



## W3 Consulting's **Top 10 Tips for Social Media Success**

Welcome to the world of content marketing! In the recommendations below, we present sure-fire ways for you to increase your Web Presence for your Small Business through Social Media. Please use this information as an opportunity to introspect and make true, positive change in your business; to move away from *management by luck* and toward *management by design*. W3 Consulting is excited and honored to be given the opportunity to help you on your way to growth and success through your Social Media success!

### 1. **Start a blog.**

Don't think too much about the technology that runs the Social Web (sometimes called Web 2.0, and most often called Social Media and/or Social Networking) engine. There are many sites that do the technical work for you (see the links below) and leave you to just think about the generation of *great content*. Your duty as a small business blogger is to write great content, which means that you need to enlist the tools you learned in high school English class: define and know your audience, outline your blog entries (summary/statement of purpose, introduction, body and summary), and proofread for spelling, style (casual, active voice is best), mood (i.e., tense) consistency, and other grammatical issues. Also, note that blogging for business marketing purposes should give information/resources, should be clear and succinct (300-600 words) and call your target audience to action (what do you want them to do?). If you could speak directly to your customers and potential buyers of your product/service **every** day, week or month, what would you say? Finally, create an editorial calendar. The publishing industry (books, magazines, newspapers, websites and other periodicals) all have editorial calendars (sometimes outlining their topics a **year** in advance)--you can too.

*Links:*

<http://www.wordpress.org> (recommended for its rich features/plugins and portability)

[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) (Google owned, simple to use but not really for small business bloggers)

[www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com) & [www.posterous.com](http://www.posterous.com) (fairly new but worthwhile mini-blog services)

W3 Consulting's Blog Publishing Services - <http://w.w3cinc.com/nflrpR>

*Advanced:*

Once you get yourself into a regular blogging schedule (3-5 weeks of steady posts, talk to your Web designer/programmer about installing a blog on your company's website (e.g., [www.your-domain.com/blog](http://www.your-domain.com/blog)), or getting a separate domain for your blog (e.g., [www.yourblogsname.com](http://www.yourblogsname.com) or [www.yourblogsname.blog](http://www.yourblogsname.blog)). You can then move your content from your current blog site and move it to your new blog. (Why give your earned Web traffic to another website?) Have your Web designer/programmer make sure to install software to monitor your Web traffic, such as Google Analytics (free or premium version).

*W3C Web Services has reliable and affordable Wordpress blog hosting -*

<http://w.w3cinc.com/oX3nsz>

## 2. Create a Twitter profile.

Once you create your Twitter account, Twitter will take you through a process to see what contacts are also on Twitter. (Don't make the mistake of accidentally emailing everyone. The utility should just go through and tell you which contacts are *already* on Twitter.) Follow as many contacts as you find interesting and follow everyone that requests to follow you in the initial days; you can always stop following them once you get the hang of Twitter. Start tweeting!

Links:

[www.twitter.com/w3consulting](http://www.twitter.com/w3consulting) ← Follow us on Twitter!

*Advanced:*

Seek out experts in your industry on Twitter and try to engage them in conversation with either direct messages (DM) or @replies. Also, talk to your Web/graphic designer to edit your Twitter profile, background image and profile image to match your company's brand. (You can also try your hand at doing it yourself using the free Twitter tools or Themeleon—look for the link on Twitter.) Finally, go learn about “tweetchats” and engage in at least one per week in your industry, or in the #smallbizchat tweetchat that happens every Wednesday at 8pm ET (Details: <http://succeedasyourownboss.com/what-is-smallbizchat/>).

## 3. Create a LinkedIn profile AND a LinkedIn Company page.

Think about your LinkedIn profile as your Web résumé. Complete your profile and update it as necessary as your professional life changes and progress. Connect with contacts by using the LinkedIn utility to search your e-mail contacts against the LinkedIn network. Forget keeping business cards as your contact management system, use LinkedIn! And, please do not “automagically” send all your Twitter posts to your LinkedIn profile from your company Twitter account without considering the strategic impact of doing so. It makes sense for some businesses and not for others!

Your Company page is your business presence on LinkedIn, not your profile. Use this place to highlight your product(s)/service(s) and get recommendations for them, and post updates about positive goings-on as your business grows and prospers. You can syndicate your Twitter and blog posts to your Company page.

Links:

<http://www.linkedin.com>

<http://w.w3cinc.com/tDZWsx> - A great primer on how to use LinkedIn for a job search. Many of the same principles apply for procuring new business contacts!

Watch the video: *LinkedIn in Plain English* - <http://w.w3cinc.com/thTxRT>



*Advanced:*

Request or write recommendations of colleagues and customers on your Company page for specific products/services. Start becoming active within appropriate industry groups and reviewing LinkedIn Applications that may be useful to you (e.g., "Reading List by Amazon" or "Events").

Become a LinkedIn Premium member so you can see additional information about the people who view your profile, add YouTube videos to every product/service on your Company profile, and syndicate your blog posts to your Company profile.

*Challenge:*

Find me and connect: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/raymond> & follow our Company page at <http://www.w3cinc.com/linkedin>.

**4. P.I.M. ≠ Personal Information Manager. P.I.M. = Plan. Implement. Maintain.**

No matter how you do your project planning, **planning** is the key to making Social Media strategies a success. You can use S.M.A.R.T. goals for your Social Media-enabled business, but do not forget the three parts of any good system: plan, implement and maintain (which includes evaluation). Most people neglect the final step, which is "how do you intend on maintaining your system?" If you do not think about your goals and keep the long-term perspective in mind, you will lose energy and fail to keep the momentum alive that is important for successful strategies to take hold in the social networking and media world.

*Links:*

[Wikipedia's article on SMART Goals](#)

A great book on productivity and planning: [Getting Things Done](#) by David Allen - <http://w.w3cinc.com/f3ObTv>

*Challenge:*

Write a one-page Social Media marketing plan for the next 12 months. Contact us and request a copy of our Social Media Marketing Plan template: [www.w3cinc.com/contact](http://www.w3cinc.com/contact) to create your own one-page Social Media marketing plan today.

**5. Share = good. Sell = bad.**

In business, sales are great. However, **social** networking and **social** media are intrinsically "**social**" not *sales*. If you are genuine about your long-term investment in the

concept of Social Media (producing useful, thought-provoking content and engaging contacts in conversation about that content), you will shine and prosper. If you are fake and just posting sales-y content on the Web in social networking and media platforms, people *will* ignore you and it will hurt your professional image and company's brand. Social Media can produce tremendous value and sales, but you have to play by the content marketing rules. And, sales happen when your target audience asks, not when you think it should.

## 6. A.B.C., Part I = Always be creating.

There are always opportunities for you to be creating content. Everything you do in your business can be captured and used in some way to create content (internally or externally) for your blog, website, podcast, YouTube channel, Pinterest boards, or elsewhere. Note that you must think about great content in all varieties of media (i.e., text, images, links, audio, and video) to provide to your target audience. Content on the Internet (a/k/a World Wide Web, Web, Interwebs, W3, and so on) comes in many formats: text, images, audio and video. All of which can be static, dynamic or interactive. Think creatively about your company's goals, how you want to engage your target audience (thinking about their emotional reaction), and then tailor your content to the format.

*Links:*

[www.podcastalley.com/](http://www.podcastalley.com/)

<http://www.businessweek.com/search/podcasting.htm>

<http://podbean.com>

<http://images.google.com>

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

<http://vimeo.com>

<http://mashable.com/2008/02/21/screencasting-video-tutorials/>

<http://pinterest.com>

*Challenge:*

Try to add one type of non-text content (picture, audio or video) to your next posting in your Social Media. (Note: this doesn't mean you must have created the content. You can post (giving appropriate credit with your own commentary on) content created by someone else.)

## 7. A.B.C., Part II = Always be commenting.

Social Web is about socializing--it's a conversation! Commenting on other people's blogs, message boards, on-line profiles and other "social content" is an easy way to dabble in Social Web without any infrastructure investment. Find industry-related message boards, blogs, social networks/communities, and news sites (most of which now have commenting

abilities) and post your opinions and related resources. Challenge or praise (tactfully) to incite a good conversation. You get professional exposure, our target audience engages with you from a new perspective (while defining yourself as a "thought leader" or "industry expert"), and the author gets more Web traffic. Win-win-win!

**Challenge:**

Find your favorite industry-related news or organization's website and see if they have a blog, message board, or on-line community, and plan on commenting on at least 3 articles/posts this month.

**Advanced:**

Once you have a Twitter account, search for great content to "RT" (re-tweet) and "@" reply to great tweets on a regular basis. Create a "comment signature" to promote your Social Web digital identity in all of your social profiles. (NOTE: Don't use comment signatures if the blog/website gives you the ability to create a profile. People will find your blog/website via your profile if they find your comments valuable; comment signatures are looked as poor taste if the site provides profiles. It's just part of the Internet culture that has developed.) As well, talk to your Web/graphic designer about creating an "avatar" for your company's Web Presence.

**Links:**

<http://gravatar.com>

## 8. A.B.C., Part III = Always be connecting.

Constantly and consistently grow your on-line social network. Building on the principle behind #4's "Maintain," you must be increasing the number of people you are exposed to, or you become stagnant and your social network will notice and start ignoring you. In some cases, that means out with some of the old before in with anyone new. You can only really engage with about 200-250 people or brands at any given time. *Choose them wisely.*

**Challenge:**

Be cautious about allowing **anyone** into your social network. You want to grow it, but you want to grow it **strategically**. If you are marketing to Millennials with expendable income, try not to connect to Baby Boomers. Also, remember the adage: you are what you eat. In Social Networking, the corollary is: you become with whom you associate. And, also: you get what you give.

## 9. Limit your time on-line for effectiveness.

Parkinson's Law states that "work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion." If you do not control your time on the Social Web, it will easily start to control you; your whole day can be consumed by social networking and social media content generation. You still need to manage the rest of your business! Social Media marketing and advertising should not and cannot be your only marketing strategy; it's a component. So,

make sure to dedicate how much time you need to be effective on-line and put it in your calendar. For example, in the beginning, log into your social networking site(s) once a week on Monday morning for half-hour and try that for a month. You can increase or decrease the time you need to be effective and efficient with your strategies on a monthly basis. You may learn that half-hour daily is necessary, or that half-hour once a week is just as effective. For most Small Business owners who are seeing really great benefits from Social Media, they are usually contributing an average of 1-2 hours daily to content creation, commenting, curating and connecting.

#### 10. Think like a tech geek.

Okay, here at W3 Consulting, we're tech geeks, so it's easy for us to say that. However, you will not succeed in Social Media marketing if you do not take calculated risk. You're an entrepreneur or at least have an entrepreneurial spirit, otherwise you wouldn't be taking the initiative to read this list of tips. (By the way, reward yourself for taking the first step in your road to Social Media success!) Tech geeks learn because they aren't afraid to "play around" with technology. They will sit with a piece of software or on a website and try out every feature to see what they do. The likelihood is that whatever you are doing is reversible, withstanding common sense (e.g., don't press DELETE if there's no UNDO button). This bravado helps you stumble upon (by the way, check out [www.stumbleupon.com](http://www.stumbleupon.com)!) features and tricks and shortcuts and new Web services you won't otherwise.

Jump in and try! Good luck!

#### **BONUS TIP: Beware (or better yet: Be Aware) of Facebook!**

Facebook is one of the most powerful, pervasive social networking and advertising platforms on the Internet today. It's growing faster than any other social networking site in the world. However, Facebook has many issues (and many more opportunities!) that you need to know before you involve your business on the platform. Get on Facebook, but consult business and Web & digital technology strategists (like W3 Consulting) on how to engage on Facebook appropriately and effectively.

If nothing else, make sure to read Facebook's Terms of Use. Additionally, use Facebook's Help sections to their fullest extent.

Protect your personal and professional brand from Facebook!

Links:

[www.facebook.com/terms.php](http://www.facebook.com/terms.php)

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