

not business as usual.

HUGHES

Missouri Municipal League
Social Media Guide

Presented by:
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Social Media Defined

Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics:

- **Participation:** social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between media and audience.
- **Openness:** most social media services are open to feedback and participation. They encourage voting, comments and the sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content – password-protected content is frowned on.
- **Conversation:** whereas traditional media is about broadcast (content transmitted or distributed to an audience) social media is better seen as a two-way conversation.
- **Community:** social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favorite TV show.
- **Connectedness:** Most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

A good way to think about social media is that all of this is actually just about being human beings. Sharing ideas, cooperating and collaborating to create art, thinking and commerce, vigorous debate and discourse, finding people who might be good friends, allies and lovers – it's what our species has built several civilizations on. That's why it is spreading so quickly, not because it's great shiny, whizzy new technology, but because it lets us be ourselves – only more so. And it is in the "more so" that the power of this revolution lies. People can find information, inspiration, like-minded people, communities and collaborators faster than ever before. New ideas, services, business models and technologies emerge and evolve at dizzying speed in social media.

Media Production

Rather than asking, “Are blogs a fad?” or “How much of this is hype?” it's more useful to look at the fundamentals behind the phenomenal growth of social media. It used to be that the ability to create content and distribute it to an audience was limited to individuals and organizations that owned the production facilities and infrastructure to do so. In other words: 'the media'. If you were in the video creation and distribution business you were called a TV station and employed thousands of highly skilled individuals to write, film, edit and broadcast your content through a relatively small number of channels to the public. Similarly, if you were a newspaper, you hired a team of reporters and editors, designers, typesetters, printers and delivery men, and had deals with a network of newsagents for them to sell your product to your audience.

With the advent of digital technology and the internet it became a lot easier for people to create their own content, be it images, words, video or audio. But even five years ago, it was still beyond most people's technical skills to create and maintain their own website. Today, the ever-lower costs of computers, digital cameras and high-speed internet access, combined with free or low-cost, easy-to-use editing software means that anyone can have a live blog website up and running within minutes of deciding to do so. With a little reading and fiddling they can upload video or sound too.

Distribution

Production, obviously, is only half of the story. What good is great content unless you can get it to people? Take blogs for instance. People have a limited amount of time to check websites regularly – few people are going to be bothered to check more than a couple of blogs every day. Now they don't need to. The innovation that has increased the reach of blogs and podcasts and has given terrific impetus to social media's evolution is a technology called RSS (Really Simple Syndication) which allows people to subscribe to a blog or website.

RSS notifies a “newsreader” or your personal homepage (on, say, Google or Windows Live) that there is new content available and sends it the text and images. You can then read these in your newsreader without having to visit the website itself. The importance of RSS, therefore, is that it makes it much easier for blogs and other social media to build or become part of communities. They may often be small communities, but to their users they may be highly relevant and valuable.

The other method of distribution that is sometimes neglected in any discussion of social media is search engines. Because blogs are highly connected, in the eyes of Google the more established ones can become an authority on a niche topic. If, say, you have been blogging about cats for a

good few months, and your posts have attracted links from other blogs, then a story about new government legislation on pet ownership on your blog may earn similar ranking for searches on that subject as the local newspaper or even national media.

Basic Forms

At this time, there are basically seven kinds of social media. Note, though, that innovation and change are extensive.

- Social networks: these sites allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. The biggest social networks are MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Blogs: perhaps the best known form of social media, blogs are online journals, with entries appearing with the most recent first.
- Wikis: these websites allow people to add content to or edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database. The best-known wiki is Wikipedia, the online encyclopaedia which has over 2 million English language articles⁴.
- Podcasts: audio and video files that are available by subscription, through services like Apple iTunes. Forums: areas for online discussion, often around specific topics and interests. Forums came about before the term social media and are a powerful and popular element of online communities.
- Forums: are web applications for holding discussions and posting user generated content. Internet forums are also commonly referred to as Web forums, message boards, discussion boards, (electronic) discussion groups, discussion forums, bulletin boards or simply forums. The terms "forum" and "board" may refer to the entire community or to a specific sub-forum dealing with a distinct topic. Messages within these sub-forums are then displayed either in chronological order or as threaded discussions.
- Content communities: communities which organize and share particular kinds of content. The most popular content communities tend to form around photos (Flickr), bookmarked links (del.icio.us) and videos (YouTube).
- Microblogging: social networking combined with bite-sized blogging, where small amounts of content ('updates') are distributed online and through the mobile phone network. Twitter is the clear leader in this field.¹

¹ icrossing, 2007

Local Government

It's easy to see governments as nameless, faceless monoliths, something impersonal or, even worse, untrustworthy. Much of that is because government culture remains steeped in traditional ideas about public relations and outreach work, notions that have become archaic in an Internet-enabled, hyper-connected world. Just as private companies are learning to embrace social media to manage brand reputations, governments must adapt if they wish to effectively communicate with their "customers" -- a.k.a. their citizens and stakeholders.

The term "branding" is most often associated with companies selling products, but government components are arguably brands themselves. And failure to monitor conversations about brands is guaranteed to be PR trouble. Just look at the recent "Motrin Moms" controversy. Briefly, Motrin failed to keep abreast of negative public reaction to an online advertisement aimed at mothers, a failure that may very well have damaged the brand's reputation in a major niche market.

Conversations like those that surrounded the "Motrin Moms" video are happening every day on issues that directly pertain to governments. How well do governments monitor what their constituents are actually talking about on Twitter and similar open information-sharing platforms?

Businesses, governments, and other organizations are still struggling to find the best way to use social software to engage people about their brands. On social networks, brands are best represented by individual people as "brand ambassadors." Ashton Kutcher and Maria Sharapova are in digital camera commercials for a reason -- so you'll watch (and hopefully listen and learn, too).

But television commercials, billboards, and press releases are unidirectional -- the audience sits back and passively receives information. Through social software, brand ambassadors have the potential to promote messages through "indirect, intimate influence". Brand ambassadors ideally listen and learn from ongoing conversations, and then engage in them, creating bidirectionality. Ideally, they also talk about more than just their brands on social networks -- a good ambassador will also talk about other aspects of his or her life, to the point that followers eventually begin to see the brand ambassador as something of a trusted friend.

Every citizen now has the potential to be a collector, an analyst, a reporter, and a publisher -- and so does every government employee. Engaging, trusted personalities employed as brand ambassadors will complement -- not replace -- traditional public affairs and government outreach. Depending on their agency or office's mission and goals, individuals can follow customized strategies to engage specific niches of the public at events, in interviews, and through constant,

pervasive use of new and emerging media tools. In an ongoing bi-directional conversation, brand ambassadors would work not only on behalf of the government among the people, but also on behalf of the people within the government.

Government social ambassadors should be fully accessible, transparent, authentic, and collaborative leaders that inspire people to cooperate for the sake of common concerns. As part of their missions, government brand ambassadors should conduct community-based research to understand the "marketplace." What do the elderly living in the Southwest think about health care? What do kids from different household incomes think about their public schools? What does the man-on-the-street in Greece think of U.S. foreign policy? While many interests are represented in Washington DC, the interests of the average person are sometimes misunderstood or overlooked.

The strategy of lethal generosity can be incredibly powerful when engaging micro-niches. Lethal generosity holds that the most engaged and sharing person in a community will eventually become the most trusted. By leading overt discussions online and in person, combined with the ambient intimacy brought about through engagement, government brand ambassadors will gain a greater sense of public sentiment, which in turn will allow lawmakers to formulate better informed public policy.

While governments certainly face challenges in using social tools, the pros of using these tools far outweigh the cons. Social technologies can make networking and engagement with the public simple and powerful, make research faster, identify influencers in useful micro-niches, provide mechanisms for combating negative publicity, and measure public sentiment to help inform public policy.

These tools can also be used to advertise job vacancies or agency needs as well as provide live broadcast coverage of niche events. And there are increasingly quantitative measurements of social software return-on-investment. Finally, they may even save money. Phone calls, focus groups, and airline tickets can be expensive; social software can provide a cheaper alternative in some situations. Governments everywhere will benefit greatly by adopting progressive new approaches to social software and the indirect, intimate influence it propagates.²

² MediaShift, 2009

Overview of Social Media

Now let's take a look at each of the main types of social media, and how they work. These explanations are intentionally very general, because with social media every rule seems to have an exception. In fact, among the defining characteristics of social media are the blurring of definitions, rapid innovation, reinvention and mash-ups. If you want to really understand how social media works, there's no better way than to take part in it.

Social Networks

Social networks on the web are like contained versions of the sprawling blog network. People joining a social network usually create a profile and then build a network by connecting to friends and contacts in the network, or by inviting real-world contacts and friends to join the social network.

These communities retain the interest of their members by being useful to them and providing services that are entertaining or help them to expand their networks. MySpace, for instance, allows members to create vivid, chaotic home pages (they've been likened to the walls of a teenager's bedroom) to which they can upload images, videos and music.

MySpace has built a lot of its popularity around its music services. There are said to be over three million bands and musicians registered on it, trying to attract a fan base from the 200 million registered accounts.

In 2007, Facebook a social network that originated in US colleges, became available for public use in the UK. Its popularity quickly rocketed. Part of Facebook's success is its creators' decision to 'open up' and allow anyone to develop applications and run them on Facebook - without charging them. This has seen Facebook users able to play each other at Scrabble and Chess, compare each others' tastes and send 'virtual gifts', among any number of new ideas vying for attention.

Crucially, the growth in the use of social networks by young people in recent years has come at the expense of their consumption of traditional media such as TV and magazines. This switch in behavior was one of the drivers behind the biggest deal in social media to date, when Rupert Murdoch bought MySpace for US \$580 million.⁵ Marketers have also increasingly begun to experiment with trying to reach the members of MySpace and other social networks.

Perhaps the most 'grown-up' of the popular networks is LinkedIn, which allows users to build their business and professional contacts into an online network. It has been criticized for not being open enough and for charging for too many of its services – but next to Facebook it is still the most popular online social network among people aged 25 and over. The huge success of the 'opening up' of Facebook, as mentioned above, could be a challenge to LinkedIn's 'closed' approach in the future.

Blogs

At its simplest, a blog is an online journal where the entries are published with the most recent first. There are a number of features that make blogs noteworthy and different to other websites:

- Tone: blogs tend to be written in a personal, conversational style. They are usually the work of an identified author or group of authors.
- Topic: blogs tend to define what it is they are writing about. They can be as specific as a blog about a book in progress or as wide in scope as my musings on life and stuff.
- Links and trackbacks: the services people use to write blogs make it very easy for them to insert links to other websites, usually in reference to an article or blog post or to provide further information about the subject they are writing about.
- Comments: each blog post has a comments section, effectively a message board for that article. On blogs with large audiences the debates in these sections can run to hundreds of comments at a time.
- Subscription: blogs can be subscribed to, usually via RSS technology, making it easy to keep up with new content.

Blogs are easy to set up using any of a number of services. One of the simplest is the free Blogger service from Google. Others such as Wordpress and TypePad offer more features, the latter for a fee.

With millions of people around the world of different ages and backgrounds blogging about whatever they feel like, it is about as easy to generalize about bloggers as it is to make sweeping statements about human beings. Here are some of the main kinds of blogs you will come across:

- Personal blogs: Many millions of people keep blogs about their everyday lives, much like public diaries. These sometimes become very popular indeed, especially those anonymous, slightly risqué ones.
- Political blogs: Especially in the US blogs are being written about politics. Often perceived as a response to media bias (across the political spectrum) they tend to comment on the news, giving closer analysis of issues they feel have been misrepresented or glossed over by mainstream media.

- 'Almost media' blogs: Some blogs are unashamedly media businesses in their own right, taking advertising and employing a blogger or a group of bloggers full-time. Effectively, they are start-ups that are taking advantage of the new blogging technologies and opportunities to build communities of readers in new or niche subject areas. These are generally to be found covering news and opinion in the technology and media industries.
- Mainstream media blogs: Most national newspapers – and TV news programs – now have blogs for some of their reporters and editors. These can provide useful insights into the news gathering and reporting process, but will also give vent to personal views that the journalist may otherwise have kept to themselves.

The easiest way to read blogs is to subscribe to ones you find interesting using the Bloglines, Google Reader or Newsgator newsreader services. A newsreader is a website or piece of software where you can go to read a newsfeed that you are subscribed to via RSS. All blogs and most news websites have RSS feeds attached to them.

You can find blogs on topics that you're interested in by using search engines like Technorati or Google Blog Search. If you find a blog which is particularly interesting or relevant to you, have a look for its 'blogroll' (list of recommended blogs) – it's a great way of exploring the networks of blogs.

Wikis

Wikis are websites that allow people to contribute or edit content on them. They are great for collaborative working, for instance creating a large document or project plan with a team in several offices. A wiki can be as private or as open as the people who create it want it to be.

The most famous wiki is of course Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia that was started in 2001. It now has over two million articles in English alone⁶ and over a million members. In 2005 the respected scientific journal Nature conducted a study into the reliability of the scientific entries in Wikipedia and Encyclopaedia Britannica. No one was surprised that Encyclopaedia Britannica was the more reliable of the two – what was remarkable was that it was only marginally more accurate. The Encyclopaedia Britannica team issued a 20-page rebuttal of the study a few months later. Others observed that while Encyclopaedia Britannica had no entries for wiki, Wikipedia has a 2,500 word article on Encyclopaedia Britannica, its history and methodology. But Wikipedia is more than a reference source. During a major breaking news story, especially one which affects large numbers of people directly, such a natural disaster or political crisis, Wikipedia acts as a collective reporting function.

Podcasts

Podcasts are audio or video files that are published on the internet and that users can subscribe to. Sometimes 'vodcast' is used to specifically describe video services. It is the subscription feature that makes a podcast so powerful as a form of social media. People have long been able to upload audio content to the web, but the subscription feature means that people can build regular audiences and communities around their shows. It effectively puts private individuals or brands on a level playing field with traditional media organisations when it comes to competing for people's attention with AV content online. Podcasts, like personal video recorders (PVRs), are part of a shift in media consumption patterns, which increasingly sees people watching or listening to content when and where it suits them. This is sometimes known as time-shifting. When a new podcast is posted to the web, all the subscribers' podcast services (such as iTunes) are automatically notified and download the programme to their computer's hard drive. The podcast can then be either listened to on the computer or downloaded onto an MP3 player, such as an iPod.

Naturally the advent of the podcast has also meant that media brands have been able to invade one another's traditional territory. Many national newspapers have started effectively producing their own radio-style programs and distributing them via their previously text-and-picture based websites.

Forums

Internet forums are the longest established form of online social media. They most commonly exist around specific topics and interests, for example cars or music. Each discussion in a forum is known as a thread, and many different threads can be active simultaneously. This makes forums good places to find and engage in a variety of detailed discussions. They are often built into websites as an added feature, but some exist as stand-alone entities. Forums can be places for lively, vociferous debate, for seeking advice on a subject, for sharing news, for flirting, or simply for whiling away time with idle chat. In other words, their huge variety reflects that of face-to-face conversations.

The sites are moderated by an administrator, whose role it is to remove unsuitable posts or spam. However, a moderator will not lead or guide the discussion. This is a major difference between forums and blogs. Blogs have a clear owner, whereas a forum's threads are started by its members. Forums have a strong sense of community. Some are very enclosed, existing as 'islands' of online social activity with little or no connection to other forms of social media. This may be because forums were around long before the term 'social media' was coined, and in advance of any of the other types of community we associate with the term.

In any event, they remain hugely popular, often with membership in the hundreds of thousands. Forum search engine BoardTracker monitors over 55 million conversation threads across almost 40,000 forums, and it is by no means a comprehensive index.

Content Communities

Content communities look a bit like social networks – you have to register, you get a home page and you can make connections with friends. However, they are focused on sharing a particular type of content.

For example, Flickr is based around sharing photography and is the most popular service of its kind in the UK. Members upload their photos to the site and choose whether to make them public or just share with family and friends in their network.

Thousands of groups have formed on Flickr around areas of common interest. There are groups dedicated to particular graffiti artists, towns, sports and animals. If you work for a reasonably well-known brand it is worth taking a look to see if there is a Flickr group about you – there are groups for motorbike brands, consumer electronics brands and even the cult notebook brand Moleskine. As testament to its enormous success, Flickr was bought by Yahoo! in 2005 for an estimated US \$30 million.

YouTube is the world's largest video sharing service, with over 100 million videos viewed every day. Members of YouTube can upload videos or create their own “channels” of favorite videos. The viral nature of YouTube videos is enhanced by a feature that makes it easy for people to cut and paste videos hosted by YouTube directly into their blogs.

As well as thousands of short films from people's own video cameras, webcams and camera phones, there are many clips from TV shows and movies hosted on the service. Some people also use the service to record video blogs.

YouTube started as a small private company, but was bought by Google for \$1.65 billion in October 2006.

Digg is a news and content community. Members submit links to news stories that they think will be of interest and these are voted on by other members. Once a story has garnered about a critical number of votes (the number varies according to how busy the site is) it will be moved to

the front page where it will receive wider attention from members as well as more casual visitors to the site.

Digg claims to receive 20 million unique visitors every month, and certainly the volume of traffic via popular links from the service is so great that it can cause smaller companies' servers to crash. As with other social media platforms, rumors of acquisition deals and massive valuations for the service are flying around, but it remains independent and relatively small in terms of the number of employees (around 40).

Micro-blogging

Micro-blogging is tool that combines elements of blogging with instant messaging and social networking.

The clear leader in the micro-blogging field is Twitter with over 340,000 users. Other notable micro-blogging players include Pownce and Jaiku, which offer various different features, but for the purposes of this e-book it makes sense to focus on the Twitter format.

Twitter users can send messages of up to 140 characters instantly to multiple platforms. 90% of Twitter interactions are not made via the Twitter website, but via mobile text message, Instant Messaging, or a desktop application such as Twitterific. Its flexibility is further enhanced by the ability to subscribe to updates via RSS. Uses of Twitter vary. It's popular among homeworkers and freelancers, who use it in part as a 'virtual watercooler'. Other people use it simply to stay in touch with a close network and share thoughts or start conversations.

Its suitability as a vehicle for breaking news has encouraged the BBC and CNN to introduce Twitter feeds. Even candidates for the US Presidency have taken to Twitter (for example, Barack Obama). An important feature to note is that Twitter can be indexed via Google. As with so much on the web, it's a public platform, so it's worth remembering that as such your use of it may become part of your 'permanent record'.³

Mashups

In technology, a mashup is a web application that combines data from more than one source into a single integrated tool; an example is the use of cartographic data from Google Maps to add location information to real-estate data from Craigslist, thereby creating a new and distinct web service that was not originally provided by either source.

Mashups currently come in three general flavors: consumer mashups, data mashups, and business mashups.

The best known type is the consumer mashup, best exemplified by the many Google Maps applications. Consumer mashups combine data elements from multiple sources, hiding this behind a simple unified graphical interface.

Other common types are "data mashups" and "enterprise mashups". A data mashup mixes data of similar types from different sources (see Yahoo Pipes), as for example combining the data from multiple RSS feeds into a single feed with a graphical front end. An enterprise mashup (see JackBe), usually integrates data from internal and external sources - for example, it could create a market share report by combining an external list of all houses sold in the last week with internal data about which houses one agency sold.

A business mashup is a combination of all the above, focusing on both data aggregation and presentation, and additionally adding collaborative functionality, making the end result suitable for use as a business application.

A Telecom mashup is a telecommunications service where service elements come from more than one source and are combined into an integrated experience. For example, one could get the base service from company A, a ringback tone from company B, a voicemail service from company C, etc.

Mashups within mashups are known as 'monster mashups'.

³ icrossing, 2008

Overview

Facebook helps you keep tabs on everyone whose profile you can engineer a gander at. It has grown into a virtual nation of nine million people.

Recent changes to the site have made it slightly more interesting as a marketing tool.

- Companies can buy advertising space on Facebook. Appearing on the left sidebar of any Facebook page, the University of Phoenix is currently pouring big money into having its ads appear on the site, as are Verizon and Sprint.
- If you have the money (and the college-friendly product) to advertise here, your ad will be prominently yet tastefully displayed. The same is not true for MySpace.
- You can pay Facebook five dollars to have a "Facebook Flyer" displayed on the site 10,000 times in one day; the cost increases depending on how many times you wish the flyer to be displayed and how many days you want it to be displayed for.
- You can also post events on the site and invite people to attend. This service is free.
- Now that Facebook is a free-for-all like MySpace, you can send these event advertisements to people who do not have Facebook profiles, as well.
- Far more popular than the events, however, are Facebook groups. Again, anyone can create these groups. Groups that seem to have been created with a financial goal in mind do spring up, although some of them may just be the creations of innocent fans, such as "Boycott Pepsi - Buy Fanta."
- You can create a Facebook profile for your business and add friends from around the globe. This is also known as Friend Spam and it isn't recommended.
- Facebook can expose your brand to a lot of people. Remember to keep the dominant Facebook demographic in mind: despite the newly open format, Facebook is still the realm of the middle class, late teen, early twenty-something.

Facebook is so beloved by so many people that promoting something wisely and making it seem hip and fun could do you a lot of good. This site's users tend to get passionate about Facebook issues and if you can get them riled up via a group or event.

How to Get Started

Create your Facebook profile

A Profile Page on Facebook is the original and most traditional use of this social networking site. A Profile allows you to connect with family, friends or business colleagues and it can be customized to host as little or as much information as you feel comfortable. There's a spot to fill out interests and contact information, a place to upload pictures, and the capability for friends to send you a message or write on your "wall." Many people are uncomfortable sharing too much information about themselves online. No worries- Facebook has extremely good privacy settings that allow you to choose what people can and cannot see.

Jumpstart your Facebook marketing campaign with a profile. You want your profile page to be attractive to business contacts and potential consumers. Your profile should be simple, but informative and interesting. Just like a website, your profile should focus on the business goals that you intend to achieve.

Justin Smith of Inside Facebook explains why you need to work on your profile page. "Your profile page is an opportunity to craft a credible real-world story around the reasons your products or services are valuable." This is a venue where you need to be more personal when promoting your product. You have to be as authentic as you can be to your audience.

Start your brand's Facebook group

Another part of your Facebook marketing campaign includes creating a group and building a network for your business contacts and potential consumers. The best way to reach your target market is to create a network that they can join.

It is recommended that your main presence be a Fan Page. Groups should be used for organizing and connecting customers, clients, donors or volunteers with each other. One great example of an organization using Groups effectively is Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Because Komen is a national nonprofit they have a Fan Page. Their affiliates around the country can then organize Groups which allow smaller communities of people to meet, connect, and rally around Race events.

A Facebook group offers a venue where consumers and contacts can interact in connection to a particular product or concept. In this case, you're building brand awareness while interacting with your customers at the same time. Putting up a group is probably the simplest Facebook marketing technique that you can employ.

The best thing about groups is that you can easily update your contacts about your company's upcoming products, events, and promos. As a marketing strategy, your Facebook group allows you to disseminate information in the most cost-effective way possible. It wouldn't cost you anything to set up a group or a number of groups.

Promote through Facebook Marketing

Facebook marketing also works for promoting other online marketing campaigns. For instance, if you have a company blog or if you have an upcoming promo or event, you can post a note on your profile. These notes will come up in your contacts' news feed so everybody will easily find out what's going on with you simply by logging on to their Facebook accounts.

These are just some of the ways through which you can use Facebook marketing to your advantage. Some of the strategies such as creating a group may entail extra work especially in managing messages, but these efforts will pay off as soon as you find your business attracting more sales activity through the market that you managed to reach.

Start your brand's Page

Until a few months ago, nonprofits and businesses were often unsure about whether they should have a Fan Page, a Group, or both. In March, Facebook debuted a new type of Fan Page that looks and acts similar to an individual Profile Page. Some favorite features include the option to interact with fans, advertising capabilities, fan tracking and reporting, and a status update feature similar to a Twitter update. The new Fan Page is set up to allow users more viral visibility because your Fan Page updates show up on your fans' homepage feeds, keeping you at top of mind.

If you don't yet have one, the first step is to create a free user profile. Go to facebook.com and click "Sign Up." You'll fill out some basic information, receive a confirmation email, and click the link in the e-mail. To create a Facebook Page, go to facebook.com/pages/create.php. Type the name of the Page exactly as you want it to appear and as you think users will search for it. You won't be able to change the name later.

Select the category that's best for your business. Selecting the correct Page type will make the features of the Page more relevant, so avoid using "Other" unless there's truly no good alternative. Now you just need to add content and publish your Page.

There are several ways users can find your Facebook Page:

- **Name Search:** Users can search for you by name using the Quick Search bar on any page, or by going to the main search page. Your Facebook Page will appear high in the search results if the user enters your name as it appears on your Facebook Page.
- **Fans' Profiles:** A link to your Facebook Page will appear in the profile of each of your fans in their "I am a Fan of..." box.
- **News Feed & Mini-Feed:** Users will see stories in their News Feed when their friends become fans of your Facebook Page or engage with the Page in various other ways. Similarly, these stories will be published in the friends' Mini-Feeds. Every day, billions of potential stories are created on Facebook, but only the most interesting ones are published to News Feed; Social Ads, however, turbo-charge the distribution of these actions on your Facebook Page make it into users' News Feeds.
- **Public View of Your Facebook Page:** Your Facebook Page is visible to people who are not logged in to Facebook, so you can add links to your Facebook Page on other websites and blogs. Internet search engines will also index your Page and share it with their users.
- **Pages Dashboard:** Users can browse through their own Pages, other Pages with recent activity, their friends' favorite Pages, and lists of most popular Pages by category.
- **Events:** When you create Events for your Page—like sales, happy hours, and concerts—your fans can invite their friends to come along with them.
- **Share:** Fans who like your Page can permanently post it to their own profile and/or invite particular friends to check it out.

Administration of Facebook Pages

It's helpful to remember the difference between your user profile and your Facebook Page. You access Facebook by logging into your user profile, regardless of whether or not when you have a Facebook Page. When you edit your user profile, these changes will not be reflected on your Facebook Page. Likewise, when you edit your Facebook Page, these changes will not be reflected in your user profile.

There are two ways to edit your Facebook Page:

- Use the Page Manager, which appears in your Facebook left sidebar as "Page Manager" or "Ads and Pages." You can also use the Page Manager to view detailed statistics about your Page and to support it with Social Ads
- Bookmark your Facebook Page and click an "Edit" link in any section or in the upper right part of Page

When adding content to Facebook, notice whether you're adding it to your Facebook Page or to your user profile. If you want to add content to a Facebook Page, go to the Page Manager application or to your Facebook Page first.

If you have colleagues who help maintain your Facebook Page, you may want to add them as administrators of your Page. Since you should never share your personal log-in information to your user profile, inviting your colleague as administrators is the only way to share control of your Facebook Page. The user(s) you add will then need to confirm that they want to have administrative access to the Page.

- Go to your Facebook Page, and click 'Admins' in the upper-right part of the Page. Then select from your friends on Facebook and/or enter the email addresses of colleagues who aren't yet on Facebook
- Users cannot see who is administrating your Facebook Page
- Never share your secret log-in details

To remove an admin from your Facebook Page, just click 'Remove admin' next to the name of the person you want to remove on the Admins page. If you accidentally remove yourself as an administrator of your Facebook Page, you will need to ask one of the remaining admins to add you as an administrator of the Page. Never remove yourself as an administrator of your Facebook Page unless there is at least one other administrator; otherwise, your Facebook Page will be taken down from the site.

Using Applications

You can use applications on your Facebook Page to share information, sell products, and engage your consumers with rich media.

- Use the application directory to find applications you want to add to your Facebook Page.
- A good way to find useful applications is to search for businesses similar to yours and browse the applications they are using.

Several applications are included by default with your Facebook Page:

1) Mini-Feed: The Mini-Feed in your Facebook Page shows a log of recent changes, just as it does on a user profile. You may delete any story that you do not want to display. It's important to regularly update content on your Facebook Page, so users know that the Page is being actively maintained.

2) Photos: Photos are the most popular feature on Facebook. With billions of photos, Facebook is the number one photos site on the Internet, so think seriously about how you can best integrate photos into your profile. Upload the photo that best represents your business as the Profile Picture at the top of the Edit Page. A good Profile Picture is crucial to help users find your business in search. You can choose to allow fans to add photos to your Page.

It is a good idea to upload photos frequently to your Facebook Page. Use vibrant, candid photos to communicate the human element of your business: employees, special events, customers, etc. These will give your Facebook Page a natural feel to users who are used to viewing their friends' profiles and photos.

To add new photos, go to the Edit Page for your Facebook Page and click on 'Photos'. To create a new album, select 'Create a Photo Album' at the top of the page. To add photos to an existing album, click on that album and then select 'Add More Photos' at the top of that page. No changes you make while editing an album will be saved until you click "Save Changes" at the bottom of that page.

3) Events: You can use Events to inform customers about grand openings, in-store sales, happy hours, public appearances, and any other occasions or milestones you want people to be aware of. Fans, in turn, can RSVP and spread the word to their friends. To create an Event, go to the Edit Page for your Facebook Page and click on "Events." Fill in the event information and add a picture to your event. You can then add photos, videos and other content to the event—and you can choose whether or not to let fans add content as well.

To edit your Facebook Page's Event, go to your Facebook Page and click 'Edit Event' in the upper-right. You can delete an Event by clicking 'Cancel' in the upper-right of the Event's Edit Page.

One of the ways Facebook knows which stories are most interesting to a given user is the number of that user's friends involved in a story. Stories about Events can include all the users who have RSVP'ed. Therefore, actively using Events is a powerful way to reach users through the News Feed.

4) Notes: Notes is Facebook's blogging feature. You can use Notes to tell your fans about recent press mentions or awards, highlight new products, or share any other information with your customers.

To write a new note, go to the Edit Page for your Facebook Page, click on 'Notes,' and click on 'Write a New Note' in the upper-right. You can also import an external blog from another website. From the Notes Edit Page, follow the instructions on the right side of the page.

5) Video: Facebook's Video application offers you a highly engaging and personal way to show fans video promotions, clips of live performances, or recordings of what it's like inside your office, store, or venue. (You can also send Video Updates to all your fans; see Sending Updates to All Your Fans for more information.) You can record, upload, and edit videos effortlessly—just go to the Edit Page for your Facebook Page and click on 'Videos.'

6) Discussion Board: Your Facebook Page has a Discussion Board, where you and your fans can talk about your business, your products, and your upcoming events. This is a great place to get candid, actionable feedback from your customers. When you or any administrator of your Facebook Page writes on your Discussion Board, the post will appear to come from your Facebook Page and not from your user profile.

To start a new topic or to respond to an existing topic on your Discussion Board, simply click on an existing thread or start a new one. You will see an option to 'Start New Topic' in the upper right part of the main Discussion Board page. Only you and fans of your Page can start a new topic.

You can turn your Discussion Board off by clicking on the 'X' in the upper right corner of the Discussion Board on your Facebook Page. You can also turn the discussion off or on from the Edit Page for your Facebook Page. You can delete any Discussion Board posts or topics that you do not want appearing on your Facebook Page. If a user violates Facebook's Terms of Use with a post, you can report the user by clicking the "Report" link next to one of their posts so that appropriate action may be taken. Posts violating Facebook's Terms of User will be removed.

7) Wall: Facebook Pages come with either Wall or Reviews pre-installed. Wall is a public comment board where your fans can leave messages that will be visible to everyone who views your Facebook Page. When you write on the Wall of your Facebook Page, you will be writing on behalf of the Facebook Page itself and not as your user profile.

You can send a private Message to someone who wrote on your Wall, although this private Message will come from your user profile and not the Facebook Page. You can delete any Wall post. If a user violates Facebook's Terms of Use with a Wall post, you can report that user to Facebook by clicking the 'Report' link, and you can click 'Block' link, so they will no longer be able to write on your Wall. You can turn off your Wall by clicking the 'X' in the upper right corner of

your Wall on your Facebook Page. You can also turn your Wall off or on from the Edit Page for your Facebook Page.

8) Reviews: Facebook Pages come with either Wall or Reviews pre-installed. Reviews allow users to write about your business or particular products— for instance, their favorite dish at your restaurant, a recent spa treatment they enjoyed, or an exciting part of the film they just watched.

If a user violates Facebook's Terms of Use with a review, you can report the user by clicking the "Report" link under their review so that appropriate action may be taken. Reviews violating Facebook's Terms of Use will be removed.

You can choose to display on the front of your Facebook Page only those reviews written by a user's friends. From your Facebook Page, on the Reviews box, just click the edit link and choose your preferred setting. Only Reviews of three stars or higher will receive free viral distribution into friends' News Feeds.

There are thousands of other applications that you can add to your Facebook Page. A restaurant owner might add the applications to help users judge their food, make reservations, or order for delivery. A film producer might add Fandango's Movie Times and Tickets application so users can buy tickets directly from the Page. A musician might add the iCast application by iLike to blog or try either the MusicShop application by Musictoday or the My Merch Store application by Zazzle to sell clothing and CDs. The choices are yours—experiment and pick what's right for your business.

To browse applications, go to the Edit Page for your Facebook Page, click on More Applications link at the bottom of the applications section. When you find an application you want to use on your Facebook Page, just click on it and then click 'Add to Page' in the right-hand column. Be sure to add the application to your Facebook Page and not to your user profile. To search for an application by name, just type its name into the Quick Search bar in your left sidebar.

You can also add applications you see when other user profiles and Facebook Pages. When you see one you want to add, click 'Add' in the upper-right part of the application's box. Not all applications can be added to your Facebook Page. When you try to add an application, look for a link in the upper-right for 'Add to Page'. If this link does not appear, then that application cannot be added to your Facebook Page (it's probably designed for user profiles instead.)⁴

⁴ The Insider's Guide to Viral Marketing, 2009

Overview

MySpace is one of the most popular social networking sites online today. However, it's actually more than a typical social networking site. Users can make friends, write blog posts, add music, and create a custom look to their MySpace pages to make them unique and truly their own. MySpace has a reputation of being popular for teenagers, but people from around the world and from all walks of life successfully use MySpace for personal and professional purposes, including blog promotion.

MySpace is filled with tools and features to help users connect with other users and communicate. You can add music and videos to your site, customize the look and feel of your profile with custom MySpace layouts and graphics, send messages, write blog posts, instant message your MySpace friends and even join groups.

How to Get Started

It is relatively simple to engage in account creation on MySpace. You just need a few minutes, an email address, and the time to provide some pretty basic information about yourself. Once you have done this, it is important and necessary to take the time to read the terms of your membership on this social networking website. Once this is completed, you will be welcomed to the website with open arms. This is done by an activation email. It will be sent to the email address that you used to create your account on MySpace. You simply open and click. Advertise yourself, talk about your career, provide news, even advertise and market your merchandise, videos, and music.

Your profile is the page that visitors will see when they visit your page. Many individuals find that this is a very exciting part of becoming a MySpace member. You can customize this page to display your interests, likes, hobbies, work, personal life, and more! The downfall is that in order to create a truly effective and detailed profile, a basic knowledge of HTML is required. The good thing is, there are many MySpace profile generators that will assist you with nearly every aspect of profile creation when it comes to your MySpace page. This makes it extremely easy to develop and design an artistic profile with little or no experience!

In order to start creating a memorable profile, you would simply visit your home page on MySpace and select "Edit Profile". This will be near the image that you can place on your page. Here, you can type information that is related to you, the things that you enjoy, people that you are looking to meet, your lifestyle, and more! If you like, you can add pictures, videos, and music to your MySpace page as well.

Overview

A first reaction to LinkedIn's is to wonder just how experienced and how professional the members of this site actually are. After all, LinkedIn's worthiness somewhat depends on the caliber of its seven million users.

- Clicking "People search" and typing in a common last name will provide a good list of people, their industries, companies, positions and locations. And, wow, this site is not filled with spam and idiocy!
- The majority of people on LinkedIn are true professionals. Thus, there are definitely marketing opportunities.
- The process of promoting a business on LinkedIn involves getting recommendations from other people (who must have LinkedIn profiles themselves). When you receive a recommendation from someone, the fact that they recommended you appears in your profile. The only odd thing about this is that the recommendations do not come with the names or statements of the people who provided them.
- You can search through professionals in specific areas (and be listed, if you have the adequate recommendations),
- Job searches for job-seekers and a candidate search for employers and recruiters is also available.
- You can also view members who graduated from your school, people with specified skills and people from a particular area of the world. And yes, this site is popular enough to be truly international. Looking for an engineer in Denmark? Look no further.
- Oh, how wonderful it is not to have to provide one's relationship status or a list of "who I'd like to meet!"
- Gain visibility on a site where everyone is there for professional purposes. You can use the site to either find potential business associates, or someone may find you and your services instead.

How to Get Started

When you start on LinkedIn, you need to build a profile of yourself, what you do, who you work for etc. This is like an online CV builder, and if you are serious about using LinkedIn, you do need to spend some time getting this right and keeping it updated. People can find you by searching so it is worth putting a smattering of keywords across your profile that reflects your key skills or products. It is worth spending some time to filling your profile out fully, because you never know who can find you online – business contact, ex-colleagues, prospects and even potential employees.

One of the biggest mistakes people make who join LinkedIn is that they sit back and wait for something to happen, which is only natural and I certainly did to start with. Any form of networking whether that be offline or online, needs you to be proactive to grow your network. The difference with LinkedIn is that it make this very easy for you to do. My key phrase with regards to this and other social networking sites is a simple one – ‘you only get out of it what you put into it!’ So you need to start building your network, but how do you do it?

Here are the top 10 ways for beginners to grow their networks on LinkedIn:

1. Take out your business card collection, or if you're organized use your Contacts in Outlook, or even on your PDA or Blackberry. Go through each one and do a quick search on LinkedIn, and if you find them there, send them an invite using the relevant page and make sure you personalize the emails.
2. Spend some time and think of people you have worked with during your career, and if you find them link to them. They may have gone to the same school / college / university, or you have worked with them at current or previous organizations. You will be surprised at how many of these people are on LinkedIn.
3. Each time you get a request to join a network, either accept it or archive it. Do not choose the ‘I don't know this person’ as once a person gets five of these their account is frozen, and you could then be responsible for having them removed! My advice in the beginning would be to accept all requests to link up.
4. Get into the habit of being a ‘name magpie’. Each time you think of people you haven't yet linked to write them down somewhere safe. Trust me this will happen, and you will find yourself remembering people you thought you had forgotten about! Next time you are online, go searching on LinkedIn and as before, when you find them, link to them. It is also a great way of finding what people have been up to since you last met.

5. If you do find someone in your (now expanding) network who you would like to connect to but don't have an email address for, then you can still contact them. Request an introduction through someone in your network that is connected to the person you want to connect to (if there are multiple connections here, you can even choose which introducer to use). Just make sure you explain succinctly why you want to be introduced, as the introducer does have the power of veto.
6. Recommendations. Don't be afraid to ask current colleagues, excolleagues, business partners etc for recommendations on LinkedIn. They do help in building your profile further, but my advice would be only seeking recommendations from people that you would recommend yourself.
7. Regularly go through the connections of all your 1st level contacts. They are also expanding their networks, and it is likely you will find mutual contacts that you will be able to link to.
8. Connect with power networkers or 'hubs' in your industry. These are the people who have thousands of contacts and are usually only too pleased to link with others. They are often referred to as 'open networkers' and have their email address placed publicly in their profile. Don't be shy with these people; they are motivated by expanding their networks. When you next do a search for someone, sort the search by connections (drop down box), and you will find them. Invest the time to link with these power networkers, and you will find your own network going exponential!!
9. The Advanced Search is key to getting the most out of LinkedIn, get used to using it – you will reap the benefits.
10. LinkedIn kindly provide you with a button that you can add to email footers, websites, blogs etc. Make sure you use it (go to your profile, 'Promote your profile'), it is great advertising, and you will get people inviting you to join their network.⁵

⁵ Sirona Consulting, 2008

Overview

Launched in June 2008, GovLoop.com is becoming the "Facebook for Government" where over 8,500 federal, state and local government employees connect to share best practices and ideas to improve government. There is a ton of great information on the site with over 1,300 blogs, 1,000 discussions, 200 videos, 3,000 photos and 400 events. Members range from city managers, county CIOs and municipal public affairs officials to federal senior executives, public policy professors and brilliant new government innovators.

The network has over 5,000 members from federal, state, and local government. Their members range from CIOs and Deputy Administrators to brilliant mid-level and entry-level staff all across the United States and the globe.

In only a few months, their members have written over 600 blogs, launched 450 discussions, posted over 200 events, and shared 1000+ photos and over 100 videos.

Together they connect and collaborate on ways to improve government from the inside. Recent discussions and blogs have addressed topics such as Gov 2.0, Crowdsourcing, Participatory Budgeting, and Creating New Government Leaders.

Especially of interest on GovLoop is the number of groups on the site ranging from Acquisitions 2.0, Human Resources, Open Source Software and Communications Best Practices. Additionally, members post openings at their work so it is a great place to find new opportunities and recruit new staff. Furthermore, GovLoop has expanded into other additional mediums with a Twitter feed (@govloop) and a Gov 2.0 Podcast (gov2radio.com) with guests including Tim O'Reilly and TweetCongress.

How to Get Started

Simply go to <http://www.govloop.com> and sign up for a free account. Once you become a member you will have full access to the blogs, discussions, videos, photos and events.

Overview

Twitter is an online service that enables you to broadcast short messages to your friends or "followers." It also lets you specify which Twitter users you want to follow so you can read their messages in one place.

Twitter is designed to work on a mobile phone as well as on a computer. All Twitter messages are limited to 140 characters, so each message can be sent as a single SMS alert. You can't say much in 140 characters. That's part of Twitter's charm.

Twitter is useful for close-knit groups (although there also are some fairly large mobs on Twitter). If you follow your friends, and they follow each other, you can quickly communicate group-related items, such as "I'm going to the pub on Fourth Street, come on along."

If you enter items into Twitter, they can be private, so only friends you've authorized can see them. Items can also be made public, which means anyone who knows your Twitter ID can read and subscribe to them.

How to Get Started

Go to [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) and click "Join for free." It's also helpful to upload a picture. If you select the "Protect my updates" box, people won't be able to read your Twitters unless you authorize them.

Now that you have a Twitter account, tell your people your username or send them the link to your Twitter page. Each user has his own page, in the form twitter.com/username. (Example: Twitter page is twitter.com/Hughes-stl.)

Connecting to Mobile Devices

The Twitter network works for you even if you're not at your computer or browsing the Web. Once you are registered, you can connect your mobile phone and instant messenger account. Go to Settings > Phone and IM. Connecting your phone and IM programs to your Twitter account is a straightforward process. Note that messages you view on a phone or an IM program also are readable on your personal Twitter Web page.

You can make Twitter send you a message every time a user who you are following has posted a Twitter message. This can be fun, but it will drive you crazy if you are following a lot of people. If you don't want to be barraged by a stream of random messages but still want friends to be able to reach you, select "Direct Message." Then when other users send a message to you and you alone, you'll be alerted on your phone or IM account. Otherwise, you won't get an alert.

Tweeting

You can send a Twitter message, or "Tweet," from any of your registered devices.

- From the Web page, enter a message in the entry window at the top of the page.
- From a mobile phone, send an SMS message to 40404. Your phone's caller ID is attached to your Twitter account, so the system will know it's from you.
- From M, message TwitterIM if you're on AOL, or twitter@twitter.com if you're on Jabber/GTalk.

In all these cases, all your "followers" will see your message on their own Twitter pages and possibly on their mobile devices as well.

Following

If you've gotten this far, you're able to send messages into the Twitter system, and people can find your account and follow your updates. Here's how you can see their messages.

On the Web: to add a friend, first be sure you are logged into your account. Then go to his or her Twitter page and press the "Add" link in the "Actions" box. To find a user page, use the search box on your own Twitter page.

Once you click "Add," you'll start to see his or her Tweets on your page if his or her account is set for public access. If the account is private, the system will send a "friend" request that must be approved before you start to see updates.

You also can see who your friends are following by hovering your mouse pointer over the pictures in the sidebar on your friends' pages. Those pictures are of their friends--the users they are following. If you click on one of those pictures, you'll go to that user's page, where you can add him or her, too.

You can see all the Tweets from any person's friends by clicking the "With Friends" tab above his or her message window. Or you can turn that off and see only his or her Tweets by clicking the obliquely named "Previous" tab.

On the phone or IM: send the command follow username to register your phone or IM account to receive public Tweets from a user. You also can invite people based on a phone number: SMS add phonenumber to 40404, and you'll start following the user at that number; if the person at that number isn't a Twitter user, he or she will get an invitation to join.

There are a few numbers on your Twitter page. The most important figures are these:

- The number of "followers" you have. These are the people who are paying attention to (following) your Tweets.
- The number of "friends" you have. This is the number of people you are following.

Public figures and Twitter celebrities will have more followers than friends. People who want to watch more than participate will have more friends than followers. People who just use Twitter to communicate just within their own social group will have roughly the same number of friends and followers.

Person-to-person Twittering

You can send a Twitter message directly to another Twitter user with the Direct command. Enter d username message, and users will get your ping if they have direct messages enabled on their phone or IM account.

If you enter a Tweet with @username at the beginning of it, your message is understood as being intended for that particular person, although others will be able to see it. (However, @ tweets won't show up on your home page unless you are the intended recipient.) Be sure the person who you want to see your message is following you, or they won't get it.

Advanced features

You can apply your own design to your Twitter home page: it's fairly straightforward. Typically you should avoid using the "tile" option for your background image.

Twitter also can be used via third-party programs that run on your desktop or in your widget/gadget engine.⁶

⁶ CNET Webware, 2009

Overview

When a website, or any appliance, for that matter, becomes a verb, you know they have done something right. "To digg" has become an important addition to this noun-turned-verb crowd.

- You can submit your own content to Digg; however, whether your content is dugg en masse has a lot to do with the status of the person who submits the article.
- When someone else diggs your content without your knowledge, you'll probably not be ready for a huge increase in traffic. If your site is strong enough, an untimely digg isn't going to hurt you.
- If you have digg-worthy content, consider enabling a comments form, or some type of participation, whereby users have to register in order to participate. This way, your Digg referrals should result in more people registering and being more inclined to become regular visitors.
- You cannot have everyone in your office digg what you've submitted. The site's editors will notice that a lot of diggs are coming from the same IP address, and their most likely course of action will be to ban you and your colleagues accounts.

How to Get Started

There are two main things that you can do on Digg. The first is to submit stories that you think the community will like and the second is to digg stories that you like.

Submitting

Thousands of stories are submitted to Digg on a daily basis on a variety of topics. There are currently 7 categories on Digg which include technology, science, world & business, sports, videos, entertainment, and gaming. If you come across any stories that you think are interesting, you can submit them for others to vote on.

Digging

If you like a story you have the option of "digging" it, which is basically voting on it and endorsing it. However, if you don't like a story then you can bury it by marking it as duplicate, spam, wrong topic, inaccurate or even lame. If this is too simple and you'd like to say more, there is a comment section which gives you the opportunity to give your own two cents on the story and what you really think about it.

Front Page

There are two separate areas where stories are displayed, one is the upcoming section and the other is the popular stories section that begins on the front page. When a story is submitted, it has up to 24 hours to make it to the front page or longer if it has not been marked as duplicate, spam, wrong topic, inaccurate or lame. Digg's complex algorithms take multiple factors into account in order to determine if a story should hit the front page. Some of the factors that the algorithm uses are as follows:

- The number of diggs
- Amount of buries
- Identity of the voters
- Time
- IP addresses
- Category

Example: Stories submitted in the sports category generally require less diggs to reach the front page compared to stories submitted in the technology category. Overall, less people submit and digg sports stories compared to technology stories which is taken into account by Digg.

Features

Although Digg seems like a simple website it is filled with many useful features:

- Digg Spy: In order to tell what other users are digging, submitting, commenting on, or reporting (burying)? Use Digg Spy to show all the activity on Digg in real time. Every few seconds it polls diggs and updates the page. So if you submit a story you can use Digg Spy to keep track of it, that way you can see how many people buried it compared to dugg it (digging a story).
- Popular Archive: Thousands of stories have made the Digg front page, with the Popular Archive you can see them all in an easy list format. You can back track to older days and months and see the stories that made the front page with the amount of diggs next to each story.
- Digg Labs: Currently Digg Labs contains two tools that help give a deeper and broader view of Digg. Stack is a tool which shows diggs occurring in real time on up to 100 stories at once. Swarm is a tool which creates brightly colored circles for stories as they are dugg.
- Digg Tools: At the moment, in the Digg Tools section, there are six features that help people get more involved with Digg.

- Digg badges - badges can be placed on one's website in order for visitors to digg the website.
- Digg news - the latest digg stories can be added to ones website or blog with ease.
- Digg button - for those who have a blog a "digg this" button can be added to each blog post.
- Google IG module - view recent stories from Digg on your personalized Google homepage.
- Google Coop module - see Digg stories at the top of your Google search results.
- Video thumbnails - enables you to display Digg's video thumbnails on your own website.

Submission

When you submit a story, there are many keys to bolstering it's acceptance by the community which can ultimately affect its popularity. If a story does not have an attractive title and description, there is a good chance that it will not make the front page. A lot of diggers do not click through to actually read the whole story, they just digg based on the title and description.

When creating a title and description, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Make a statement and do not be dull.
 - Example: Senator Ted Stevens Downloads the Entire Internet and Complains It's Slow!
- Be controversial and make false promises (it sounds bad, but it works!).
 - Example: If an article was called "Professor says days of 'no oil' are nearing" you may want to use this as the digg title "Days of no oil are nearing".
- Use keywords in the title that diggers love and that are also relevant to the story.
 - Example: Amazing high resolution photos of the Sun.

Friends

Digg is a social website where users interact with each other. Just like MySpace, Facebook, Friendster, or any of the other social websites; you can make friends on Digg too. Looking at the top 100 digg users, there is one thing they all have in common: they have lots of friends. If a story needs 100 or so diggs to make the front page (number can vary), getting a few diggs from your friends will just help get you their faster. It usually is not too hard to get your friends to digg your submissions as long as you are also reciprocating and digging your friends' submissions as well. This may sound like "gaming" Digg, but it seems that Digg has taken this into consideration with

their algorithm to stop abusers. Keep in mind that this is still a community and should be treated as such if you are trying to leverage it's offerings.

The Digg Effect

One of the main reasons Digg is so popular is because it can drive thousands of visitors to a website within minutes. As you might expect, this can have a profound implications for website owners:

- It can help increase traffic which can lead to links and increased search engine rankings
- Help increase pageviews which increases advertising revenue
- Serve as a marketing tactic for branding strategies and promotions

Because of these benefits some people will do anything to get on the front page of digg.com which can include paying for diggs or even messaging everyone they know to solicit additional diggs. These techniques are effective however don't be mislead: Statistics show that a select few (100) users contribute over 50 percent of the stories that reach the front page. These users are able to do this because of the stories they find, the text used when submitting the story, and the friends that they have which help them along the way. That doesn't mean you have no control over the popularity of the stories on the front page, it just means that you need to take a few things into account if you are submitting.⁷

⁷ Pronet, 2009

Overview

Wikipedia is an online free-content encyclopedia that anyone can edit and contribute to.

Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wales has described Wikipedia as "an effort to create and distribute a multilingual free encyclopedia of the highest quality to every single person on the planet in his or her own language." Wikipedia exists to bring knowledge to everyone who seeks it.

This site is so popular that searching for any kind of keyword will often display a Wikipedia result in Google's top ten. Here are some basic facts and tips for using Wikipedia.

- If your site really does have something to contribute, go ahead and post your link in a Wikipedia article's External Links section.
- The wiki aspect of these online encyclopedias is dangerous because you may find people writing things about you that you don't like.
- Also, if your website is not the strongest page on the net, your entry on Wikipedia could well rate ahead of your own site for your specific keywords. Thus, it is smart to make sure that anything said about your interests on this site has as good of a balance between "true" and "complimentary" as possible.
- A surprising number of internet users don't fully understand the concept of a wiki and many have no idea that anybody can edit one, let alone write for one.
- Posting an advertisement that is posing as an article is pointless. It will be deleted. When you're writing unique content about your business, try to write it from the perspective of an outsider who has nothing to gain from the article appearing on Wikipedia.
- Your main professional aim on Wikipedia should be controlling what is said about you. Their links are far too influential for you to ignore Wikipedia's content, especially given the public's misunderstanding of its liberal editorial policies.

How to Get Started

If you're responsible for your company's image, Wikipedia is just one more place to know what's being said about you. It is important to look up your competitors, too, since you or your products may appear on pages about them. Here are some steps for getting started:

- Look up your company, products, inventions, brands, and people on Wikipedia. Do the same for other companies in your ecosystem: competitors, partners, suppliers and customers. Take note of any entries that present a problem. You may be involved with these pages for a while.
- Browse the Help section and read a good selection of entries before you start making changes. Wikipedia is like other Internet subcultures that want newcomers to learn their ways before making noise.
- Anyone can edit Wikipedia entries. If you find simple errors, fix them. Then monitor that page to see if the errors return. Be sure to see the Discussion and History tabs at the top of each entry.
- Set up an account on Wikipedia. Registered users can create new pages and set up watchlists to track changes to Wikipedia entries.
- Just to keep things interesting, remember that Wikipedia exists in multiple languages. You'll need to track them individually.

There are two main ways to get listed in Wikipedia:

1. Get listed as a resource. This means inserting the link to your website in the "External Links" or "References" section for existing and related Wikipedia pages.
2. Create a new Wikipedia page describing a personality/event/business entity/profession/website.

You should create a new Wikipedia page only if you are unable to find the topic in Wikipedia.

When targeting a specific subject, do a search and make a list of the pages that you want to edit.

1. First, visit Wikipedia and choose which language to log into.
2. Then, click on the "Signup/Create an account" button on the top right hand corner of the screen. Fill in a username and password. Email addresses are optional.
3. After which, you'll see a row of tabs show up at the top of the screen. This includes your watchlist, contributions and messages.
4. Surf to a webpage you want to edit and scroll all the way down to the "External Links" section. There's an "edit" link at the right side of the screen. Clicking it will allow you to start editing the External Links page.

5. If you want to edit the content for the entire page, click on the 'edit this page' link right at the top of your screen. Not recommended if you don't know what you are doing.

Wikipedia is the kind of low-profile, apparently objective, information source that potential customers could rely on when they're getting ready to buy. Wikipedia is not the place for a sales-oriented pitch, but it shouldn't be the place for inaccurate, adverse information, either.

Wikipedia editors are pretty strict and they'll definitely remove your link within minutes if it is irrelevant or seems like a sales-pitch.

You'll need to be aware of Wikipedia's Notability guideline:

All topics should meet a minimum threshold of notability for an article to be included in Wikipedia. Notable is defined as "worthy of being noted" or "attracting notice", but is not synonymous with "fame" or "importance". It is not measured by editors subjective judgment. A topic is generally notable if it has been the subject of published material which is independent of the subject, reliable, and most importantly, attributable. The depth of coverage and quality of sources must be considered in determining the number of sources required and whether the coverage establishes notability. Multiple sources are preferable and should be independent of each other.

Notability is by far one of the most important factors when it comes to being successfully listed in Wikipedia. Notability also limits the amount of material that can be created on Wikipedia.

For instance, you can't write about your secretary or co-worker unless they have "been the subject of published material which is independent of the subject". This also means well known personalities or events can be a placement target for webmasters with relevant web pages.

Notability also means you need to create Wikipedia pages that are similar to college essays: Attribution and authentic references are requirements you need to fulfill. If you are creating a fresh page on Wikipedia, make sure to include as many references as possible from other websites, personalities and even blogs. A good rule of thumb is to include at least 3 references within the first two paragraphs. Like a college essay, your sources will need to have some authority while relating to the topic.

To understand what type of material will work for Wikipedia, you need to understand what Wikipedia is not.

Articles about companies and products are acceptable if they are written in an objective and unbiased style. Furthermore, all article topics must be third-party verifiable, so articles about very small “garage” or local companies are not likely to be acceptable. External links to commercial organizations are acceptable if they can serve to identify major corporations associated with a topic.

This means that overt commercial self-promotion will not work in Wikipedia. Your Wikipedia page must also refer to a verifiable entity. The easiest way to circumvent this is to refer to entities that already have their own page in Wikipedia.

How you frame your words is very important when it comes to creating a Wikipedia page. Wikipedians have always stressed that attribution and the Neutral Point of View (NPOV) are the two core content policies.

The neutral point of view is a means of dealing with conflicting views. The policy requires that, where there are or have been conflicting views, these should be presented fairly. None of the views should be given undue weight or asserted as being the truth, and all significant published points of view are to be presented, not just the most popular one. It should also not be asserted that the most popular view or some sort of intermediate view among the different views is the correct one. Readers are left to form their own opinions.

Superlatives are definitely are not encouraged and your content should be purely descriptive. Opinionated evaluations need to be attributed to verifiable sources so stay clear of that unless you have specific references at hand.

Creating a New Wikipedia Page

- Build up your editing history. This is crucial. Try not to make your first edit a link placement. Most editors at Wikipedia check your history of involvement. Try improving other articles that interest you and develop a background. This will prep you for the first time you try to edit a link.
- Is it Notable? Has it been the subject of published material? If the answer is no, you’ll probably find that the page will be deleted rather quickly. If it is notable, prepare a list of references to use when creating the page.

- Find your Competitors. Are your direct competitors listed in Wikipedia? If they're not listed, there might be something wrong with your niche or topic. Try submitting a brief skeletal description of your website with several external links to gauge the response.
- Include other sources. God forbid that you create a fresh Wikipedia page and only include your website as a source. Mix your link among other sources.
- Avoid Links in Content. Do not put any links in the body of text. Most of the time, Wikipedians will include the internal links for you. You'll just need to place the link to your website in the External Links section.
- Cite experts. Experts add authority to your page and increases its credibility.
- Check your copy. Never, ever write in first person when creating a Wikipedia page. Stay politically correct and strive for the semblance of objectivity. Use jargons as much as possible to keep your copy niche-centric.

Submitting your Website as a Resource

- Get some background info. Click on the "discussion" tab and find out how Wikipedians perceive the webpage. Find out what they need or don't need and use that to your advantage. Come up with what they need and submit it as a reference.
- Review the Page History. Click on the "History" tab and review the history of edits. Do they come fast and furious after a change has been made? Or are they hardly re-edited? Good way to determine the popularity of a Wikipedia page.
- Leech off personalities. Try adding links to specific personalities if you have a related web page. The more popular the personality, the harder it is to keep the link up.
- Include as References. Very useful when you come across a Wikipedia page that is calling for more references. You'll need to be familiar with what type of material you actually have on your website.
- Find a less popular topic that is still partially related to your niche.
- Don't submit more than one link in a day for each website. Submit too much too fast and you'll definitely be marked as a spammer. Submit every three days or once a week if possible. Squeeze in other legit submissions in between submissions for your website.
- Make your Site Ad-free. Remove all ads and affiliate links before inserting your webpage as a reference. Editors are extremely sensitive to commercial ads, especially if your website is not an authority in the niche. If you feel the need to, reinsert the ads after 3 weeks if your link is still up.
- Make Attribution visible. You could try leaving a section after each article on your website for references. Referencing others makes you accountable and possibly, more liable for approval.

- Aim for indirect traffic. This should be the last resort. If you write for more established websites, submit the page with your article and byline.

After you've finished listing your website...

- Monitor Edits. Click on the "Watch" tab to include the page with your link in your Watchlist. This allows you to be notified when changes are made. If inaccurate factual statements are inserted, you can revert the changes. Do not remove counter-arguments that are well attributed and verified.
- Make edits for other Wiki pages. Submit other links that are not your own or you can choose to correct sources or spelling/grammatical errors. Basically, try to be a team player and build your user reputation among the community.⁸

⁸ Dosh Dosh, 2008

Overview

As opposed to sites such as Webshots, Flickr has a more of a professional aura, catering to people who want to promote a business (such as their art work, as is pictured in the example below).

Its clean layout makes it a better place to share any photos, personal or not. However, due to its more experienced, professional population, it's a far more sensible realm in which to market something than similar sites, such as Webshots.

- Upload your interesting, relevant pictures, and then link to your website in your profile.
- Topping a search can be profitable. A search for "art galleries washington dc", Flickr user "lil" came in first. An interested user who clicks through to lil's profile page will see that she is a former art curator who is interested in being contacted about having her work published. She also provides a link to her website.
- Definitely include such a link. There's not much point having an impressive photo gallery and not directing viewers to your website.
- Aside from displaying your product, Flickr can be used as a PR tool. Include pictures that depict you in your professional life as you'd like to be seen by the public. Although this goes for every site where you can upload photographs, manage your online persona through your pictures.

How to Get Started

First step: Get your photos into the service. Flickr has a few options to get photos from your camera into your account, the easiest one being a little uploader app you can install on your PC or Mac (there's also a Linux version.) When it's installed on a PC, you can right-click on any photo and send it straight to Flickr. You also can use this uploader to create albums (Flickr calls albums sets) for your pictures. You can install software that lets you publish from any folder in Windows XP, without the need to use the uploading program. If you're using a Mac, there's also a plug-in for iPhoto.

If you're not keen on downloading a piece of software, Flickr lets you upload six individual photos at a time. This might work for some weekend shots, but if you've got more than 20 shots it's worth trying out the batch uploader. We recommend using the downloader software, or if you've got

Yahoo's Widgets Engine installed, the latest version comes with a widget that doubles as a photo viewer and uploading tool.

Tagging and organizing. Once your photos have been uploaded, you don't need to rely on titles or folders to sort them, as you do with most other sharing sites. Instead you use tags: short identifiers you can later use to categorize and search for photos. Sorting by tags lets you create sets on the fly – of just your pictures, or yours plus the community's. People often tag pictures with names, locations, event descriptions, and theme, for example: "Mountain," "Everest," "Cold," and "Vacation."

There are several ways to tag pictures, either one at a time or in batches. On any given picture, click the code and add a tag option on the right-hand side. Flickr lets you add up to 75 tags to each picture, so feel free to go wild. If you have a multiword tag such as "Tree House," put quotations around it, otherwise it will get split into two different tags.

- Notes. Say there's a really cool part of a picture you want people to notice. The easiest way to do this is with notes. On any of your pictures click the Add note button above the photo. This pops up a rectangle you can move around the picture and adjust in size. Just like a Post-it note, you can write a quick message for others to read. Once you're done, click save. The cool thing about notes is they don't get in the way if viewers don't want them. To see them, users can just move their cursor over a picture to pull them up. You can have several different notes on the same picture, and other users can add notes to your pictures. Good note etiquette: keep notes easy to see and use by not overlapping them.
- Geotagging. Geotagging is a special method of tagging photos with their location. To geotag any photo, just click "Place this photo on a map" under the Additional information box on the right-hand side of your photograph. This will pull up a new interface with a large map. The easiest way to add the location is to type it into the search box in the top right-hand corner. The built-in search isn't as forgiving as your average search engine, so if you can't remember the address, try looking it up on Google and pasting it in. Once you've found your spot, just drag your photo from the bottom of the screen to where the map pointer is. After doing this to several of your photos from different parts of the world, check out Mappr, which will give you a visual representation of where your photos were taken on a large map.

Sharing. Flickr is all about sharing. The reason it has tagging and notating features is so other people can find and make sense of your photos. Flickr gives you quite a few sharing options, but maybe the handiest is the embed option, which lets you paste thumbnail previews into forums, blogs, and social networking profiles such as MySpace. (Note: if you can't see this option on someone else's photo, they're likely a free member or they are restricting people from getting the higher resolutions of a shot.) Flickr will offer different resolutions of any shot you've uploaded.

If you want to share some of your recent shots on a blog or website, but don't want to go deal with the hassle of copying and pasting the embed code each time you can make a Flickr Badge. A Flickr Badge is a small embeddable picture viewer that showcases your latest pictures, an entire set, or just pictures with particular tags. You can pick HTML, which will work with any Web site, or Flash, which will show up for anyone who has Adobe's Flash player installed. Flash as it takes up less space and looks more professional. Follow the steps, picking out the photos and colors you want until you get to the embed code, which you can simply copy and paste wherever you plan on showing off your photos.

Half of the fun of these photo-hosting services is seeing what other people are taking pictures of and interacting with them. The biggest draws to Flickr's community are groups, which let users create and contribute to themed groups. Each group has a shared pool of pictures that any of its members can contribute to. There could be a theme, or maybe no theme at all; it's up to the user. Each group gets its own forum for chatting about topics or individual pictures. It's almost like book club, but for pictures. To join any group, just click the Join this group button on the right side of the page.

To contribute your own photos, just click the Send to group button above a picture (just like adding it to a set). You'll then get the option to select whatever group you're a member of in a drop-down list.

Participating in forums and group discussions also is really easy. If you're signed in to Flickr, just click the "Post a new topic" link. You also can reply to someone's topic by typing in the reply box at the bottom of the discussion. If you find a particularly amusing or noteworthy post you want to send to someone else, click the permalink at the end of the post. You can then copy this from your browser's address bar, or just right click the permalink and choose Copy link location.

Flickr's community is a social network of sorts. You can make friends (Flickr calls them contacts) and track their newest photos. When you want to make another Flickr user a contact, just click on his or her name. This will take you to his or her photos page. After that, just click on Add

USERNAME as a contact in the upper right-hand corner. Before sending the person the invite, Flickr gives you the option to mark them as a friend or a family member. You can skip this, but you might find it helpful if you intend on sorting your contact's photos en masse later on.

If you want to see your friends' newest photos without having to check the site, subscribe to the contacts RSS feed. Just click on the contacts button from the main menu at the top of your screen, and scroll down near the end of the page where you'll see an orange RSS feed icon. You can either click this to view the feed (if your browser supports RSS), or copy and paste it into your favorite RSS reader.⁹

⁹ CNET, Webware, 2008

Overview

YouTube was founded in February 2005 and has become one of the most popular web portals in the world. Allowing users to submit videos and wade through the massive video section by searching for keywords, YouTube has taken the idea of viral videos to a new level.

The Top Videos on Youtube have been watched over 50,000,000 times. The top videos of the day often get over 1,000,000 views in just one day. Imagine the marketing potential here by just having the url of your site show at the end of your video.

YouTube has been responsible for launching careers, such as that of YouTuber “Brookers” who was hired by Hollywood celebrity Carson Daly because of her cool videos. YouTube has also brought fame to previously unknown bands such as the “Sick Puppies,” a band that became popular because a video called “Free Hugs” was set to the Sick Puppies song “All The Same.” This just goes to show you the power that a catchy video can have on the creators life.

Anyone can simply create a home video, cartoon, music video, or anything else they are good at, upload it to YouTube.com and have it spread like a good virus throughout the world. The trick is to be creative, make a video that stands out of the fields of thousands of videos uploaded each day on YouTube.com. Once you have a catchy video, either mention the website you are trying to promote at the end of the video, use the website somehow in your video, or have the url display at the bottom of the video, or at the end. Statistics show that a very surprising 8% of people who watch a video and see a url at the end will type that url into their browser.

It is also important to note that once a video becomes known on Youtube, and starts generating buzz, the video can quickly become viral and spread throughout hundreds of video sites, blogs, and possibly even major media.

How to Get Started

Sign up for a free account - The site is YouTube.com. Once you're logged in, there's a tab to upload your videos, and it takes you through the process in a few easy steps. There's also a search box at the top righthand corner of the page for you to perform keyword searches on YouTube. Take some time familiarizing yourself with the layout, the Terms of Service, etc.

Producing an engaging video for YouTube is just the first step in launching a successful marketing campaign on YouTube. With 20 million viewers a month and literally millions of videos to choose from, it's easy to get lost in the crowd.

Here are some tips for making your company's videos rise to the top and leveraging them to help your business:

- Participate in the YouTube community. People forget that YouTube has an active community, similar to eBay. Get your name around by commenting on other videos and join existing topic-oriented groups or creating one if there isn't one in your niche area.
- Make sure your videos direct visitors to your site. Tens of thousands of viewers watching your videos sounds great, unless they have no direction to find your business afterwards. Make sure you include your Web address and other company contact information. You can create a special "landing page" for viewers coming to your site from YouTube. It should have a similar look and feel to YouTube and intuitive navigation to close the deal on transactions or gathering client leads; whatever your marketing objective may be.
- Using the right production values. Believe it or not, spending too much money producing the video is more of a problem than spending too little. If you look too professional, it may work against you. Most YouTube videos are shot with a \$300 camera. YouTube videos are 320 x 400 pixels. Less important is the equipment, while more important is technique. Talking heads, stationary shots work best. Audio, however, is something people don't think enough about. It is important to have quality audio.
- Choose your keywords carefully. There's only one way viewers find you on YouTube and that's the site's search engine. Using the right keywords is essential. Choose words that best fit your subject area and niche. Keywords should draw in a broad enough audience to get the exposure you seek, but not too much. With 20 million viewers passing through the site, businesses should use words that weed out traffic too.¹⁰

¹⁰ Inc. Technology, 2009

Overview

At its simplest, a blog is an online journal where the entries are published with the most recent first. There are a number of features that make blogs noteworthy and different to other websites:

- **Tone:** blogs tend to be written in a personal, conversational style. They are usually the work of an identified author or group of authors.
- **Topic:** blogs tend to define what it is they are writing about. They can be as specific as a blog about a book in progress or as wide in scope as my musings on life and stuff.
- **Links and trackbacks:** the services people use to write blogs make it very easy for them to insert links to other websites, usually in reference to an article or blog post or to provide further information about the subject they are writing about.
- **Comments:** each blog post has a comments section, effectively a message board for that article. On blogs with large audiences the debates in these sections can run to hundreds of comments at a time.
- **Subscription:** blogs can be subscribed to, usually via RSS technology, making it easy to keep up with new content.

How to Get Started

Blogs are easy to set up using any of a number of services. One of the simplest is the free Blogger service from Google. Others such as Wordpress and TypePad offer more features, the latter for a fee.

With millions of people around the world of different ages and backgrounds blogging about whatever they feel like, it is about as easy to generalize about bloggers as it is to make sweeping statements about human beings. Here are some of the main kinds of blogs you will come across:

- **Personal blogs:** Many millions of people keep blogs about their everyday lives, much like public diaries. These sometimes become very popular indeed, especially those anonymous, slightly risqué ones.
- **Political blogs:** Especially in the US blogs are being written about politics. Often perceived as a response to media bias (across the political spectrum) they tend to comment on the news, giving closer analysis of issues they feel have been misrepresented or glossed over by mainstream media.

- 'Almost media' blogs: Some blogs are unashamedly media businesses in their own right, taking advertising and employing a blogger or a group of bloggers full-time. Effectively, they are start-ups that are taking advantage of the new blogging technologies and opportunities to build communities of readers in new or niche subject areas. These are generally to be found covering news and opinion in the technology and media industries.
- Mainstream media blogs: Most national newspapers – and TV news programs – now have blogs for some of their reporters and editors. These can provide useful insights into the news gathering and reporting process, but will also give vent to personal views that the journalist may otherwise have kept to themselves.

The easiest way to read blogs is to subscribe to ones you find interesting using the Bloglines, Google Reader or Newsgator newsreader services. A newsreader is a website or piece of software where you can go to read a newsfeed that you are subscribed to via RSS. All blogs and most news websites have RSS feeds attached to them.

You can find blogs on topics that you're interested in by using search engines like Technorati or Google Blog Search. If you find a blog which is particularly interesting or relevant to you, have a look for its 'blogroll' (list of recommended blogs) – it's a great way of exploring the networks of blogs.

Beware that no blog is like the other: some allow comments, some don't. Some censor comments, some don't. Some honor embargos, most don't. In the blogosphere, everything you say is "on the record" and it is quite common for bloggers to expose negative and positive comments as well as bad pitches. "Once a story is on a blog, keeping a lid on it is impossible," says Neville Hobson, an independent consultant on blogging and podcasting. It is a "naked" medium with transparency and authenticity as its most important values.

You should participate in the blogosphere:

- to get a feel for the blogosphere and how people communicate with each other;
- to get an understanding of blogging language;
- to become familiar with the blogging do's and don'ts including how you can pitch bloggers;
- to be able to foster relationships with bloggers who are important to your clients and with those who drive conversations in the PR industry;
- so that – as a result – you can intelligently answers questions around the blogosphere that your clients might have; and,
- incorporate blogging – when appropriate – into your proposals.

Here's what you need to know before get started:

- Blogging takes practice. Blogging takes time. Blogging takes knowledge. Explore the blogosphere and the topic you'd want to blog about.
- Find out who's blogging about the issues/products/services/ideas you'd want to blog about.
- Get advice from other people who know about blogging and blog themselves.
- Understand that blogging means commitment. You need to post regularly (2x per week, at a minimum) to make an impact.
- Blog when you've got something to say and when you feel passionate about certain issues.
- Beware that there are "private" blogs and "professional" blogs. Emily can blog about flowery bags, Khristine can blog about movie mania and Paula can blog about puppy care, but these are blogs that are not related to their work (although blogs are always more private than traditional media as bloggers reveal more about their lives than other journalists do). We don't all need to blog about PR.
- Even if you blog on non-PR topics, you need to be professional about it. Nothing is off-the-record on the web. Everything you say is recorded and can be found and traced.

Overview

Internet forums are the longest established form of online social media. They most commonly exist around specific topics and interests, for example cars or music. Each discussion in a forum is known as a thread, and many different threads can be active simultaneously. This makes forums good places to find and engage in a variety of detailed discussions. They are often built into websites as an added feature, but some exist as stand-alone entities. Forums can be places for lively, vociferous debate, for seeking advice on a subject, for sharing news, for flirting, or simply for whiling away time with idle chat. In other words, their huge variety reflects that of face-to-face conversations.

Forum search engine BoardTracker monitors over 55 million conversation threads across almost 40,000 forums, and it is by no means a comprehensive index.

How to Get Started

The sites are moderated by an administrator, whose role it is to remove unsuitable posts or spam. However, a moderator will not lead or guide the discussion. This is a major difference between forums and blogs. Blogs have a clear owner, whereas a forum's threads are started by its members. Forums have a strong sense of community. Some are very enclosed, existing as 'islands' of online social activity with little or no connection to other forms of social media. This may be because forums were around long before the term 'social media' was coined, and in advance of any of the other types of community we associate with the term.

Forums have a strong sense of community. Some are very enclosed, existing as 'islands' of online social activity with little or no connection to other forms of social media. This may be because forums were around long before the term 'social media' was coined, and in advance of any of the other types of community we associate with the term.

Social Media Optimization

Overview

Social Media Optimization (SMO) is a way to optimize web sites so they would be more easily connected or interlaced with online communities and community websites, also called social media sites. Methods of SMO include adding RSS feeds, adding a "Digg This" button, and incorporating third party community functionalities like Flickr photo slides and galleries or YouTube videos. Social media optimization is a form of search engine marketing.

SMO has everything to do with social media such as blogs, wikis, vlogs, forums and the likes. The term SMO involves consistent and enduring implementation of all necessary changes in a website that may optimize it to render it more easily linkable and more vastly noticeable in the online social media. The essence of SMO is to provide such good quality content, design and usability that people should wish to link to your website. Accordingly, SMO focuses on designing, developing and maintaining a website to suit the social media applications like Wikipedia, MySpace, YouTube, Second Life, Digg, Flickr, Miniclip et al, such that the pertinent social sites would want to stay connected to the website on their own.

Being a rather nascent concept, Social Media Optimization (SMO) still needs to be groomed into a full-fledged subject with exhaustive strategies and rules all laid down. Presently, there are few rules, coined by few Internet marketing experts, which dictate the scene in defining precise strategies.

The basic strategy involves giving up static web content in favor of dynamism. The tactics favor inclusion of blogs or white paper etc. to widen the scope of linkability and putting in quick buttons like 'add to del.icio.us/' 'Digg this' and 'Tell a friend' to facilitate tagging/ bookmarking, as well as, help the content travel. Supporting mashups is considered another fine strategy, wherein webmaster allows prudent reuse of his web content by others, so as to work in teamwork towards enhanced and augmented content. Further, rewarding inbound links is also a recommended strategy to encourage the links in the long run.

SMO, in essence, calls for being a user resource that is genuine and unpretentious. It is a good idea to keep trying new things and put across a fresh face forever. Active participation in activities of interest to ones target audience is a definite must.

If done properly, SMO can be your ticket to convincing and long-term commercial success. Effective SMO can fetch you highly desirable web traffic and significant brand recognition. The tale of extraordinary growth and glory of YouTube in a matter of mere 18 months is a striking instance of successful and innovative SMO.

Though SMO can drive a lot of traffic to your website, it may also prove to be difficult, as you constantly run the risk of negative publicity. Therefore, it is utmost important to choose your tactics carefully and target the right audience.¹¹

How to Get Started

The concept behind SMO is simple: implement changes to optimize a site so that it is more easily linked to, more highly visible in social media searches on custom search engines (such as Technorati), and more frequently included in relevant posts on blogs, podcasts and vlogs. Here are 5 rules we use to help guide our thinking with conducting an SMO for a client's website:

1. Increase your linkability - This is the first and most important priority for websites. Many sites are "static" - meaning they are rarely updated and used simply for a storefront. To optimize a site for social media, we need to increase the linkability of the content. Adding a blog is a great step, however there are many other ways such as creating white papers and thought pieces, or even simply aggregating content that exists elsewhere into a useful format.
2. Make tagging and bookmarking easy - Adding content features like quick buttons to "add to del.icio.us" are one way to make the process of tagging pages easier, but we go beyond this, making sure pages include a list of relevant tags, suggested notes for a link (which come up automatically when you go to tag a site), and making sure to tag our pages first on popular social bookmarking sites (including more than just the homepage).
3. Reward inbound links - Often used as a barometer for success of a blog (as well as a website), inbound links are paramount to rising in search results and overall rankings. To encourage more of them, we need to make it easy and provide clear rewards. From using Permalinks to recreating Similarly, listing recent linking blogs on your site provides the reward of visibility for those who link to you
4. Help your content travel - Unlike much of SEO, SMO is not just about making changes to a site. When you have content that can be portable (such as PDFs, video files and audio files), submitting them to relevant sites will help your content travel further, and ultimately drive links back to your site.
5. Encourage the mashup - In a world of co-creation, it pays to be more open about letting others use your content (within reason). YouTube's idea of providing code to cut and

paste so you can imbed videos from their site has fueled their growth. Syndicating your content through RSS also makes it easy for others to create mashups that can drive traffic or augment your content.¹²

¹¹ MindScape, 2007

¹² Influential Marketing Blog, 2006

Social Media Guidelines

Overview

Web 2.0 offers new opportunities to engage customers directly, influence the marketplace, increase brand awareness and affinity, build a better customer experience, and collect market intelligence. To successfully take advantage of Web 2.0, executives and employees must think differently about external audience interactions, and follow new rules that guide their behavior online.

Learn and Apply

Today user-generated content (UGC) in blogs, podcasts, wikis, social networks, communities, virtual worlds, product reviews/comments, and videos is fast becoming the bulk of content on the Web. No longer can corporate websites, branding activities, and mainstream press programs alone drive the conversation online.

The vast amount of information created by customers, prospects, and industry bloggers through these new media vehicles can help companies gain a better grasp of trends, customer sentiment, competitor activities and product and service requirements.

In addition, employees can enhance and extend a company's customer experience by creating and distributing content that adds value, and by learning from and applying information created by external audiences. Collective intelligence (from the Webosphere) can be applied to every part of the company including marketing, product development, customer service, sales, and finance.

Responsible Participation

Social media interactions should be designed to build relationships with customers, partners, and bloggers, attract prospects, initiate or add value to the public discourse and embrace outside interaction. Employees are encouraged to interact responsibly on social media such as blogs, wikis and through comments.

Getting involved in social media such as blogs, wikis or social networks is the choice of each employee. If you choose to interact online, the guidelines listed below must be followed.

Social Media Guidelines for Employees

1. Don't be anonymous. Always identify yourself and if relevant the company that you work for. On every type of social media platform whether blogging, posting comments on another blog, answering a question in a forum, as an avatar in a virtual world, or any other type of online interaction, identify clearly the company that you work for (and when relevant, your role) when you discuss the company or company-related matters. Transparency is critical to building trust and credibility online.
2. Write in the first person. Only those people who are officially designated by your company have the authority to speak on behalf of the company. You must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself, not the company. Although it does not carry legal weight, it can be helpful to use the disclaimer, "These comments are my own and don't necessarily represent my company's positions, strategies, or opinions."
3. You are personally responsible for the content that you publish. On blogs, wikis, podcasts or any other form of social media you have sole responsibility for what you post online. All company policies apply (trademark guidelines, privacy requirements, confidential information protection, and anti-discrimination).
4. Recognize that content is public. Any content you provide anywhere on the Web can be search engine indexed, copied, linked to, and used as evidence in court. It may live on the Web for a very long time. So consider the content carefully.
5. Be personal. It is accepted behavior to be more personal online by limiting the use of corporate jargon and formality and showing some of your personality. Speak in your own voice, share information that helps readers know a little about you, let your personality shine through, and say what is on your mind.
6. Protect your privacy. Only provide personal information that you want distributed and accessed across the Web. It helps to build relationships on the social Web if you provide a few interesting details about your life and personality. Only provide personal information you are comfortable sharing publicly. (Know that it may stay on the Web for many years.) Do not share personal information or pictures of colleagues, partners, customers or others without their express approval.
7. Respect others. Do not use obscene language, ethnic slurs, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in this company's workplace.
8. Do not engage in verbal warfare. Avoid inflammatory subjects such as politics and religion. When interacting with someone who is confrontational online, keep a calm voice and respond to the facts. Keep it brief. Admit when you've made an error, and if you edit

information you previously posted make sure the edits are clearly indicated (and that the originally posted information still appears).

9. Responding to others. Often information is posted by customers, prospects, competitors, and press and it is just plain wrong and sometimes inflammatory. If you are extremely knowledgeable about the subject respond directly to the facts and link to any supporting information (including other customers' comments, data on your corporate website, or third-party experts). Make sure it is clear that you are an employee of this company and speaking to the best of your personal knowledge. You don't have to right every wrong on the Web. The social Web encourages customers to speak their mind and sometimes it is better to let comments go. If it appears additional information will add value to the conversation, question or comment, then go ahead and provide it. Remember, your comments will be indexed in Google for a very long time (which can be a very good thing if your answers are clear and correct). Do not comment on the competition
10. Respect copyright, trademark, and fair use laws. Do not quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work (less than 250 words in the U.S.). It is good social media practice to link to others' work instead of using excerpts. For more information or clarification of these laws, contact your legal department.
11. Protect company confidential information and follow financial disclosure laws. Do not provide company confidential or proprietary information, or the proprietary or confidential information of another company. You must not comment on the company's financial information such as future business performance, business plans, or prospects. Talking about revenue, future product ship dates, pricing decisions, roadmaps, share price, unannounced financial results or similar matters may get you (and our company) into serious legal trouble. Stay away from these subjects in all forms. Do not comment on rumors in any way. The only correct response to a rumor is "no comment."
12. Keep internal conversations inside the company. You may have opinions about our products, other employees, or company marketing. Do not communicate these opinions in public online forums (blogs, wikis, or other) or in private social networks (even if you have privacy controls in place). Do not use social media to air complaints, communicate ideas to other employees or correct their behavior. If you are commenting on a specific product it is reasonable to make constructive statements such as "better training materials for resellers is needed" or "more simple start up documents would solve the problem," but not to state that product training "sucks." Do not use your public voice to trash or embarrass the company, customers, partners, co-workers, or yourself.
13. Ask permission. If it is unclear whether information or internal conversations are confidential, ask permission or for clarification from management prior to posting that information publicly.

14. Do not reference partners or suppliers without their approval. Partners and suppliers should not be referenced or cited without their prior approval. Never identify a partner or supplier by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a partner or supplier agreement.
15. Become part of the industry conversation. Add value by being knowledgeable on the subject (write what you know), reading and following Web conversations, and providing interesting and new information. Be clear, concise, and spell-check.
16. Link, link, link. Make every attempt to link to other blogs, websites, or individuals relevant to the topic you are posting.
17. Content ownership. When employees leave the company, material written during their employment normally remains in place under the company's policies and guidelines.¹³

¹³ Venture Essentials, 2009

Santa Clarita and Santa Clara, CA

In Santa Clarita (@santaclarita), anyone can email “Mayor Dude” Frank Ferry (@Mayordude), follow him on Twitter or friend him on Facebook. The city is one of a growing list of wired municipalities connecting to citizens young and old through social media. While not every administrator will feel comfortable hosting live chats or Tweeting “is hungry. Join me for lunch today at Taste of Town,” Government 2.0 is going viral.

In the northern part of the state, the City of Santa Clara (@santaclaracity) Tweets everything from notices about RFPs for tennis and sport court resurfacing projects to summer employment opportunities and Swine Flu updates.

Rob Quigly (@RobQuigley), a Sacramento Web site developer and New Media Director for Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who specializes in creation and management of government Web sites, explains the transition from Gov. 1.0 (putting up a web page to post council agendas) to Gov. 2.0 as a transition from digital archive to a two-way communication tool. Citizens can express opinions, ask questions and get answers in real time.

That immediacy has also proved helpful in getting information out quickly in emergency situations. Whether it is Swine Flu updates, earthquake warnings, missing child reports or road closures, a single post can reach thousands of people quickly and efficiently. Santa Clarita City Manager Ken Pulskamp has three goals for social media.

“Social networking allows the city to communicate directly with our residents and business community to ensure that the information provided is accurate, timely and relevant.”

Pulskamp says he is simply meeting expectations by running his own YouTube channel.

“The information age creates a greater expectation for transparent government and an even greater expectation that the information is both real-time and easily accessible.”

Arnold (@Schwarzenegger) is also using social media. In fact, he recently broke 60,000 followers and held a live Twittered press conference where he received 400 questions in 45 minutes.¹⁴

¹⁴ Public CEO, 2009

Billings, MN

The city of Billings has joined a wave of municipalities embracing online social networking through Facebook and Twitter as a method of direct communication with residents.

"We have a great new way that's kind of sweeping the nation on how to connect with your citizens," said David Watterson, the city's Internet technology manager.

Within its first few weeks, Billings' personal Facebook page gathered more than 500 fans, Watterson said. Friday evening it was up to 1,241.

"I decided to become friends with the city because I've lived here the majority of my life," wrote Brooklyn Porter, 14, in a Facebook message. "Also, because I think it's great, not too big and not too small!"

Based on their personal profile photos, the city's fans are of all ages, but most appear to be young like Porter. Facebook and other social-networking tools until recently were the sole domain of teenagers, but businesses soon seized upon them for free advertising. And now cities, counties, presidential candidates and local politicians have been drawn in by the promise of their reach.

"It does open up a whole new avenue of people that can follow and keep up with what's going on," said City Councilman Denis Pitman, who also operates his own Facebook page and what is known as a Twitter feed.

The company Civic Plus, which set up Billings' social-networking tools, has seen a surge in municipalities interested in making a foray into the online social-networking world, said Rachel Correll, its marketing director. In the past three months alone, she said, the Kansas-based subsidiary of Icon Enterprises has outfitted 22 municipalities with Facebook and Twitter accounts.

"It's part of the push for transparent government, so we're trying to find additional ways to keep people informed," Correll said.

According to Watterson, Civic Plus offered to set up the city's Facebook and Twitter accounts for free while it was building the city's new Web site that launched in the spring of 2008. Maintaining the social networking tools also does not cost anything beyond the work associated with updating the city's main online portal, because everything posted on the Web site automatically feeds onto Facebook and Twitter.

"Upcoming events and news and announcements automatically get pushed out to our Facebook and Twitter," Watterson said.

The openness, though, can work both ways. And in ways that are unanticipated, especially with an existing army of young social networkers who may not take full advantage of the privacy settings Facebook offers. Watterson, for his part, was surprised when he clicked on the link for one of the city's many fans and was able to see photos of all of their Facebook friends and lists of other things to which they have pledged fandom.

"There's definitely concern about what the public policy should be and that's keeping a lot of people from moving forward right now," Correll said.

While a city administrator with the right access codes could see some fans' personal "wall" postings if they are unguarded about their Facebook behavior, and also post a comment on their "wall" of messages, the city's fans do not enjoy quite the same unfettered access.

They can post feedback on messages posted by city departments, and they can use a direct link to send comments to city administrators. But they cannot write on the city's "wall." That kind of wide-open, two-way forum could drastically raise the costs of the new endeavor, Watterson said, because it would require a moderator.

"It's kind of a one-way street for information, but if someone wants to report a barking dog or a pothole in the street or whatever, they can do that," Watterson said.

In addition to its 1,241 Facebook fans, Billings has 97 people following its Twitter feed, or tweets, short text messages that can be received online and over cell phones. The messages offer information about everything from zoning application deadlines to office closures, musical events and library programs.

"It's been incredible to see the amount of information that's coming out from the city," Pitman said. "Even the departments are starting to use it now."¹⁵

¹⁵ Billings Gazette, 2009

Portland, OR

In February, Portland, Ore., launched the nation's first "Twisitor Center." Twitter.com users post up to 140-character questions about Portland — such as where to find a particular restaurant or which hotel best suits their needs — and add the identifier #inpx. Staff from Travel Portland, the official destination marketing organization for the city, respond to the questions.

Chicago, IL

In February, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley launched his own YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/mayordaley, to give residents a behind-the-scenes look at city government. "YouTube has become a worldwide phenomenon allowing people to watch hundreds of millions of videos a day that create discussion and spark debate," Daley said in a statement.

South Sioux City, NE

South Sioux City, Neb., has been publishing an average of two videos a month for the past two years, and has been exclusively posting them on YouTube for about nine months, says the city's Communications Director Patty McGill. The videos typically feature community events, and they have received more than 6,000 views since December 2007.

South Sioux City's YouTube presence also is becoming part of the city's economic development advertising initiative to attract permanent residents, McGill says. "We have a lot of people who come into this area, graduate from our high schools and colleges, and move away, so we're looking for some retention there," she says. The city also plans to open accounts on MySpace, Facebook and Twitter for the same purpose.

Denver, CO

In Denver, CIO Molly Rauzi works for Mayor John Hickenlooper, who many consider a prime example of a public official who has embraced the possibilities of Web 2.0 technology. In September 2007, Hickenlooper created a YouTube channel featuring various commercials, public service announcements and other videos that span his six years in office. So far, the site contains 20 clips, which viewers can rate, comment on and share with other YouTube members.

But even with a mayor who likes seeing his inner star shine on YouTube, finding the right balance and approach to social networking tools for a large organization like Denver can be a challenge and an ongoing process. For example, Rauzi said employee access to Facebook is allowed but not access to MySpace. The general consensus within the organization is that more "adults" use

Facebook, and that it is useful for helping organize neighborhood collaboration and other business uses. Additionally the technical staff said Facebook presents less of a security risk than MySpace, a site that is seen as more focused on teenage socializing and therefore inappropriate for employees to access during work time.

Los Gatos, CA

One adult who has decided social networks are for him is Greg Larson, city manager of Los Gatos, Calif., and a Digital Communities Advisory Board member.

Larson began exploring social networking by joining LinkedIn, a tool advertised as a professional's social networking site, but found that he didn't use it for much even though he had established links to more than 300 people. On the recommendation of friends, he decided to join Facebook and was impressed with how easy it is to use, and he found it valuable for staying in touch and sharing personal information, stories and photos. He found that what began as a way to learn and stay abreast with all of this "social networking stuff" quickly started to become "addictive."

Larson said he doesn't use Facebook aggressively for work yet, but can see that changing, especially as improvements are made to the system. Through his circle of "friends," Larson has noticed that the site is most widely used by those under 35 years old. Larson cautions other social network users to quickly change privacy settings to ensure they accurately reflect the amount and type of information they want to disclose and to whom.

It is also important to be mindful that status updates and wall postings will likely be seen by many and probably saved somewhere in perpetuity, and that the cute third-party applets may collect information from your site and be used to actively encourage others to join.

Milwaukee, WI

Newly appointed CIO Nancy Olson sees a change taking place in Milwaukee. Until recently, the city had a filter that blocked employee access to social networking sites, but the city has been finding more and more business reasons to allow access to sites such as Facebook and MySpace.

For example, the local newspaper in Milwaukee is using Facebook as a business resource and the mayor's communication director wants to be able to regularly review the site. Additionally, the city business license division is finding more and more establishments are using MySpace as their business Web site, and city staff need to access the sites during the liquor licensing process.

Misc. Examples

Federal

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
USA.gov library of federal RSS feeds	External		RSS Feeds
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	External		RSS Feeds
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	External		Links to various social media sites on the foot of each web page to allow users to automatically post (to Facebook, Reddit, Stumbleupon, Digg, etc.) or e-mail
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	External		Facebook and LinkedIn group pages
U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Colorado	External	RSS feeds for press releases, oil & gas lease sale information, and planning documents.	RSS Feeds
Environmental Protection Agency	External		RSS Feeds
	External		Great Lakes Earth Day Challenge Blog
	External		Greenversations
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association	External		Warning System Rss Feed
Federal Emergency Management Association	External		Rss Feeds
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	External	Secretary Mike Leavitt blogs about health and the related challenges that face United States	Health and Human Services Department Blog
	External	To provide information on the uses of new media for the HIV/AIDS community.	AIDS.gov Blog
	External		

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
Department of Defense	External	Covers the America Supports You program with daily information on citizen troop-support efforts, DoD programs and services, and educational tips for U.S. military servicemembers	ASY Live Blog
	External	RSS feeds for DoD News articles, press advisories, speech transcripts and Bloggers Roundtable	RSS Feeds
	External		Military Health System Blog
	External	The Bloggers Roundtable provides source material for stories in the blogosphere concerning DoD by bloggers and online journalists. Where available, this includes transcripts, biographies, related fact sheets and video.	Bloggers' Roundtable
	External	Video-on-demand for any and all interested parties to download or embed; featured clips include but are not limited to DoD news, briefings, speeches, military campaigns and operations, public service announcement.	vClips
	External	Live and then archived radio shows of the Bloggers' Roundtable calls.	DoD Live Audio Casts
	Internal	Podcasts	Pentagon Channel Podcasts
Department of Veterans Affairs	External		Second Life YouTube FaceBook
Department of Veterans Affairs	Internal	Podcasts, Blogs, Wikis, RSS	
Department of Defense	External	DoD New Media's blog	DoDLive blog
Centres for Disease Control and Prevention	External		CDC Injury Center Director's View Blog
Congressional Budget Office	External		Congressional Budget Office Director's Blog

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
Transportation Security Administration	External		Evolution of Security Blog
U.S. Department of Transportation	External	To provide a forum for discussing the nation's transportation system and making announcements about future projects	Fast Lane Blog
U.S. Government Printing Office	External		Future Digital System Blog
National Center for Health Marketing	External	A blog about research, science, and practice in health marketing and communication, social marketing, information technology, public health partnerships, and more with Jay Bernhardt, Director of CDC's National Center for Health Marketing	Health Marketing Musings Blog
Secretary Michael Chertoff	External	Secretary Michael Chertoff blogs about working to protect the American people, building an effective emergency preparedness and response capability, enforcing immigration laws, and promoting economic prosperity	Homeland Security Leadership Journal Blog
National Agricultural Library	External		InfoFarm Blog
Library of Congress	External	Highlights news and collections for the Library of Congress	Library of Congress Blog
NASA	External	NASA Goddard CIO, Linda Y. Cureton, blogs about technology, leadership, and being a Chief Information Officer	NASA Goddard CIO Blog

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health	External	This blog helps NIOSH to fulfill its mission of translating scientific research into practice. It also provides a forum for NIOSH partners and the public to present ideas to NIOSH scientists and each other while engaging in scientific discussion.	Science Blog
National Museum of the Air Force	External	Blog posts from the public about their experiences at the National Museum of the Air Force	National Museum of the Air Force
Navy	External	The CIO blogs about matters related to information management and information technology and how they impact the Navy Department.	Navy Department Chief Information Officer Blog
National Drug Control Policy	External	To educate Americans about illegal drugs and the latest international, federal, state, and local efforts to reduce drug use	Pushing Back
U.S. Geological Survey (U.S. Dept. of the Interior)	External	Numerous public "real-time" hazards sensor data and other RSS/CAP feeds, plus video and audio podcasts, image collections, and a blog highlighting various USGS research activities.	Data & News Feeds; Arctic Chronicles (Blog); Flickr Photostream; YouTube Channel; Podcasts, including CoreCasts & CoreFacts
	Internal	Numerous wikis to support Communities of Practice, knowledge management, Science program and other research and technical teams, etc.; managers' blog for internal communication.	USGS Leaders' Blog

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum	External	Provide portable content of high quality for constituents to use and generate discussion. Inform public about threat of genocide and engage in discussion about effective genocide prevention policies and actions; inform public about threat of antisemitism and hatred and motivate public to confront hatred and antisemitism.	World is Witness geoblog YouTube Channel Second Life sim Facebook groups -- Committee on Conscience: Genocide Awareness and Prevention and Friends of World is Witness Podcasts -- Voices on Antisemitism, Voices on Genocide Prevention, and First Person: Conversations with Holocaust Survivors Distribution of content via iTunes U

Municipal

Department/Agency Name	Initiative Type	Objective/Purpose	Social Media Channel(s) Used
Rhode Island Government	External		Multiple Social Media on Website Rss, Podcasts, Blogs, etc...
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	External	To educate NYC teens about mental health issues (e.g. substance abuse, risk taking, dating violence, depression and anger management) and to motivate them to seek help.	Popular social networking sites: MySpace, Facebook, YouTube
City and County of San Francisco www.sfhomeless.net	External	To host homeless resources on a wiki so that resources used by the government, non-profits, and public can be complete, available and up to date.	Wiki (Wikia.com)
City of Santa Paula, California	External	Contains city government news and information from the City Manager.	Blog
City of Georgetown, Texas	External	To better solicit input from our citizens	Blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, RSS feeds.

¹⁶

¹⁶ Government 2.0 – Best Practices Wiki, 2009