

## **Ten Myths About Social Media Marketing**

By Darrell Cuthbert

Social media have become an integral and important part of many people's lives in the last few decades. The downside of this rapid increase in usage is that along with all the good information being shared there are also many myths about social media that are commonly believed as fact.

- 1. It is totally free or extremely cheap.** Most of the tools and resources required to participate in social media are indeed free. However the time and expertise of specialists who understand social media are not.
- 2. It is very simple.** As the social media sphere grows it becomes more and more complex. Knowledge and perception are needed to decide which elements are effective business tools and which a waste of time.
- 3. It is a short-term fad that we needn't bother with.** The internet is essentially a space for conversations. The tools used and platform with the most impact may change over time but customers have become used to the concept of conversational marketing and it is here to stay.
- 4. Only teens and young adults are interested in social media.** Social media were initially adopted mostly by students, other young adults and teenagers. It is estimated though that almost half of Facebook profiles now belong to people aged 35 and up.
- 5. Marketing through social media is simply a matter of advertising on Facebook.** Strange as it sounds, the way to start marketing via social media is not to start marketing at all but rather to listen and converse. Once people trust you and value what you have to say they will be more receptive to subtle messages about your business.
- 6. Anyone can do it.** Many companies delegate social media projects to a junior or inexperienced staffer because they believe it to be very simple or they don't see its importance as an element of the overall marketing mix.
- 7. A successful social media campaign can be handled internally.** Using social media in a business context requires knowledge of what works and what doesn't. It can also be very time consuming, especially for an inexperienced person.
- 8. The results of engaging customers via social media can't be measured.** Many aspects of social media engagement can indeed be measured. One of the keys is to have clearly defined outcomes. For example goals related to increasing website traffic or getting people to sign up for a newsletter or other communication can be set and accurately measured.
- 9. There are no rules.** As social media platforms evolve and become more sophisticated, a distinct culture is growing around the technology with its own rules of etiquette. If you are unfamiliar with the culture and rules it would be wise to team up with someone to guide you through the initial phases and possibly provide ongoing advice.
- 10. The amount of social media connections you have is an indication of your success.** Simply having thousands of social media connections is no guarantee of success. Recruiting random strangers as followers, friends or connections on social media sites is unlikely to benefit your business. Remember that quality counts more than quantity, seeking out and engaging with the right kind of people takes skill and knowledge of consumer behavior.

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