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Busting the Top 5 Social Media Myths

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By **Sallie Burnett, Customer Insight Group**

Social media is the brave new world of marketing that is in a constant state of change and growth, so when we try to wrap our heads around it, it can be easy to fall into the trap of the generalizations overheard during cocktail party banter. Here, we take a look at the all-too-common myths about social media and let you in on the straight scoop.

Myth #1: Social Media Is Free

Yes. Setting up a Facebook page, Twitter account, Pinterest presence or just about any other popular social media account is completely free. And you can post and tweet to your heart's content without every paying a dime. But as soon as you acknowledge that your social media efforts should be in tune with all your other marketing efforts, then you will quickly see that in order to make social media effective for you, it is going to take plenty of time and money before you will see a return on your investment. After all, the nature of social media is that it takes time to build, shape and ultimately grow.

Myth #2: Social Media Doesn't Require a Plan; Just Be Social

Think again. This is no Miss Congeniality contest. Just like all your marketing efforts, you need to take time to understand your audience, find the best way to add value to your relationship through whatever social media tool you're integrating, and most important, be sure that your efforts ultimately track back to your overall strategy and business objectives. Have the end in sight before you begin.

Myth #3: Tweet About What You Ate for Lunch

Tweet about some inside scoop, a special event, a new product line, a new addition to your staff or some exciting company news, but leave the boring personal stuff, like what you had for lunch, out of the mix. Remember who your customer is and what will matter to them and let that drive your content regardless of which social media tool you're using.

Myth #4: Your Audience Is Not Social

Resist the urge to think that only those under the age of 25 are on social media. It simply isn't true. With over 900 million people now on Facebook and over 465 million on Twitter and 10.4 million users on the fast-growing Pinterest site, chances are there is a slice of the social media pie just waiting for you to connect with them.

Myth #5: The Corner Office Will Never Buy Into Social Media

This may be true if you're talking to them like how a teenager raves about the coolest new gadget they just have to have. Start winning their buy-in by talking their language – hard numbers. Show them the data that translates likes, repins and tweets into reach, awareness and engagement. Then, make a direct correlation between social media and the company's business goals, and you'll have those execs ready to give you the green light in no time.

To learn more, join Sallie Burnett on August 28, 2012 as she presents the lunch brown bag seminar, "What Marketers Must Know to Maximize Results of Social Media."

Sallie Burnett is the president of Customer Insight Group, Inc., a strategic marketing company that helps companies improve the return on their marketing investment by developing and executing high-performing acquisition, loyalty, upgrade and retention programs. Explore how Customer Insight Group can help you increase sales and build profitable customer relationships by visiting www.customerinsightgroup.com or call 303-422-9758 today.




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