

Transfer Media Group

Social Networking Management



SOCIAL NETWORKING MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

Whether it is maintaining an already established online presence, or setting up a last-minute online retention system in response to an unexpected spike in media visibility, established social networking sites Twitter, Facebook, & MySpace are key to growing a brand's base, and perpetuating that brand's image to its public. These new media outlets provide an unprecedented level of closeness and interactivity between a company or artist and its audience, and require a carefully monitored balance of personal flare and brand objective. When this balance is achieved, individuals in a brand's audience feel as though they are part of the company's or artist's product and movement, and they themselves spread the brand's image and current objective virally across the internet.

COMMON ISSUES & THE SOCIAL NETWORK MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Issue: When unexpected media spikes occur, it is important to have a complete online retention system in place to "catch" potential consumers. Traditional e-mail newsletters are not enough.

Solution: Establishing accounts on major networking sites allows users to "follow" the brand on Twitter, "join" the brand's Facebook Group, and "friend" the brand on MySpace. This permits the brand's community to grow even as official websites may be in development, or in the case that an official website may not have the necessary bandwidth to handle spikes in traffic. Users are also more likely to track a brand via a format they are already integrated into themselves.

Issue: A brand's audience wants to be privy to project developments, and the brand itself wants to maintain a level of interest and relevance with its audience.

Solution: Twitter can act as a news feed, updating all "followers" on meetings, relationships, and developments in the world of the brand on a weekly or daily basis. The brand's Facebook Group can serve as a central source for news and happenings, but focuses specifically on larger developments (the reason for this is explained below).

Issue: Brands would like to engage dialogue and conversation within their communities without sending potential users to outside sites to do so.

Solution: All three major social networking sites, Twitter especially, allow for direct communication with individual fans or customers, either via wall postings (Facebook & MySpace) or Tweet responses (Twitter).

TWITTER (AS A "SOFT" NEWS FEED)

Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging site which allows users to post updates of up to 140 characters, which then appear on the home page of all others who have chosen to "follow" the initial user. Twitter has quickly become one of the exciting social networking outlets, and acts both as a place to begin building a brand's community online (as "followers"), and also as a news feed for that brand's developments.

Success on Twitter requires a level of intimacy with one's followers. It cannot be used strictly as an outlet for traditional media announcements. Users who follow businesses and public personalities on Twitter do so for the voyeuristic view into their work behind-the-scenes. They expect a level of spontaneity in postings, yet these postings must align with the overall media image.

Transfer Media Group works to discover the public face and figure that would intrigue such followers, and helps create a balance of personal association and brand objective in postings. Such Twitter posts would generally be comprised of regular updates on the figure's travels, meetings, and personal thoughts inline with the brand's image.

"Hard" news, such as finalized sponsorships or partnerships, is interjected between these personal updates and anecdotes.

FACEBOOK (AS A "HARD" NEWS FEED & MEDIA CENTER)

Facebook can act in the same dual manner as Twitter. Future fans can "sign up" with the brand's community by joining their Facebook group, and the group page can also be used as a news feed for the brand's major developments and promotions.

In contrast to Twitter, a Facebook group often lists only major news updates. It does allow for, however, the posting of photos and video. Thus, Facebook (along with MySpace) can be the gathering place for all of the brand's related media (photos, videos, links to articles, etc).

Facebook Groups have the additional value of offering integrated "Discussion Boards" where members of the group can discuss issues related to the brand without navigating away from the brand's page.

Note: Facebook does not allow for customizable backgrounds or color schemes like Twitter or MySpace.

MYSPACE (AS A MEDIA CENTER & PERPETUATOR OF A BRAND'S LOOK)

MySpace remains a powerful tool for building an online community of followers. MySpace pages are highly customizable and can be edited to mirror the look of the brand's official site, thus allowing the perpetuation of that brand's "look." A MySpace page also allows for integrated media, meaning that like Facebook, it can be a gathering place for all related photos, videos, links, etc.

MySpace's layout is less conducive to posting news and happenings. MySpace does dedicate a section to blog postings, which would mirror the major news postings on Facebook, and the brand's official site.

SOCIAL NETWORKING MANAGEMENT RECAP

With proper management of these three heavyweight social networking sites, any brand can capitalize on spikes in visibility, while compelling the fans themselves to help in building the brand's online following. Twitter generates buzz about a brand's developments and happenings, MySpace reinforces a brand's image, and Facebook provides a place—managed exclusively by the brand itself—for discussion of topics related to that brand's audience.

Transfer Media Group acts as a liaison between web developers, new media content, and social networking accounts to create an all-encompassing and consistent online presence.