

HOW SOCIAL ARE YOU?

Social media has taken the marketing and advertising worlds by storm in the last decade and appears to be here to stay. I hope by now your business is in the social mainstream because I can assure you many of your customers are, as is your competition. Social media can be a blessing or a curse; ask a few celebrities who have tweeted things they wish they could now take back. If you are unsure what social media is though, think of it as word of mouth advertising via digital devices. If you work with social media and your customers, it can help you generate new clients and more business than ever before.

Reading one post online will not make you a social media guru; if it did there would be far fewer failed social media campaigns than there have been in the recent years. As new as social media is to you and your business, it isn't that new to your clients. Your clients expect a certain level of behavior and interaction from you, if for no other reason than that is what they are programmed to want.

The key to social media is to give your clients what they want "socially" while at the same time rising above the noise of your competition. The first step to a good social media plan is making sure your business is where your clients are digitally. I'm sure many of you have a Facebook account by now, if not why have you delayed? Facebook is a free tool for advertising and highlighting your business and should be included in your day just like that morning cup of coffee. If you do have a Facebook account, are your customers aware of it? If not, we need to get them aware of it and quickly. In the coming weeks we will further explore Facebook and some tips on how to get it to work for you.

The second leading social media tool out there is Twitter. Yes, that little "blue-t" is everywhere, and so are the people on it. Twitter is of course free as well and even easier to use than Facebook. If you text you can tweet. If you need to learn how to text, well see if one of your employees or children can help with that. Twitter is one of the best ways to get timely information out to the masses without spending a dime. That's right, you can be sitting at home, sitting in traffic (please make sure the car is not moving), or in a boat on the water and you can just tweet your heart out. The key to twitter is tweeting the right things at the right time; we'll cover this in an upcoming article as well.

I hope I didn't scare you, or make you feel too sure of yourself because you are already using these tools. Social media is like any other tool in your advertising or marketing arsenal; use it right and it will pay off like a rigged slot machine, use it wrong and you might as well start boarding up the windows.