Online assignment submission essay sample

Media

" Why are social media sites so important to e-marketers? What are the challenges and opportunities facing marketers that want to use social media as part of their strategy?"

The use of social media has exploded in the last several years, so much so that it now touches almost every facet of our lives. Friendster, the first social media site was launched in 2003. Myspace, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter soon followed. Facebook, the most popular of the social media sites, currently has over 500 million users. It is the second most popular website behind Google.

There are a lot of reasons as to why a certain company needs social media marketing and it will depend on different factors like company profile, the products and the customers that it is catering to. As the days go by, there is also an increase when it comes to the importance of social media marketing that is very effective for most companies. Thus, social media sites have become so important for e-marketers to do their social media marketing effectively.

Below are some of the major importance of social media for e-marketers and the company they are advertising for. 1. Social media channel is a good way of increasing a company's trustworthiness and goodwill which will definitely give the company a better branding. When companies are able to have conversations with their customers, the result is going to be a great amount of credibility.

2. The lead generation is also another basis for companies to go for social media marketing. The online lead generation is an Internet marketing term

that refers to the generation of prospective consumer interest or inquiry into a business' products or services through the Internet. Lead can be generated for a variety of purposes- list building, e-newsletter list acquisition, building out reward programs, loyalty programs or for other member acquisition programs. A lead usually is the contact information and in some cases, demographic information of a customer who is interested in a specific product or service. Since the lead generation serves a very important part for a company's success, using social media marketing for company campaigns help the e-marketer to reach out to the targeted lead generation.

3. Social media channels also make it easier and more flexible for companies to engage with its customers. This might be on the top priority list of the e-marketers since customer engagement is a very crucial procedure since this will help the company retain the existing customers and also increase the brand credibility.

4. Social media channels are also responsible for generating a highly powerful traffic for the company's site. E-marketers don't have to worry since there's a lot of social media channels that will be able to make it easier for the e-marketer to obtain the relevant and quality traffic that it will need.

5. The industry is considered to have a backbone if the companies have total access to customer's feedback. This is because the feedback actually helps in improving the products based on what the customer's require. Due to the fact that social media channels aid in making customer engagement possible, then customer feedback will always be available for the company to use as basis for improvement. With this, the e-marketer can always expect

customer reviews and feedback that can help the company in making the products and services even better.

6. There is no better way or an even cheaper way than a social media channel when it comes to announcing new products or services of the company. It is a very inexpensive mode of advertising because it reaches a vast audience for a marginal investment. Instead of spending large amounts of money on marketing and advertising campaigns, let the customers advertise for the company.

Many consumers are no longer going directly to the source for product information; they trust their peers to fairly review products for them. Therefore it is a good idea to encourage your customers or clients to check-in at your business, or direct them to review your product online. This method ensures that you reach a vast audience via social networks. Social media will make it easier for the e-marketers to spread the news regarding a new product or service. Information such as arrival or release dates can be making known to the public in an easier method.

7. Another importance of social media marketing is the fact that it will allow the e-marketer to discover the customers' preferences so that the company will be able to act based on what they want. By knowing their preferences, it will be much easier for the e-marketer to enhance all the company's products and plan the marketing campaigns more effectively.

All these factors stated above can be seen as the opportunities to e-marketers in using social media as part of their strategy. On the other hand, there are also challenges that an e-marketer can face in using social media

marketing. Some of the common obstacles and barriers to social media adoption that could be focused on are:

1. Flying blind

Many companies chase social media tactics with no idea about the " who", " what"," when" and " where" of the social web. It's essential that companies first develop a listening program to answer those questions. Listening through social media monitoring is critical to understanding brand, competitors and key terms relevant to the audience on the social web. Without a smart listening effort, companies missed key opportunities such as marketing, customer service, sales, recruiting, partnering and public relations.

2. Unsure where it fits – who owns social media?

As companies develop their social media programs, responsibilities and resources need to be allocated and that leads to accountability and ownership. For successful social media adoption within organizations, it's important to establish social media goals and responsibilities in different parts of the organization. As resources and accountability are identified, the different departments can work to cross pollinate efforts, and work together as a team. By doing so, it helps the company leverage combined efforts and avoids conflicting representation of the brand.

3. Inconsistent participation

Companies need to be consistent with their social participation. The solution to a more consistent participation is to lead from the top, get executive buy-

in. Establish goals and provide a feedback loop to contributors. As they grow, the community will provide feedback.

4. Not individual or confident

It is important for an e-marketer to believe that people will listen to and find value in what the message is saying requires confidence and clarity. Whether the e-marketer is right or wrong might not matter as much as being passionate. Therefore when using social media sites as part of their marketing strategy, e-marketers may face the challenges of showing leadership and conviction when it comes to social participation and engagement.

5. Digitally unsavvy team

Modern marketers need to understand social media. Companies don't " do social", they " are social". That means being savvy participants. According to " Social Technographics of Business Buyers" from Forrester Research: * 91% of business buyers read blogs, watching user generated video, participate in other social media * 55% of decision-makers were in social networks

* 43% are creating media (blogs, uploading videos or articles, etc.) Josh Bernoff, Forrester stated that " If you're a B2B marketer and you're not using social technologies in your marketing, it means you're late. 6. Lack of personalization

It is important to use real team members in social media efforts. Using some faceless person behind the brand is not the effective way to forge

relationships with others. Companies can win on the social web by developing a strategy, experiment and iterate.

In a nutshell, the challenges facing marketers who want to use social media sites as part of their strategy are the growing diversity of tools and niches, decentralized audience and more effort is needed to reach the same audience. Besides, there is a potential decrease in control of image and increase in amount of content which is the risk of content overload. It is important that an e-marketer have clear knowledge on how to translate real-world relationship norms into online norms when engaging in social media marketing.

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