client success story
- Best practices
- Answers to common buyer questions

A good way to learn is to look at what others are doing. Here are some professional services blogs to check out:

- ➔ Accenture (consulting): www.accenture.com/us-en/Pages/blogs.aspx—example of a firm with multiple, multi-author blogs.
- ➔ Edelman’s Authenticities (PR): <http://edelmandigital.com>—example of a multi-author blog, frequently updated, uses embedded video, blog roll, features social bookmarking icons, easy to subscribe via RSS, Flickr photo gallery.
- ➔ Foley Hoag (law): example of a firm that publishes several blogs, here are just three—
 - www.lawandenvironment.com
 - www.emergingenterprisecenterblog.com
 - www.massachusettsnoncompetelaw.com
- ➔ Forrester Research (market research): blogs.forrester.com—multiple blogs, including one by CEO and founder George F. Colony (blogs.forrester.com/colony/#), consistent branding and layout across all their blogs
- ➔ LexBlog (law), CEO Kevin O’Keefe’s blog points to many blogs in the legal blogosphere: kevin.lexblog.com

- PriceWaterhouseCoopers (accounting): pwc.blogs.com—multiple blogs, topical, as well as one for recruitment, PwCPeople (pwc.blogs.com/pwcpeople)

Additional Blogging Resources:

Attract Clients and Grow Your Business Using Blogs with Chris Garrett
Webinar by RainToday.com: www.raintoday.com/library/on-demand-events/attract-clients-and-grow-your-business-using-blogs/

Blogging for Business

Webinar by HubSpot: www.hubspot.com/marketing-webinars/b2b-business-blogging-archive

Are There Any Good Professional Services Firm Blogs Out There?

Blog post on RainMaker Blog by Mary Flaherty

www.raintoday.com/blog/are-there-any-good-professional-services-firm-blogs-out-there/

Dealing with Blogging Evolution: Foundational Necessities for Bloggers

Blog post on ProBlogger by Hendry Lee:

www.problogger.net/archives/2009/01/24/dealing-with-blogging-evolution-foundational-necessities-for-bloggers

40 Ways to Deliver Killer Blog Content

Blog post by Chris Brogan: www.chrisbrogan.com/40-ways-to-deliver-killer-blog-content

Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies

By Charlene Li, Josh Bernoff, Harvard Business Press, 2008.

The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use Social Media, Blogs, News Releases, Online Video, and Viral Marketing to Reach Buyers Directly, Fourth Edition

By David Meerman Scott, Wiley, 2013.



Twitter

The most popular micro-blogging platform, [Twitter](#) invites you to share “what’s happening.” Twitter, which limits all entries to 140 characters or fewer, has more than 255 million monthly active users. And those users post an average of 500 million updates, or “tweets,” a day.

The beauty of Twitter lies in its simplicity. Because of the 140-character maximum, individual Twitter posts can be sent and received in many ways: [twitter.com](#) website, third-party applications (both desktop-based and web-based), text messaging from a mobile device, instant messaging, RSS feeds, email, etc. Every Twitter account can be “followed” (or subscribed to) by other accounts. That means that as you post to Twitter, you will also receive updates from all of the people you follow. You control whom you follow, and you can also block people from receiving your updates.

You can pay as much or as little attention to the stream of tweets as you want. It’s been likened to a cocktail party—where you arrive when you want, leave when you’re ready, and talk to those you want to while you’re there. With Twitter, you step into and out of the flow of conversation as it suits you. Unlike email, you aren’t expected to respond to—or even, read—every message.

What you *could* post to a Twitter account:

- Answers to questions posted by other users
- Insights gained from conferences or other events you’ve attended
- Links to blog posts you’ve written
- Links to industry information
- Fun behind-the-scenes updates
- Results of research you’ve conducted
- Retweets (sharing with your network) of someone else’s post
- Information about events in which you’re participating
- Articles you publish
- 6-second videos using the [Vine app](#)

Why You Should Consider Using Twitter

As consultant and Twitter power user Laura Fitton (@Pistachio) says, you should care about Twitter “because networking is a fundamental key to business success.” She goes on to say:

“Tools like Twitter take the time, space, and attention constraints of face-to-face networking and turn them on their heads... We have always known that networking, connecting, mentoring, and collaborating better are extremely valuable for business. You miss out—massively—when you dismiss this stuff as new-fangled and faddish. Look beyond the surface to see what is universal and enduring. Give things a chance. Find the people in your organization who are drawn to it, and give them a little space and encouragement to discover and play.

“Fundamentally, the value of all social networking is not substantively different from the value of reading and writing articles, building business relationships, networking, old-fashioned networking, and surrounding yourself with successful people. I’d encourage smart business people. Don’t get hung up on the tools, and try to keep an open mind to results and success stories that just might be disparate from your own experiences.”

(Source: Laura Fitton interview with Shel Israel, Global Neighbourhoods, <http://redcouch.typepad.com/weblog/2008/04/twittering-her.html>)

How to Get Started

To set up a free Twitter account, go to twitter.com, create a username and password, and begin finding people to follow. Corporate Twitter accounts are also available, some of which are more broadcast-oriented than conversational. We suggest you go ahead and register for a Twitter account in your firm's name (before someone else does) that can be used to share service information, news announcements, etc. In addition, register for an account(s) in the name of a person—whether managing partner, associate, or marketing director (for example, MarySmith or MSmith)—because clients, prospective clients, partners, vendors, etc. want to have conversations with people, not firms.

As on LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social networking sites, your profile is the face you put forward to the public—make it professional. Take the time to brand your profile. Start with a compelling bio. You have only 160 characters, but those characters can pack a powerful punch. They should include your areas of expertise, your interests, what you're passionate about, your unique selling point, and keywords. Here are a few excellent examples:

[@garyvee](#). Family 1st! but after that, Businessman. Just a dude who Loves the Hustle, People & the [@NYjets](#). CEO of [@vaynermedia](#). Tasted wine for years [@winelibrary](#)

[@diannahuff](#). I help small family-run industrial manufacturing companies market, grow and succeed. Fresh insights + in-the-trenches wisdom. diannahuff.com

[@melcoach](#). America's Leading Small Biz Optimizer. Host of [#SpeakerChat](#) & weekly podcast tiny.cc/iTunesSBO. Luv Starbucks, good wine, exotic travel & spas

Take the time to customize your Twitter page. Select a Twitter name that fits your brand, put in your real name (not the default from Twitter or a nickname), list your websites and blogs, add a profile picture, add a "header" picture, and add a background design.

To simplify browsing of tweets from people you follow, create lists. For example, create lists for CEOs of financial services firms, marketing consultants, and sales trainers. Then you can read just the posts from people and businesses on those lists rather than trying to scroll through hundreds of tweets in your feed.

Another option is to turn on alerts for people or businesses you follow. When you do that, you will receive a text message whenever they post an update.

You should also consider using Twitter's Location feature. It allows you to selectively add location information to your tweets. You can use it when you travel to show your followers where you are so you can meet in person.

The [Twitip](#) site offers pointers on customizing your profile page, along with many other useful Twitter tips.

Example of Twitter Profile Page



Example of Twitter Newsfeed

See tweets tailored to you, Twitter activity of those you follow, who to follow recommendations, and find friends on Twitter

Michelle Davidson
@michedav
TWEETS 3,996 FOLLOWING 500 FOLLOWERS 597

Trends - Change

- #aeronow Promoted by AERO
- Trulia
- #ShawnToNumber1
- #qanda
- #SONA2014
- #goggethosegeckos
- Eid Mubarak
- #TheLeftovers
- Boston
- Yukos

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

- LOFT @LOFT Followed by Amanda Hansen ...
- Mktr2Mktr @Mktr2Mktr Followed by Chris Snell and ...
- Brandon Schaefer @90DayP... Followed by S. Anthony Iann...

Marketto @marketo · 25s
Happy Monday everyone! Here's some #motivation from writer Ray Bradbury.

LIFE IS "TRYING THINGS TO SEE IF THEY WORK."
— Ray Bradbury

The Associated Press @AP · 44s
Lawyers for Blackwater security guards accuse the government of suppressing trial evidence: apne.ws/WJxCoD

SELF Magazine @SELFmagazine · 1m
The INCREDIBLE @JessicaAlba is our August cover star! Steal her stay-positive, feel-great secrets NOW: on.self.com/1sKMEYh

The Boston Globe @BostonGlobe · 1m
The partially open box filled with human remains was found at Alexander Way and Walker Road in Duxbury. ow.ly/zErID

John Jantsch @ducttape · 1m
Selling Your Consulting Services: Who's The True Buyer? bit.ly/1qGYL8X

Here are some pointers to keep in mind when you're starting out:

1. **Follow** people who are in your field, and initially just watch and listen.
2. **Choose** to follow a few power users who have thousands of followers (see the list later in this section), but also follow users who have a smaller number of followers—to see how and what the average user posts. (You're invited to follow RainToday's [@MaryFlaherty](#), [@michedav](#), and [@Mike_Schultz](#). They post several times a week and mostly with information related to marketing and selling professional services or social media, with a few personal posts here and there.)

3. **Take a strategic approach to following people.** As we advise with face-to-face networking, calibrate *who* needs to be in your network. It won't be the same for everyone. Reach out and follow your target contacts.
4. **Like frequently follow like.** One way to find people to follow is to look at the followers of people you follow.
5. **Use a directory site** such as Twellow to find people to follow by category, i.e., accounting, law, PR, media, etc.
6. **Balance your posts** with links, helpful information, best practices, @replies (where you respond to what someone else has posted), answers to requests and questions, and personal “here’s what I’m doing” posts.

(Note: If you want your @reply to be seen by everyone, put text—even just one character—before their handle. For example, “. @raintoday – great podcast on client objections today!” If you don’t put text before the @ symbol, only people who follow you and that person will see the tweet.)

7. **Use direct messages, too.** If someone follows you back, you can send a direct message that only they will see.
8. **Stay away from sending automatic direct messages** when someone follows you. Twitter is a place for personal one-on-one interactions, not generic spam tweets.
9. **Use hashtags** to provide context to your tweets or to designate them as part of a conversation. You can also use hashtags in your marketing campaign to build a temporary community, create a buzz, or start a discussion around a particular topic.

For example, when RAIN Group released its report *What Sales Winners Do Differently*, all of its tweets related to the topic included [#saleswinners](#) in them, which allowed its marketing team to track conversations. Also, if a lot of people use a hashtag, it can become a “trending topic,” which is a topic so many people are tweeting about that it becomes a trend.

You should also search for hashtags your prospects might use. Their tweets could provide insight into challenges they're dealing with and problems they're trying to solve.

10. **Consider using a tool such as HootSuite or TweetDeck** to schedule tweets, monitor tweets and re-tweets of your content, and interact with people.
11. **Make sure you give.** Your group of followers will grow organically as people find you and find value in your posts.
12. **Consider Twitter ads.** Twitter Cards allow you to bring rich experiences and useful tools to users within an expanded Tweet. Recently Twitter expanded its Twitter Cards suite with the Lead Generation Card. The Lead Generation Card “makes it easy for users to express interest in what your brand offers. Users can easily and securely share their email address with a business without leaving Twitter or having to fill out a cumbersome form,” according to Twitter.

Remember: As in face-to-face networking, share, add value, and participate in the conversation. Don't spam your followers with requests to buy your service!

Here are some useful tools and applications that can help you manage and enhance your Twitter experience:

- ➔ **Search.twitter.com:** To find topics, firms, or people of interest.
- ➔ **Twellow (www.twellow.com/):** A directory of people on Twitter, Twellow helps you find people to follow in areas such as architecture, business services, finance, law, marketing, management, media, publishing, technology, etc.

- **TweetDeck** (www.tweetdeck.com): A desktop application that's useful if you have hundreds (or thousands) of followers. It lets you split up your messages by topic, group, search, or replies into separate columns. Then, these columns update automatically and you can more easily keep track of these Twitter threads.
- **HootSuite** (www.hootsuite.com): A browser-based application that allows you to manage several Twitter accounts, as well as your Facebook and LinkedIn accounts (business pages included). This is perfect if you have a company Twitter account and a personal account. You can post to the different accounts, schedule tweets in advance, send direct messages, and monitor who is talking about you.
- **SocialOomph (formerly TweetLater.com)** (www.socialoomph.com): Allows you to schedule your tweets in advance. It also has a tracking feature where you set up search terms (like your name, company name, etc.) to receive alerts when those terms are included in a tweet.
- **TwitPic** (www.twitpic.com/) Application to upload photos to Twitter.
- **Vine** (<https://vine.co/>) Use this application, available for iPhone, Android, and Windows phones, to tweet 6-second videos. Highlight brand advocates, display your work for a client, take people inside your office, tell your brand's story or history, or promote a contest.

Finally, here are some Twitter power users you should check out:

- [Twitter.com/chrisbrogan](https://twitter.com/chrisbrogan) – social media consultant
- [Twitter.com/guykawasaki](https://twitter.com/guykawasaki) – venture capitalist, author
- [Twitter.com/pistachio](https://twitter.com/pistachio) – social media consultant
- [Twitter.com/kevinokeefe](https://twitter.com/kevinokeefe) – CEO, lawyer
- [Twitter.com/problogger](https://twitter.com/problogger) – blogger
- [Twitter.com/jowyang](https://twitter.com/jowyang) – analyst, web strategist

Keep in mind, the above power users will post frequently and have thousands of people following them. Don't be frightened off by that. Most Twitter users are not power users, but the rest of us can learn a lot from them. These are respected folks on Twitter—they know the landscape and the etiquette and make good instructors.

Additional Twitter Resources:

Three Steps to Success with Twitter for Your Business

Webinar series by HubSpot: www.hubspot.com/marketing-webinars/twitter-marketing

How to Create a New Twitter Header in 3 Easy Steps

Blog post by Kelly Kingman: bigbrandssystem.com/create-twitter-header/

50 Ideas on Using Twitter for Business

Blog post by Chris Brogan: www.chrisbrogan.com/50-ideas-on-using-twitter-for-business

8 Easy Ways to Network on Twitter

Blog post by Cindy King:
www.socialmediaexaminer.com/8-easy-ways-to-network-on-twitter/

26 Twitter Tips for Enhancing Your Tweets

Blog post by Debbie Hemley:
www.socialmediaexaminer.com/26-twitter-tips-for-enhancing-your-tweets/

16 Ways Businesses Are Using Vine

Blog post by Kristi Hines:
www.socialmediaexaminer.com/twitter-vine-creative-uses-for-business/

Twitter Photo Tips: The Ultimate Guide for Social Media Marketing in 2014

Blog post by Laura Roeder: krsocialmedia.com/2014/05/twitter-photo-tips-for-social-marketers-2014/

Best Practices for Facebook Ads and Twitter Ads

Blog post by Kristina Cisnero: blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-ads-twitter-ads-best-practices/

Twitter Introduces Lead Generation 'Cards' to Collect Leads from Tweets

Blog post by Ginny Soskey:
blog.hubspot.com/twitter-introduces-lead-generation-cards-collect-leads



LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#), with over 300 million users in 200 countries and territories, is probably of most interest to B2B professional services providers. Not only does it have a high number of participants, but [Oktopost research](#) shows more B2B leads are generated via LinkedIn than other social media networks. The research found 80% of leads came from LinkedIn, 12.73% came from Twitter, 6.73% came from Facebook, and .21% came from Google+.

The service is very low maintenance (and free for the basic level service, which is sufficient for most users)—you establish your connections and update your profile (which essentially reads like a resume). Be sure to include links to your website, blog, and Twitter account (if you have one). Then you will receive updates when your “connections” (your contacts in LinkedIn) update their profiles.

As far as day-to-day maintenance, LinkedIn is very easy to keep up with. Initially, the primary business use of LinkedIn seemed to be as an online resume and a way to stay connected to people with whom you have existing relationships, such as past colleagues, fellow conference attendees, etc. Or, as Jason Alba, author of the book *I’m on LinkedIn, Now What?*, describes it, LinkedIn is “a place to find and be found.”

Several enhancements, including Sharing, Groups, and Recommendations, make LinkedIn much more interactive and more powerful as a networking tool.

Here’s a brief overview of LinkedIn’s more interactive features:

➔ **Share an Update:** Use this field to update your network about what you are working on, new projects, or newly published content. You may connect your Twitter account to your LinkedIn account so that your Twitter updates are reflected on your LinkedIn profile. People in your network can “Like” and comment on your updates, as well as share them.

A feature available for personal pages is the ability to tag people and companies in your updates, similar to Twitter and Facebook. Type a person’s name or a company name, and a list of connections and companies appears. When you tag someone, they will receive a notification.

- **Recommendations:** These allow you to provide an online reference for someone's work. You can ask someone to give you a recommendation. Note, however, that you do not have the ability to edit it.
- **Endorsements:** Simpler than recommendations, endorsements allow first-degree connections to recognize you for your skills with the click of a mouse. To make sure people endorse you for skills you have expertise in, list your skills on your profile. If someone endorses you for a skill you don't have or if you receive an endorsement from someone who doesn't know you well, you can hide that endorsement. Endorsements don't carry as much clout as a recommendation, but they do have an impact on how people consider you.
- **Publishing on LinkedIn:** LinkedIn has expanded its publishing platform to allow members to publish long-form posts about their expertise and experience. When you publish a long-form post on LinkedIn:
 - Your original content becomes part of your professional profile. It is displayed on the Posts section of your LinkedIn profile.
 - It is shared with your connections and followers.
 - Members not in your network can now follow you from your long-form post to receive updates when you publish next.
 - Your long-form post is searchable both on and off of LinkedIn.
- **Showcase Pages:** With Showcase Pages, you can create a dedicated page for each aspect of your business with its own message to share and audience to share with. Give LinkedIn members a chance to follow the aspects of your business they value most. Share focused content to build a relationship with your specific audiences
- **Groups:** With groups, you can follow and participate in discussions with a community of professionals who share a common interest. Anyone can create a group. You can search group members and be found by those searching within the group.
- **Travel:** Use the Triplt application to tell your network where you are traveling to encourage in-person meetings if people in your network are in the same location.

→ **Advertising:** LinkedIn has two options for advertising on the site: [LinkedIn Ads](#) and [Sponsored Updates](#). LinkedIn Ads start at \$10 per thousand impressions and allow targeting by company size, job function, industry, etc. Sponsored Updates extend the reach of your posts in the LinkedIn Newsfeed. With those, you can also target your ad. How much you pay depends on the budget you allot for the ad.

Here are some steps you can take to use LinkedIn effectively:

1. **Write a strong profile.** Your profile summary can include up to 2,000 characters. Here's how to take advantage of the space: include keywords your target audience might search for, add detail about where and how you contribute within your profession, include a professional headshot photo, include links to your website and/or blog (be sure to use the actual name and not just the URL), and include videos and/or photos.
2. **Optimize your profile for search discovery and ranking on LinkedIn.** Use appropriate keywords and keyword phrases in your heading and job titles. Add skills and expertise tags. Link the websites included in your profile with keyword anchor text.
3. **Add Skills and Expertise topics.** These are topics for which you can receive endorsements.
4. **Claim your custom URL.** LinkedIn will generate a URL to your profile page; you can edit that URL for example, from www.linkedin.com/pub/1/222/990000 to www.linkedin.com/in/jasonalba.
5. **Join a group.** Join a group (or groups) around a professional interest or alumni group and then participate in group discussions. [Go where your prospects are.](#)
6. **Create a company page.** With LinkedIn being the social media vehicle of choice among services professionals, it makes sense to create a page for your firm. Add information about your firm in general in the Overview section, and regularly post updates to the page.

7. **Personalize your invitations to add people to your network.** There's nothing worse than using the canned message LinkedIn provides. Take the time to write a personal note. The recipient will be more likely to respond if you do. You should also personally acknowledge and welcome new connections.
8. **Connect your contacts with others in your network.** If you want to build social influence with your connections and become more valuable to them, introduce them to one another. Strategically helping others can elevate your social status and help you become an influential, as well as trusted, person.
9. **Use the Search feature to find prospects and prospect companies.** With LinkedIn Advanced Search, you can search for people via title, location, and relevant keywords. To search for a company, select Search Companies from the Companies menu, enter the company you're looking for on the next page, and go.
10. **Monitor connections' job changes.** A job change is a trigger event that you can use to start a conversation with a prospect. Your connection might move to a different company, giving you the opportunity to sell to their new organization.

LinkedIn Profile Page (Premium)

Jill Konrath 1st • PREMIUM

Sales Speaker, author of AGILE SELLING, SNAP Selling & Selling to Big Companies

Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area | Professional Training & Coaching

Current **JILL KONRATH**

Previous Selling to Big Companies, Applied Strategies, CPT

Education University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

500+ connections

www.linkedin.com/in/jillkonrath

Contact Info

Posts

Published by Jill **12,825** followers

Xerox Was Forced to Hire Me
July 1, 2014

XEROX

Jill K. Konrath
Marketing Executive
Business Products Division
Xerox Corporation
2300 Mesa Drive
Bloomington, Minnesota 55420
612 954-0622

People Similar to Jill

Greg Riebe 3rd
President, P.S.R. Consulting, Inc.
Connect

Ads You May Be Interested In

Successful Womens Network
Apply Now to the National Association of Professional Women. Register Free

Social Media Journalism
Use Social Media & Engage w/ Audiences. Get a New Media Journalism Master's

Northeastern University
Earn an MBA online at accredited Northeastern. 8 Specializations. Get Info!


Background

Summary

I help salespeople, entrepreneurs and business professionals increase sales to the corporate market. I show them fresh sales strategies to get into new accounts, create opportunities out of thin air, speed up sales cycles & win bigger contracts.

Jill Konrath’s profile page demonstrates some of the features that make a profile effective: headshot photo, summary statement, current position, previous positions, education, and a claimed custom URL. To see her complete profile page, go to: www.linkedin.com/in/jillkonrath/.

LinkedIn Profile Page (Not Premium)



Adrian Davis 1st

Expert in strategic selling and account management
Toronto, Canada Area | Management Consulting

Current Adrian Davis, Whetstone Inc.

Previous Canadian Association of Professional Speakers - Toronto Chapter, Software & Information Industry Association, Canadian Association Of Professional Speakers - Toronto Chapter

Education University of Ottawa / Université d'Ottawa

500+
connections

Connected 2 years ago





★ Relationship 📄 Contact Info ?

Email	adavis@whetstoneinc.ca	Phone	647-977-9047 (Work)
		Address	161 Bay Street, Suite 2700 Toronto, ON, M5J 2S1

🐦 Twitter [AdrianDavisPS](#)
🌐 Website [Company Website](#)
📄 Blog [AdrianDavisPS](#)

[✎ Edit contact info](#)

People Similar to Adrian


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Summary

Adrian Davis is a professional speaker, author and strategic consultant. He's worked as a trusted advisor and management consultant with organizations such as ITW, KPMG, MTS Allstream and Dupont.


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RainToday.com "Instead of pushing products [or services], we're being a lot more useful. We're educating prospects in unique ways, we're launching interesting discussions, we're solving problems rather than just pushing product." – Robert Rosenthal



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Above is an example of a [company profile page for RainToday.com on LinkedIn](#). Companies with profile pages will also show up in your LinkedIn network. Only a current employee can create the page, using a company email account. Any employee who is a LinkedIn member and has a company email address can edit and post updates to the page.

Additional LinkedIn Resources:

I'm on LinkedIn, Now What?

Jason Alba's book blog: imonlinkedinnowwhat.com

Linked In or Linked Out: Learn How to Generate REAL Business Using LinkedIn
RainToday webinar delivered by Neal Schaffer:

www.raintoday.com/library/on-demand-events/linked-in-or-linked-out-learn-how-to-generate-real-business-using-linkedin/

How to Improve Your LinkedIn Profile

Blog post by Brenda Bernstein: www.socialmediaexaminer.com/linkedin-profile/

How Top Sellers Use LinkedIn to Get Clients

An Interview with Jill Konrath: www.raintoday.com/library/podcasts/how-top-sellers-use-linkedin-to-get-clientsan-interview-with-jill-konrath/

10 LinkedIn Tips for Building Your Business

Blog post by Jeff Korhan:

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/linkedin-tips-business-building/

How to Network Using LinkedIn Groups

Blog post by Stephanie Sammons

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-network-using-linkedin-groups/

8 Companies Totally Rocking their LinkedIn Company Pages

Blog post by Joe Lazauskas: blog.hubspot.com/marketing/companies-rocking-linkedin-company-pages

Why You Need to Strongly Consider LinkedIn's New Premium Profiles

Blog post by Shelly DeMotte Kramer:

www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140611124839-15935731-why-you-need-to-strongly-consider-linkedin-s-new-premium-profiles

LinkedIn Blog

blog.linkedin.com



Facebook

Facebook, currently with more than 1.32 billion users, has evolved since it originally began as a way for college students to get to know each other. Today it has become a combination of a personal and professional site.

Setting up a Facebook account for yourself and creating a [page for your business](#) is another way to enter the social networking space. Facebook accounts are also free, and there is plenty of help available on the Facebook site to help you get started.

Who sees your information and posts depends on the level of security you set. You can make your profile public, open to only Friends, or open to Friends and Friends of Friends. That same level of security applies to individual posts.

Companies or products can also have Facebook pages. These pages must be created by an existing Facebook user's account. Facebook users can declare they "Like" your company, and then your company updates and posts will show in their news feed.

Your company or product page can feature standard information (company overview, mission, etc.), links, events, RSS feeds, photos and videos, discussion threads, and countless other features (thanks to third-party applications). You can also send messages to the people who "Like" you through Facebook.

Along with frivolous personal applications, you'll find extremely useful ones on Facebook, such as photo and video hosting and sharing, RSS widgets (so you can share your blog feed on your profile), and business applications.

To ensure people who Like your page see your posts, encourage people to turn on the Notifications feature for your page. They do that by visiting your page, hovering their mouse over Liked, and selecting Get Notifications.

Also, the more a person interacts with your page (Likes posts, comments on posts, or shares posts), the more likely they are to see your posts in their news feed. So, post items that encourage interaction, such as photos, and fill-in-the-blank questions, in addition to posts linking to your blog, ebook, new service, etc. (Fill-in-the-blank questions can be fun, such as "When spring finally comes, I'm most looking forward to _____." Or they can be used to take the pulse of your buyers: "The marketing tactic I most want to learn about is _____.")

Because of a new Facebook algorithm, the reach of posts is becoming less and less. If people don't immediately interact with a post, the post becomes hidden. An option to ensure your followers see your posts is to "boost" or "sponsor" them. These are essentially ads, and for as little as \$5, you can pay to increase the reach and views of a post.

You can also buy ads targeted at increasing the number of Likes on your page.

Facebook Hashtags

Facebook introduced hashtags to help users better see what's happening and what people are talking about. Similar to Twitter, you can add hashtags to your posts, which become clickable. When you click on a hashtag, you'll see a list of what people and pages in your network are saying about that topic. You can also search for hashtags in the search bar to find posts about topics.

Facebook Graph Search

With Facebook's Graph Search, Facebook search results are based on people's connections to a place or a page.

Some typical searches:

- Books my friends have read
- Accountants my friends have used
- Lawyers my friends have hired

Graph Search acts like a recommendation engine, with friends' Likes being endorsements for a business, product, or service. "To get found in Facebook's Graph Search, you need to get more people to Like your page or check in at your location so that people *they're* connected to get exposed to your page," according to [AWeber](#).

You can also use Facebook Graph Search to learn more about your fans, find colleagues to connect with, find Friends who Like your page, network within Facebook groups based on shared interests, find your fans' interests, compare fan bases to identify new prospect markets, and identify your competitors.

To help ensure your business or service shows in Facebook search results:

- **Make sure your Facebook profile is complete.** Fill in all the fields on your About page, making sure you have the right category selected and include your company's physical location even if you have an online business.
- **Tag your photos.** "Photos of people and places are searchable in Graph Search. Tag all the photos you post with your page's name and location. If you take photos during events, invite guests to tag themselves in your photos. The more connections you build between people, the more findable your page will be," AWeber says.
- **Promote your page on Facebook.** Facebook has several tools you can use to promote your page and posts at low or no cost. Use them to encourage people to Like your page. You should also post items that encourage people to "check in" to your establishment.
- **Promote your page off Facebook.** Make it easy for new people to Like your page. Include links to it on your website, blog, enewsletter, and email signature. And be sure to include a Facebook share option on your content (articles, blog posts, landing pages, etc.).

Here are some steps you can take to use Facebook effectively:

1. **Assign responsibility for your company page.** Once you've set up a company page, don't forget it. Identify who will have responsibility for keeping the page refreshed with new content.
2. **Keep it fresh.** Update photos and news so your fans will see a steady flow of information about your firm and content you produce (blog posts, reports, white papers, etc.). Note: Facebook posts should *not* be as frequent as Twitter posts. Post two or three items a day maximum or run the risk of losing Likes.
3. **Use the Schedule feature to schedule posts in advance.** Doing so will help you plan a few days' worth of items and make the process easier. You can easily change the time of your scheduled posts if needed.

4. **Cross-promote your Facebook page on your website.** Include the Facebook share link on your website, and encourage site visitors to “Like” your Facebook page. Likewise, don’t forget to include the URL for your website and blog on your Facebook page.
5. **Create events.** Use the events feature to share information about firm events such as an open house, seminar, or other function. When fans of your page RSVP, their friends will also see the update—thus creating more exposure for your firm.
6. **Create groups.** If you have Friends who are clients or work acquaintances, create a group so that you can network with them exclusively instead of sharing business-related information with your entire list of Friends. Group members are notified via alerts on Facebook and email when information is added to the group page. Once you create a group, a Facebook algorithm will help you populate the group, offering you suggestions, and suggest other groups for you to join.
7. **Create member-only content.** You can create content for only those people who “Like” your page, such as a coupon for discounted attendance to an event conducted by you or to a report your firm produced.
8. **Reply and respond to fan posts.** People like to have their actions acknowledged, so make sure you respond to posts on your page. Plus, the interaction could lead to a bigger conversation about your services.

Facebook has created a Reply feature that allows page administrators to reply directly to a person’s comment. This can be good if you have a lot of people commenting on a post and you want to reply to a person directly instead of it getting lost in the mix of posts. Right now, the Reply feature is optional; you have to manually turn it on.

Along with the Reply feature, Facebook has released active-thread listing, which means the most active threads (comments with likes and replies) appear higher in the posts.

9. **Reward active Facebook fans.** Showcase such fans via a Fan of the Week feature. Interview the person, post the interview on the page, and encourage dialogue around that person.

10. **Consider placing an ad.** The inexpensive Facebook Social Ads can be targeted by demographics, as well as profile keyword. You could use an ad to further promote a seminar or other event.

Some Words of Warning:

Posting Content: An important point to keep in mind with any social media site is content on the Internet lives forever. Be mindful of what you post on these sites, as it could have consequences on your professional life.

A good general rule of thumb is if you wouldn't put a picture in a frame on your desk at work, then don't put it up on a social networking site. If you wouldn't want your writing posted on a public bulletin board, don't post in on a social networking site.

Responding to Unhappy Customers: These days everyone is a reviewer, and increasingly people turn to review sites such as Yelp, Google Places, and Angie's List to post their opinions about companies, services, and products. They will also share their opinions on your social media pages. These reviews and posts won't always be good.

If you discover a negative review, someone posts a negative comment on your page, or someone creates a "Boycott ____" or "I Hate ____" Facebook page, the most important thing to do is **keep calm**. The best course of action is to reply respectfully and professionally and take the conversation out of public view to try and rectify the problem. Do not attack the person and have an [online meltdown like the owners of Amy's Baking Company Bakery Boutique & Bistro](#).

In most cases, the person simply wants their opinions acknowledged. If you can fix the problem, that's even better. If you handle the situation well, you could end up with loyal customers who sing your praises.

And sometimes the issue, particularly if the claim is false, will not have enough momentum and will simply die. That has happened with many "I Hate ____" Facebook pages.

For more information about how to handle negative reviews and posts, read [Attack of the Customers](#) by Paul Gillin and Greg Gianforte.

Facebook Business Page for Mari Smith

facebook 101
Back to Basics

with Mari Smith
Social Media Thought Leader
Top Facebook Marketing Expert

Mari Smith ✓
Business Person

Like Follow Share

Timeline About FREE Webinar! Facebook Class! More ▾

PEOPLE >

135,796 likes

Jennette Mullaney and Kevin Knebl like this.

Invite your friends to like this Page

ABOUT >

Forbes Top Social Media Power Influencer & Facebook Marketing Expert www.marismith.com
www.twitter.com/marismith Instagram: @marl_smith

<http://marismith.com/>

Suggest Edits

POSTS TO PAGE >

Ash Collins
Today at 5:00am

Post Photo / Video

Write something on this Page...

Mari Smith shared a link
July 25

NEW Facebook course just launched today! If you are a small business owner, entrepreneur, independent professional or marketing manager and you struggle to keep up with the constant changes on Facebook, and/or you want to see measurable res... See More

KoMarketing Associates' Timeline Image



Graphic D-Signs' Timeline Image



“What Should I Spend My Money On?” Facebook Group

The screenshot shows a Facebook group page with a green header. The header contains a large white dollar sign icon and the text "WHAT SHOULD I SPEND MY MONEY ON?". Below the header, there are four bullet points: "Be respectful at all times.", "Don't start a thread with a link to your own stuff.", "Report spam and lack of tact to group admins Chris Smith and Julie Aupied.", and "Complete Group Guidelines are located in the Files tab." Below the header, there are navigation tabs for "What Should I Spend My Money On?", "Members", "Photos", and "Files". To the right of the tabs are buttons for "Join Group", "+ Create Group", a settings gear icon, and a search icon. The main content area shows a post by Carol Farrish, 4 hours old, asking for ideas for a good system to generate seller leads. Below her post, there are two comments: one by E Rick Feldman and one by Bob Stewart. To the right of the main content area, there is an "ABOUT" section with 8,260 members, an "Open Group" status, and a description: "We get asked by Realtors all the time what/who/when/why and how should I spend my marketing and ... See More". Below the "ABOUT" section, there is a "SUGGESTED GROUPS" section with three groups: "Widows / Widowers Without Kids" (Nina Regan joined), "There You Go Again" (195 members), and "Birds and Nature" (148 members).

Above is an example a group page on Facebook. This popular group, with more than 8,000 fans and active ongoing discussions, demonstrates how a group of companies can engage with one another to discuss issues such as marketing and purchases with one another.

Profession-Specific Networking Sites: Certain industries and professions have social networking sites that are specific to their profession and/or invitation only, such as [Legal OnRamp](#).

If you want to network within your profession, or your target audience includes other members of your profession, then by all means explore these venues, as well.

Additional Facebook Resources:

Facebook for business:

www.facebook.com/about/pages

All Facebook Image Dimensions: Timeline, Posts, Ads [Infographic]

<http://www.jonloomer.com/2014/01/20/facebook-image-dimensions/>

How to Set Up a Facebook Page for Business

Blog post by Andrea Vahl

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-set-up-a-facebook-page-for-business/

6 Tips to Improve Your Facebook Page

Blog post by Scott Ayres

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/elements-facebook-page/

17 Ways Marketers Can Leverage Facebook Graph Search

Blog post by Christian Karasiewicz

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/facebook-graph-search-marketing/

Best Practices for Facebook Ads and Twitter Ads

Blog post by Kristina Cisnero

blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-ads-twitter-ads-best-practices/

How to Use Promoted Posts on Facebook to Boost Engagement

Blog post by Stephanie Chandler

linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140402163451-6003431-how-to-use-promoted-posts-on-facebook-to-boost-engagement



Google+

Google+ launched with a bang in June 2011. Its initial invite-only membership generated a huge buzz, and everyone wanted in. Membership, initially only individual memberships, climbed so fast that industry experts thought it would take the spot as the top social network. In December 2011 Google+ was reportedly gaining 625,000 new members a day, putting it on track to have 400 million members by the end of 2012.

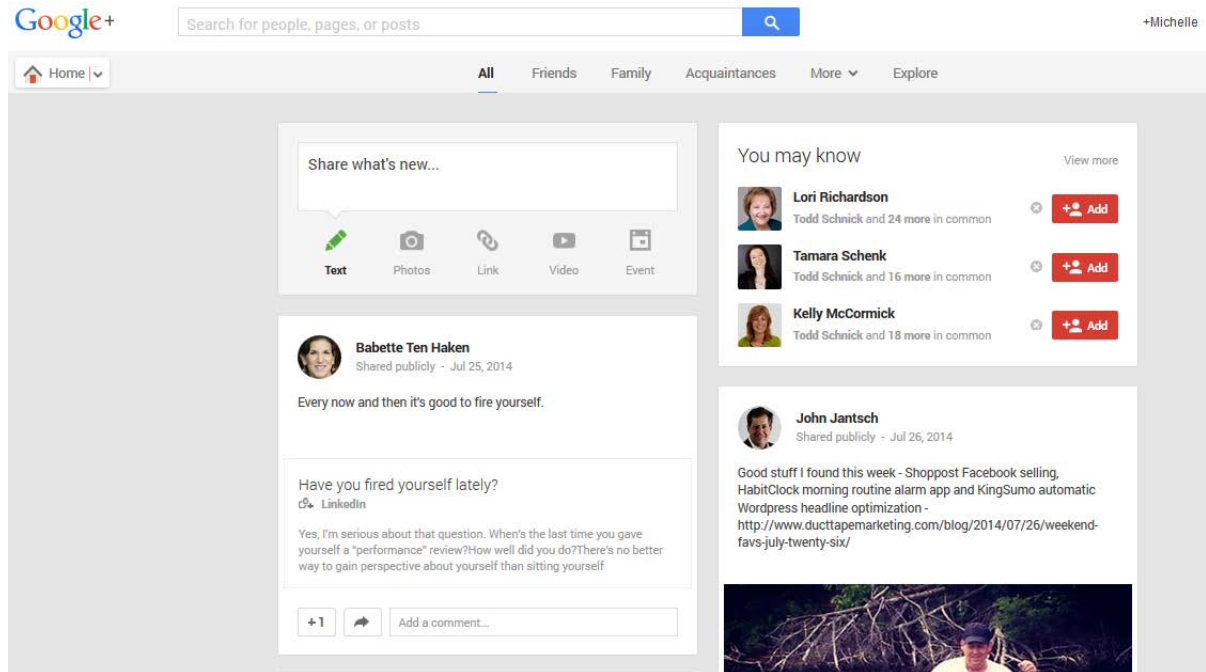
Things slowed down for the social media network during 2012, but in 2013 things turned around for the network and it now has more than 400 million active users. The increase is due partly because of Google's effort to connect all of its services—search, YouTube, maps, and other products.

For many, Google+ is too much like Facebook, where millions of people have active communities. Participating in a second network that is essentially the same isn't worth their time.

For businesses, however, Google+ remains a viable option because it can help a company's ranking in Google search results. Because the network is so connected with Google, which remains the dominant search engine, companies say they want—need—to have a presence there.

Having Google +1 recommendations can also influence a visitor. If several people "+1" a piece of content, others will be more likely to read it and +1 it themselves. Additionally, Google says "+1s from friends and contacts can be a useful signal to Google when determining the relevance of your page to a user's query. This is just one of many signals Google may use to determine a page's relevance and ranking, and we're constantly tweaking and improving our algorithm to improve overall search quality."

Example of Google+ Home Page



Example of Google+ About Page



Story

Tagline
Co-author The Trusted Advisor, author Trust-based Selling. Speaker, consultant on trusted relationships in business.

Introduction
Trust in business is my business. I founded my company [Trusted Advisor Associates](#) back in 1997.

I've written three books:

- [The Trusted Advisor](#) (co-authored; 2001)
- [Trust-based Selling](#) (2005)
- [The Trusted Advisor Fieldbook](#) (co-authored, 2011)

Read [more about me personally here](#).

Read a [cool infographic](#) on what kinds of people are most trustworthy.

I was a philosophy major, ex-NYC cab driver, 20-year strategy consultant, I've been fascinated by trust and trusted relationships in business for a couple of decades now. I think I've finally learned a few things.

Bragging rights
Ran (one) marathon. Good guitar player. Poor pedal steel guitar player. Two great kids.

Education

Harvard Business School
1974 - 1976

Columbia University
Philosophy, 1968 - 1972

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Here are some ways businesses can best use Google+:

1. **Take advantage of Google+ widgets.** Add the +1 feature to all pieces of content to encourage visitors to share your content. You can also add a third-party widget, such as the one from widgetsplus.com, to display your latest Google+ posts and +1s on your website and link to your Google+ profile or page.
2. **Include links to your website, blog, Twitter profile, and other social media profiles on your Google+ profile page.**
3. **Use Circles to target content and posts.** Create circles of prospects, current clients, and past clients, and tailor your posts to those individuals.
4. **Share others' posts.** Like when you re-tweet a post or even send a link via email to a prospect, when you share something on Google+ you are offering a helpful resource and giving others an insight into your thoughts, ideas, and experiences. You are giving people an opportunity to get to know you and like you.
5. **Interact directly with clients and prospects.** Once someone adds your brand, company, or service to their profile, you can interact directly with them. You can +1 or share their content, tag them in posts, and send them direct messages. All of those are important if you use social media to support customer service.
6. **Create or join a community.** You could join a group of people in the same industry to share tips and advice. For example, there's a community called [Consultant Exchange](#) in which members ask questions, offer advice, and share resources. You could also create a community for your clients, or you could join a community in which your prospective buyers participate.
7. **Use Hangouts to reach people via video.** You can invite people already in your sales pipeline to hang out and learn more about you. The key is not to give them a high-pressure sales speech. You want to instead further the relationship.

Other ideas for how to use Hangouts:

- Hold “fireside chats” featuring the CEO. Set up a quarterly time for people to hear from your CEO and ask questions.
- Conduct live expert interviews
- Hold peer-to-peer roundtable discussions
- Hold a virtual focus group

Additionally, you can use Hangouts On Air to broadcast your videos to an unlimited audience via YouTube and Google+ Stream.

8. **Create a Google+ business page for your firm.** Use it to share white papers, articles, blog posts, and case studies you publish.
9. **Monitor and measure Google+ activity and trending topics.** Use [Google+ Social Statistics](#) to see the top 100 people on Google+, the top pages, and the top posts. Posts can be sorted by the most +1s, comments, or shares.
10. **Consider Google+ Post Ads to amplify your content.** With these ads, you pay to promote your content as an ad on relevant third-party websites.

Additional Google+ Resources:

Get started with Google+ for Business

www.google.com/+business/

Essential Google+ Marketing Resource: A Complete Guide

Blog post by Lisa D. Jenkins

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/google-plus-marketing-resources/

How to Build the Perfect Google Plus Profile

Blog post by Gerry Moran

www.business2community.com/google-plus/how-to-build-the-perfect-google-plus-profile-infographic-0451545

Unlock the Power of Google+: 13 Ways to Gain Engagement, Optimize Posts, and Create a Community

Blog post by Kevin Lee

www.socialmediatoday.com/content/unlock-power-google-13-ways-gain-engagement-optimize-posts-and-create-community

How to Use Google+ for Business

Ebook from HubSpot

www.hubspot.com/how-to-use-google-plus-for-business

How to Use Google+ Hangouts for Your Business

Blog post by Phyllis Khare

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-use-google-hangouts-for-your-business/

Google Plus Best Practices for Brands

Blog post by Sam Millbrath

blog.hootsuite.com/google-best-practices-brands/

A Word of Caution: When Tragedy Happens

Be sensitive if a tragedy or a major news event happens. Your followers will not want to hear about your latest blog post or video during that time, plus those types of posts will get lost in the flood of posts about the event.

Should a tragic news event happen, hold all content marketing posts and stop all scheduled or automated posts until things calm down. You might consider posting a sentiment of concern about the event, but that should be all that you post.

Slide Sharing



SlideShare

If YouTube is the home for video, then [SlideShare](#) is the home for PowerPoint presentations. Launched in 2006 as a way for companies to share slides among employees easily, the network has since become a platform for global sharing of presentations, documents, PDFs, and webinars.

The network has about 16 million registered users, and it gets about 60 million unique visitors a month. To date, users have uploaded more than 10 million presentations.

Content marketing evangelist Joe Pulizzi says SlideShare is a tool companies should consider as part of its content marketing strategy, but few do.

For example, if you write a blog post or an article, you could take the elements of that story and put it into a 15- to 20-slide presentation that is visually pleasing and includes powerful how-to points. Then put the presentation on SlideShare, and embed that link into your blog or article.

“Then you benefit from the audience that’s looking for things around that topic on SlideShare, and you’re also satisfying your audience on your site,” Pulizzi says.

Other content you can turn into presentations:

- Press releases
- Ebooks
- Research reports
- How-to guides

What makes SlideShare even more powerful is how well it integrates with LinkedIn, perhaps the most popular social network for B2B service professionals. The LinkedIn share button is available on everything uploaded to SlideShare, SlideShare content that is actively shared on LinkedIn can be found on the [SlideShare.net Today page](#), and when a connection shares SlideShare content in the LinkedIn Update Stream, people can immediately view and engage with that content by clicking on a link or thumbnail.

Example of a SlideShare Profile Page



You can also connect your SlideShare account with your Facebook account. With SlideShare's Facebook app you can do the following:

- Upload your presentations and documents to SlideShare
- Share them instantly with your friends by publishing to your home page
- Comment on or "favorite" presentations by your friends
- Add a SlideShare box to your Facebook profile to display your presentations

In addition, SlideShare presentations can be viewed on news aggregator [Pulse](#). All of the top and featured presentations on the SlideShare home page can be viewed in Pulse, on your mobile device, and via the web.

SlideShare isn't the only player. Other slide-sharing sites include [SlideRocket](#), [SlideBoom](#), and [authorStream](#).

When creating a marketing presentation for a slide-sharing site, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Use a lot of visual metaphors. Keep text to a minimum.
- Keep presentations short.
- Include a call to action.
- Make descriptions keyword-rich.

Additional Slide-Sharing Resources:

Getting Started With SlideShare

Article by Billy Cripe

<http://bloomthink.com/2012/02/23/getting-started-with-slideshare/>

Top 5 SlideShare Marketing Tips

Blog post by Kristina Allen

www.convinceandconvert.com/bloggng-and-content-creation/top-5-slideshare-marketing-tips/

The Top 10 PowerPoint slides from Slideshare

Article by Olivia Mitchell

www.speakingaboutpresenting.com/design/top-10-powerpoint-slides-slideshare/

SlideShare Best Practices: How to Turn Written Content into a Winning Deck

Blog post by Dave Paradi

www.copyblogger.com/slideshare-best-practices/

7 Ways to Use SlideShare for Your Business

Blog post by David Waring

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/slideshare-for-your-business/



Podcasting

In essence, a podcast is a short radio show on the Internet. A podcast is simply an audio file that is posted to a website that you can listen to on your computer or wireless device, and it can be subscribed to using an RSS (really simple syndication) feed. The term “podcast” is a combination of “iPod” and “broadcast,” since originally podcasts were developed to play on portable music devices such as Apple’s iPod (though any other portable MP3 player would do the trick), and they’re meant to be broadcasts much like radio shows.

People who create podcasts are called podcasters. Generally, podcasters stick to a particular theme or subject in their shows, such as technology, politics, or religion. RainToday has a weekly podcast series called [Marketing & Selling Professional Services](#). [Todd Schnick](#), a marketing, sales, and business strategist, regularly interviews sales and marketing experts, as well as notables in the industries he serves. And [John Jantsch of Duct Tape Marketing](#) conducts weekly interviews with small business experts. (Additional examples of business podcasts appear at the end of this section.)

While podcasting hasn’t nearly reached the numbers that blogging has, it is definitely growing in popularity. According to Edison Research, podcasting is at its highest peak ever and growing significantly because of the ease with which people can consume information on demand on their smart phone. Further, a May 2013 Pew Research Center survey found 27% of internet users ages 18 and older download or listen to podcasts, up from 21% in May 2010.

Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute, says podcasting is poised to takeoff thanks to Apple Computer’s plan to integrate CarPlay into new cars, which turns a vehicle’s in-car entertainment system into an iOS-powered dashboard, as well as people’s desire to multitask—listen to something while they drive, walk their dog, mow their lawn, etc.

You can have your podcasts professionally produced or do them yourself. The basics needed to create a podcast are simple: a computer, Internet connection, and microphone.

Trafalgar Communications has produced a helpful series of [podcasts about podcasting](#).

Here are some other examples of professional services podcasts for you to check out:

- Accenture (consulting):
www.accenture.com/us-en/podcasts/Pages/index.aspx

- Deloitte (audit/consulting/risk mgmt/tax)
www.deloitte.com/view/en_US/us/Insights/Browse-by-Content-Type/podcasts/index.htm

- The Arketi B2B Marketing Minute (B2B marketing)
www.arketi.com/minute/

- LegalTalkNetwork (legal services industry):
legaltalknetwork.com/podcasts/lawyer-2-lawyer/

- Marketing & Communication Strategies, Inc. (advertising/marketing):
www.mcshome.com/podcasts.html

Additional Podcasting Resources:

6 Podcasting Tips from the Pros

Blog post by Cindy King

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/6-podcasting-tips-from-the-pros/

Podcasting for Business: Top Podcasters Share Success Tips

Blog post by Michael Stelzner

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/podcasting-for-business-top-podcasters-share-success-tips/

3 Unique Ways to Get Started with Business Podcasting

Blog post by John Lee Dumas

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/business-podcasting-methods/

Conclusion

Networking is all about relationship-building, whether it's social (online) or face to face. Don't get hung up on the tools—explore them and select the tools that will enhance your networking strategy. Maybe you'll use several tools, maybe just one or two. Maybe some on your staff will naturally gravitate to Twitter, while others will prefer LinkedIn or writing for the firm's blog.

There are many ways professional services providers can use social media—from establishing your brand, connecting with clients, and sharing information about your services, to building and extending your network and finding like-minded colleagues, new clients, and even mentors. Social media is part of the savvy professional's world, and it is not going away.

Additional Resources

- Social Networking
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)
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RAIN Group is a sales training, sales assessment, and sales performance improvement company that helps leading organizations improve sales results. RAIN Group has helped tens of thousands of people increase their sales and margins, and achieve the highest career success by helping them develop more leads and convert them into new customers with the RAIN SellingSM methodology. If your company is ready for in-depth, personalized sales training that will take you to the next level, visit www.rainsalestraining.com to learn more.

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RAIN Group is a sales training, assessment, and performance improvement company that helps leading organizations improve sales results. Founded in 2002, the firm has grown over the last decade into a recognized leader in sales improvement with an international client base.

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