



S O C I A L M E D I A M A R K E T I N G S E C R E T S

50 TIPS TO EXPLODE YOUR
BUSINESS ONLINE

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING SECRETS: 50 TIPS TO EXPLODE YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

BY
CHRISTOPHER TOMPKINS



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OTHER BOOKS WRITTEN BY CHRISTOPHER TOMPKINS

THE GO! METHOD: 22 SIMPLE STEPS TO CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY
THAT WORKS

IS SOCIAL MEDIA RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my amazing core team at The Go! Agency: Dale, Laura, Kaylee, Erica and Shawna. Without your talent, creativity, hard work, and dedication I wouldn't be able to achieve half of the things that I set out to. You are more than my core team, I consider you a part of my family. This one is for you - The Go! Agents!

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INTRODUCTION

“We don’t have a choice on whether we DO social media, the question is how well we DO it.” - Erik Qualman

It is safe to say that the online marketplace is crucial to ensuring not only continual growth, but also the actual survival of your business. Of course as a business you have a website presence and have even possibly run some pay-per-click (PPC) advertising through Google. But the question is...

Are you connecting with your prospective and current clients in a “real” human way online or just selling to them, pitching them your products and services?

OR are you starting conversations with them, learning what their problems are and providing them with trust-building information and support that enhances their day-to-day lives?

This is where the world of online marketing, and in particular social media marketing, can almost instantly deliver credibility to your business above and beyond what other marketing initiatives can deliver. The social media world is a marketing landscape full of potential and current customers that are happy to welcome you to join their conversations.

Just think about it - where are your customers? By now you should not be surprised to learn that they are online, reading blogs, connecting with your competition on LinkedIn, writing and reading “tweets” on Twitter, commenting on their friends Facebook updates and, best of all, are

purchasing products and service, AND referring business to their friends and connections.

But where are you in this process? Are you on there engaging your target market successfully? If not...it's time to turn that around, pronto!

But before we go any further, let me just get one thing out of the way:

Social Media Marketing Does Not Take the Place of All Marketing Activities

Why do I say this? It is down to the fact that I have been alarmed by the number of companies out there who are forgoing traditional marketing channels to invest solely in a social media marketing campaign.

In fact, every week I speak to at least one person who wants to put all of their "marketing eggs" in the social media basket. From a business standpoint, this is great for my company, The Go! Agency, but from a marketer's standpoint it is not a good decision. In fact, if a client has no marketing strategy and are undertaking ZERO other marketing activities, I caution them against investing all of their capital into social media marketing.

The reason is because in order to truly tap into the benefits of social media marketing, you need to have an existing marketing strategy to incorporate it into.

In fact, I've even spoken with large international firms that were having huge success with their advertising strategy, but were going to totally scrap it and invest in social media. While the social media spend is crucial to a business, if you were spending \$100,000 per year on advertising and were generating \$500,000 in income....why would you just suddenly stop?

Now don't get me wrong, there is value in executing a social media marketing campaign on its own, but the success is just at a lower level than when paired with a cohesive marketing strategy. You need to understand that social media marketing is not the be all and end all of business, but rather the glue that holds everything together and the powerful megaphone that will get your message seen and heard by millions of members of your target market.

Just think about it. You get to hit your audience only once when you send out an email blast. But what if that same email was re-purposed on your blog as an article, a topic for a video you post on YouTube, a discussion seen by thousands on LinkedIn, a tweet on Twitter, a picture on Instagram, a Company Page update on LinkedIn....and the list goes on (and it honestly does). So where your email database was only 350-1,000 people, you would be able to hit upwards of the hundred thousands with social media.

My advice is to consider the positive effects of social media WHILE you are formulating your plan. Already done it? Then revise your plan with the social media effects in mind.

This is where this book comes in!

In this book, we will cover lots of social media secrets that will help you not only re-invigorate a flagging campaign, but help those who are starting a brand new campaign get the boost that they need to jump on the fast-track to success!

Your only requirement before we begin? A dynamic web presence (website, landing page, blog) that acts as your online point-of-sale. You can either develop this yourself using the many different inexpensive tools available online, or by using a website design specialist. It is up to you and your budget!

Now, let's take the leap into the exciting, confusing and success-generating world of social media marketing!

What can you expect to gain from reading this book? You will gain valuable insider tips to help you:

- Increase the number of visitors to your website
- Connect with hard to reach and inundated people that should be key partners
- Gain local, national, and international visibility for you and your company
- Gain valuable credibility with your target consumers
- Build a huge database of names that you can market to

- Generate more qualified prospects for your business
- And do all of this without having to step foot on a plane once!

Sounds good right? Well, it is all available to you in the wonderful world of social media. So let's not wait any more...let's get started!

CHAPTER 1:

10 QUICK START SECRETS

“Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make, but about the stories you tell.” - Seth Godin

When it comes to sharing social media marketing tips it is best to start at the beginning. As I mentioned before, many individuals and companies make the error of jumping directly into “site work” (meaning marketing on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and the rest). Definitely NOT the way to go!

So here in I want to share some of the most proven strategies that we have used successfully with our clients’ campaigns at The Go! Agency. These are the building blocks that you can turn to again and again to ensure your progress is steady and fruitful!

Each secret will help you travel at your own pace through each important element of your social media marketing campaign structure and offer you the insight and opportunity to make small (or large) changes that will really make a difference!

SECRET 1: SET YOUR OBJECTIVES EARLY

One of the more common things that I hear from people who are executing a social media strategy is “What’s the ROI of Social Media???” Great question. The issue is that social media does not deliver just one simple, easy to measure result. Social media creates a myriad of results that can bring many essential factors to your business: leads, referrals, media opportunities, hiring, credibility, visibility, and a whole host of other results. So before you even log into a social media site, you need to identify what you WANT to achieve using social media as a key marketing channel for your company. Keep in mind that more leads is not your only goal. Think about possible objectives such as; engaging your current customers/clients, offering better customer service, building brand recognition, getting more local exposure....these are the types of objectives that you should be looking at. I suggest finding at least 5 objectives that you would like to be met by social media. This way you will be able to keep these in mind when you are preparing your social media branding and social media content. Without an objective, how are you supposed to have a defined direction with your marketing strategy.

SECRET 2: CHOOSE THE RIGHT SITES

Identifying what the best social media sites will be for your company can be very tricky. Every business is different and some will find success quicker on one site than the next. There isn’t a hard/fast rule on this (while many say there is). All of the sites are constantly evolving and making it easier for businesses to get involved everyday. The playing field has changed greatly over the past years (and even months!) and there is a spot for everyone on all of the social media sites out there. My suggestion if you want to quickly enhance your social media is this: go with what you know first, master that, and then add more. There is nothing worse than biting off more than you can chew when it comes to social media. Success on social media is built on consistency, and without that - you are dead in the water. By trying to market on numerous sites that you are barely familiar with will not only be demotivating, but it could also leave a large window of error open. Choose carefully here. I have seen many companies run in five directions at once, only to be overtaken by their competition in a matter of days.

SECRET 3: PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR COMPETITION

One of the things I tell our prospective clients at The Go! Agency is that one of the most important reasons to become involved with the social media world is to keep, or gain, a competitive edge over your competition.

I've spoken many times about the importance of claiming your social media real estate and monitoring your brand and brand sentiment on social media. I would like to add to this a CRUCIAL secret that you must do before you execute any changes to your social media strategy: a competitive analysis for your company on social media.

While this seems like a unimportant task, this will enable you to do is to gain invaluable intel into how your direct competitors are using social media and how you need to position yourself in order to gain key advantages.

Just think about it. If your major competitors are at a trade show, odds are that you will be as well. If your major competitors are placing advertising in a popular trade magazine, odds are that you will be using this vehicle to promote as well. Depending on your industry the list can go many different ways. But one of the rules of business is that if you want to gain a competitive advantage, then you must be highly visible in as many places as your target market resides.

As this secrets is one of the most crucial, I want to show you how to develop a step by step competitive analysis using Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. As each of these sites have different functions and terminology, I want to provide an overview that you will be able to apply to each site.

Step 1: Compile a List of Competitors.

First, create a short list which includes direct competitors of various size. This will help you understand how each segment of your competition is using social media to their advantage. Create this list within an Excel spreadsheet for ease of use and reference.

Step 2: Locate and Record Their Social Media Locations.

On your spreadsheet, create columns for Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and any other relevant social media sites to your industry (such as Pinterest and YouTube). Then go through each competitor and find their page on each site. Copy and paste the hyperlink to each profile in the spreadsheet accordingly.

Step 3: Record Their Network Numbers.

On your spreadsheet, go through each social media profile and record their numbers (Likes, Follows) so that you can track growth. For example, if a company has 50 Likes and week after week it stays at 50, their marketing is not bringing in new people.

Step 4: Look at Their Insights.

Facebook and LinkedIn currently have this capability where you can click on “Insights” and see the demographics of the people connected to said profile. This can be useful in seeing if your competitors social strategy is effective.

Step 5: Track Updates Versus Engagement.

Take a look at their updates and see what they are posting. Then take a look at how many comments, likes or shares they are receiving with each post. This will show you how engaged their audience is. My only caveat to this is if your industry involves lots of privacy issues – transparent engagement may not be the top factor I would consider during the analysis.

Step 6: How Are They Branding Themselves?

Look at the combination of their imagery, logos, descriptions and updates to track how they are branding themselves. Does it look slick and professional? Does it stay true to the company message?

Step 7: Time for Overall Analysis.

Now that you have gone through and looked at the major points of the profile, compare where your competitors are with where you are. How do you stack up against your competition? Are there any tips that you can take from their strategy that you can apply to your own? What are they doing right? What are they doing wrong? While you go through the profiles, make sure to jot down notes in your spreadsheet for things that you want to keep an eye on. This helps to remember important items on the fly.

How often would I suggest that you complete this process? I would suggest a minimum of once a month. This will keep you fresh and up-to-date with your competitors strategy and success rate on social media.

SECRET 4: CENTRALIZE YOUR DATA

A massive time waster when executing a social media strategy is not having your information where you want it when you need it. I'm sure you have been there, you need a headshot or company logo to send to someone and you spend 10 minutes combing through your files to find the "right" image. You'll go through old versions of the images, or ones that are not high quality, etc. What a nightmare!

This is a quick and painless process - especially if you take the time THE FIRST TIME and do it right! I want you to create an "Official Branding Package" folder on your computer. Create this file somewhere on a shared file (so everyone who needs to access it, can). This will come in handy when you are designing something on the fly for your social media campaign. This will help your branded imagery and information have consistency, rather than having many different looks - which is super unprofessional.

In this file you should have:

- **Logo:** the approved version of your logo
- **Word Document:** Create a word document where you add the following items -
 - **Short boiler plate:** This is going to be your short description of your business that you will use to immediately help someone understand what you are all about.
 - **Long description:** This is an extended version of your boiler plate. This can be used in marketing materials as well, but is a wonderful exercise to help you better understand your own company and how to fine tune your approach to your audience.
 - **Your approved contact information:** email, address, phone, fax
- **Head Shot:** approved headshot for spokesperson
- **Marketing Collateral:** In this file you should add ANYTHING that you have to use to market your company. This would include flyers, brochures, business cards, etc. Only add items that adhere to your final approved branded colors, layout, and more.

- **Stock Images:** do you use any purchased images for your branding? Add these to this file for easy access!

Extra Credit: In order to make your presence online is consistent, create a spreadsheet where you list all of your offline profiles/presences and all of your online profiles/presences. This will come in handy later when you need to make quick minor adjustments as it will help you to not need to remember the entire exhaustive list on a moments notice. This list would include any directory listings, social media presences - basically anywhere you are listed online.

SECRET 5: USE YOUR KEYWORDS IN CONTENT OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES

Whether you know it or not, you most likely create ‘content’, and engage in ‘content marketing’ every day. With online channels that include websites, sales pages, blogs, articles, social media channels, mobile apps, newsletters, and email – the use of content and content marketing is unavoidable in the sales and marketing world. If you’ve ever posted anything on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter (or composed an email for that matter) you’ve created content. The question is, was it good content?

First, what exactly is ‘content’? Very simply, it’s information that is valuable and relevant to the reader. ‘Content marketing’ is the act of getting that information to the right people on a consistent basis – with the goal of inspiring them to take action. Remember, the key to content is: valuable information, with the most common uses being on social media and blog posts.

Consistently publishing updated content on these sites, with the best wording to get your message across, is crucial to getting more traffic from social media sites and search engines, while creating a power of influence over your visitors. It will also help make YOU the person (or business) that people think of when they need the type of services you offer AND help get you found in online searches for your type of business.

The first thing you need to should do is to create a list of keywords and keyword phrases that define your business. Why? These are the cornerstones of your marketing plan. They should be the words and phrases you use on sales calls, your printed material, and on your website

and social media to create continuity with your overall strategy. What are they exactly?

Your keywords and keyword phrases are literally the words and phrases that your potential client might type into a search engine to find you and/or your business, or in other words – the features you provide that make you valuable and unique. It's important that you use these in everything you do, online and offline, so that you are known for that particular set of 'terms'. If your business deals with "elders" or "seniors", or "assisted living facility florida" or "senior memory development 33770", these would make your list of keywords and keyword phrases. The longer your list and the more unique, the better.

By consistently utilizing these keywords and phrases in your social media and blog posts, you will in time become more findable in online searches by potential customers, peers, other respected members of your audience.

1. Target Market Analysis: A social media marketing campaign that is laser focused has the ability to reap better results than a broad shoot campaign. You don't want to waste time here wading through unqualified leads....you want the real deal. Make a list of 5-10 target markets that you want to hit and keep it handy throughout your campaign. Having this list will help you keep your "eye on the prize".

SECRET 6: MAKE SURE THE RIGHT PERSON IS HANDLING THE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

If you are the person who will be handling the social media marketing work, excellent! But what happens when you get busy? Will you be getting someone else to help? Or will you be getting your interns to handle the social media marketing for your company?

My hard and fast rule is that when it comes to social media marketing, you need a marketing professional to be handling the work (or someone who has a handle on marketing). The reason for this is that all of the work that is done on social media is related DIRECTLY to the sales and marketing functions of the business, so having an uninformed or unskilled person in the marketing field handle your social media - you are missing out.

Would you have an intern try to close a major international sale? Would you have them go onto a national television show to speak on your behalf? No to both, right?

Alternatively, are you finding that you, or the person that handles your social media in the office:

- logs into your Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter account and just doesn't know what to say several times a day, or...
- scratches their head trying to figure out how to get your current and potential patients and referral sources engaged, knocking on your door or calling for appointments...

...then you may need to enlist the advice of a social media specialist.

Think about it this way, if you wanted to create a TV commercial, billboard or print ad, you wouldn't try to do the entire thing in your office, would you? You would hire the experts to listen to your ideas and goals, and then using their expertise – allow them to come up with a campaign that you will love! Social media is no different.

With that being said, use caution! Obviously, as in any business, not everyone out there that claims to be an expert in the field always is. To avoid wasting time, money and getting a bad taste for social media in general, there are several questions you must ask when choosing a firm to represent your social media marketing campaign. Don't trust this public relations, brand awareness and relationship-building effort to just anyone. Make sure that they know what they're doing, have a proven history of success, and that their own reputation, platforms and online following are in line with what you would like for your own.

You need to protect your reputation and to help you do so, we've provided 12 questions you may want to ask a potential social media marketing partner...

1. First, look at their online profiles (the links should be available on their website). Do they have at least daily activity on each channel of Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.? Do they have a decent number of followers? Is their brand aligned with the services that THEY provide? Once you get this data, bring it to their doorstep and ask them about the infrequency/frequency of their posts and the quality – will this be what you are going to do for us?
2. Ask what sets their company apart from other social media marketing firms?

3. Do they work with medical or healthcare related clients now (or in the recent past)?
4. Do they know how to deal/work with your industry, including any relevant rules and regulations that you need to adhere to?
5. Will you be allowed to view and approve all final work before it's sent out to your audience?
6. Is all of their work done in-house, or do they work with partners during the delivery process?
7. How much of the marketing work on the accounts is automated? Can they give you a percentage?
8. How many people will be working on your account and have access to your passwords?
9. Will they be monitoring your brand through the social media channels they are using?
10. Will they share 3-5 past/current clients that you can speak with about their services?
11. Will you have access to your account(s) during and after the campaign?
12. What happens to your campaign if you stop working with them? Who owns it?

These questions should get you off to a great start. Obviously you want to also ask questions about the campaigns (and how they work), but the questions above should enable you to figure out how credible that potential partner is. Remember – go with your gut. Choose someone you trust or have a good feeling about. If you have distinct reservations, beware.

This secret is important because, while you have all of the other social media marketing campaign elements perfectly in place, having the wrong person in charge of executing the campaign will derail your success almost instantly.

SECRET 7: CONTENT IS IMPORTANT, BUT GOOD CONTENT IS CRUCIAL

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This is one of the trickiest things to come by as many organizations don't have a wealth of available info to share. If your company does – the battle is nearly over! If not, it has just begun.

Make sure that you are able to come up with content that is timely, engaging, entertaining, thought provoking and educational...or one of those 5. Also, think out of the box! If I was a healthcare organization, I would go to the website for the medical association that is within my niche and share some of their updates and tips, as they would be relevant and interesting to my audience. Sharing is caring...not stealing! But content is king folks.

When it comes to creating a solid content strategy, I am a huge supporter of taking the time to create a plan when you have business goals that you want to achieve. Plans save time and money in the long run, simple as that. And this holds true for your social media marketing efforts as well!

Two great examples are diets and road trips. In each scenario, you want to get from A to B. We all know that having a written plan (or map) is crucial in finding your way effectively, and efficiently; whether with diet and exercise, or on the highway – a plan keeps you from getting lost along the way. Consider your social media marketing plan that written map to success.

A crucial aspect of a successful social media marketing strategy is an endless supply of valuable content. I'm sure you have read all about the importance of good content before, so I am not going to go on and on about it here. The short story on good content is....you need it to be successful on social media.

Good content takes time to complete, so it is handy to have shortcuts to help you organize your plan in advance so that you are not spending hours on end trying to keep up with writing and posting your content on a consistent basis.

My secret weapon for you? An editorial calendar.

While you may think these are just for journalists, they come in handy for organizing the business content that you want to share in the social media world. This will help you identify the messages that you want to share and pinpoint the most effective times to share them.

What you will need is a calendar (online or printed) and an hour or two to organize your thoughts. First I suggest that you make a list of all of the information that you would like to share during the month (events, announcements, email blasts, etc). Then I would suggest that you choose a goal for your month. Whether it be more email signups, leads, in-store visits, or whatever your own personal business goal would be.

Then, think about how you would drive those results and what type of content makes sense. Presto! You just found out what your theme of the month will be. So if you are choosing newsletter signups, you need to weave the theme of your newsletter through your posts during the month.

Also, you should know how many posts you want to do per week. I would always suggest a minimum of 7-14 per week. Which would mean 28-56 per month.

Do you have an email blast that goes out on Tuesdays? Make sure to mark that on your calendar to share a link to your email blast every week on a Tuesday. Want to run a contest to promote your newsletter signups? Promote it three times per week and mark on your calendar when you want to do this.

Then continue to add items to your calendar and before you know it – it should be nearly full! By creating an editorial calendar you will enable yourself to consistently brand yourself across online and offline as well as come up with quality content that engages your audience.

SECRET 8: CONTENT WHERE YOU LEAST EXPECT IT

In addition to the written word, things that can be considered good content are photos and images, quotes, infographics, videos, and testimonials to name a few. However, be sure to pepper these with descriptions and comments that include your keywords and phrases for an extra punch.

Stuck for ideas to create original valuable information for your audience? Try some of these:

- **Google Alerts:** Enter your keywords and Google will trawl through all of the new results on a daily basis and email you with the results. These are great ways to come up with topics that are not only topical, but also hot off the press.

- **Your Staff:** Ask the people within your organization. They may have ideas that you haven't thought of
- **Competitive Analysis:** Look at what your competition is writing about and see how successful it is. Then write some original blogs and articles with those topics in mind.
- **Social Media:** Do a social media search for your topic and see what comes up. I suggest using Twitter and LinkedIn for this as they tend to give you the most relevant results. See what people are talking about, see what they are asking about. Find some hot topics and create a blog or two around them.

Another great secret is to keep a page on your computer desktop just for jotting down ideas. If you see something interesting, cut and paste the link so that you can go back and expound on it later. Be creative, explore what makes your business unique, and share it with the world! Using some of these tips will help you to create content that is effective, and well received.

Extra Credit: Always make sure that your content is engaging, entertaining, educational and focused on your target market's needs at all times!

SECRET 9: TELL YOUR VISUAL STORY

Visual storytelling is not a new concept, but it is one that I urge every social media marketing manager out there to understand and implement immediately!

Sharing photographs and videos that showcase your business, your staff, your products, your services, your...well...everything is a way to enhance the connection that you have with your target audience online.

Here are some ideas on how to let your visual story engage your audience:

- Run contests and promotions
- Showcase your products and services
- Highlight your product or service creation process
- Show multiple uses for your product or service
- Let your office or bricks and mortar location be more accessible

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- Introduce new products and services
- Show customers who uses your product

And this is just scratching the service. We could add trade shows, media appearances, charity work, and whole host of other options. Think outside of the box - the more visuals that you share the more engagement you will receive on social media - guaranteed!

SECRET 10: DEFINE YOUR MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUE

The first step in this process is to clearly identify your objectives (which I mentioned earlier in this chapter). Now we need to see how we are going to measure this.

At first, the process can be slightly tricky to identify. I suggest that wait until you complete 30 days of your social media marketing campaign. At this point you will be able to see what sorts of results come in: website hits, likes, comments, messages, leads, etc. Once you get a handle on this, you will begin to understand what gives you the best results. Create a quick spreadsheet and track these measures on a weekly basis. As all of the sites have wonderful archives, it makes it a cinch to go back through the week's activity to find what you need. If you are going to use your website to track effectiveness, make sure that you have an analytics program installed that can monitor where your traffic comes from.

If you don't, Google Analytics is a free and easy option to use (and the results are tracked wonderfully). And you are on your way! The best part about social media marketing is that it is an organic process that can change from time to time. Don't forget to audit your campaign monthly to see if any of your measures or activities need changing or updating. Staying consistent, organized and informed will help you not only launch effectively, but promote your brand successfully.

What if your objectives change? This is very normal when you are learning about the different results that you can expect from a social media marketing campaign. I urge you to keep measuring, but organically change and modify your objectives. After a few months you will be able to find good solid data and formulate a method of reporting that will show your results.

CHAPTER 2:

10 FACEBOOK SECRETS

“The biggest risk is not taking any risk...In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks.” - Mark Zuckerberg

When it comes to Facebook I find the common thread is that many of you have created a Page for your business....but nothing is happening. This issue is one that many of us are faced with. We log-in to Facebook, knock out a quick page and start placing updates or, more worryingly, sync it to Twitter and let the Twitter feed populate the page.

In this chapter, I want to present some of my secrets to creating a cohesive social media strategy, rather than a whole list of tactics that are supposed

to be instant winners. Without a successful base strategy, all the tactics in the world can't help.

Let's go!

SECRET 1: FACEBOOK ADVERTISING IS NECESSARY

Facebook Advertising has really exploded over the past few months in terms of visibility. Now it seems that you can't even make a post to your Facebook Page without being asked if you would like to "Boost" it or promote it in some way, shape, or fashion using Facebook Advertising.

While you may be thinking – enough Facebook – what I would suggest is that you overcome this adverse reaction to advertising on social media and begin to embrace it. Once you are able to just understand the hard fact that advertising is something that is a crucial aspect of your overall campaign, the more successful you will become on Facebook.

One of the biggest barriers to entry for any online advertising model is the ease of use. Once we veer off the usual path (profiles and timelines) and go into the weird wild world of Facebook Advertising many people instantly get a bit scattered. I understand. But this is part of the learning curve.

This curve has recently been flattened a bit as Facebook has made their advertising interface VERY friendly and easy to use. So if you are interested in advertising on Facebook, here is the 6 Step Formula that you need to follow to quickly and effectively setup your ads.

Step 1: Choose Your Objective

I've written about Facebook Advertising Objectives before. There are 10 choices that offer you different paths down the advertising setup model. Which ever you choose, you will still have to complete the following steps. In this step, decide what you want your Facebook Advertisement to do!

Step 2: Who Do You Want Your Ads to Reach?

Now let's get down to demographics. WOW is all I have to say. Facebook allows you to go as niche or as broad as you would like to. But to move through this step quickly you will need to know the following:

- Geographic location you want to target

- Age
- Gender
- Languages
- Interests of your target audience for the advertisement
- Behaviors of your target audience for the advertisement
- Facebook Connections you would like to include/exclude

Step 3: Budget

Now you need to setup how much you want to spend. If this is your first ad I always suggest a Lifetime Budget of \$50 for a 2 week or 1 month period. This way you can monitor your success closely in a more manageable way.

Step 4: Scheduling

When do you want your ads to run? All the time? Perhaps you have done research and found when your target audience is on Facebook the most. Then you can customize your ad schedule so that your ads only run at those times.

Step 5: Visuals

Facebook gives you the opportunity of adding 6 different pictures to your advertisement. I would suggest having these ready to go before even starting your Facebook Advertising journey. Just remember that images with text that takes up more than 20% of the image may not be approved. So be careful with text in your ad!

Step 6: Adding Text

This is where you can add your call to action for your Facebook Advertisement. Depending on what your target is, you get the opportunity to say more or less. At the low end you have to make your impact in around 90 characters or so, thus you need to be crafty in creating your ad copy.

And there you go! You click "Place Order" and your ad will be sent to the Facebook Advertising review board who will then approve or deny your ad.

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If denied, you will be notified why and given an opportunity to go in and make edits, not start all over (which is handy).

My tip here is that the more in-tune you are with your marketing strategy and your target audience, the easier this whole process will be. Otherwise there will be lots of guess work for you to complete. So look at the list above and come up with your ideas for each point and THEN log into Facebook and start setting up your brand new Facebook Advertisement!

SECRET 2: OPTIMIZE YOUR CONTENT FOR FACEBOOK

Content and optimization have become two very important buzzwords in the online marketing community. If you are a company who is interested in reaching your target market online – you need to have compelling AND optimized content to do so.

I've spoke about content and content optimization before. This is not something new. What's new is the growing interest among companies who are desperately trying to get the most out of their online marketing efforts. Like I always say, if you are going to spend hours (or hey, even minutes) developing content – you want it to hit the mark AND actually be seen!

This brings me to the over-riding theme of this article: optimizing your posts for Facebook.

Briefly – here are my three pillars of content optimization:

1. **Engaging Content:** Well-written content which is laser focused on your target market.
2. **Timing:** When does the post go out and when will it be seen by your target consumer.
3. **Social Media Optimization:** Do your posts contain keywords, hashtags, tagging and more that can get your content seen by greater numbers of your target audience?

While I could break this down further, I think that these are the three main pillars that you need to concern yourself with when it comes to social media content optimization. These are overall, but when it comes to Facebook I want to give you specific tips to further optimize your posts in specific ways.

Facebook has many idiosyncrasies that prevent many newbies from truly being able to realize the full potential of engaging their target audience. This is due to their constantly changing algorithm which seems to be moving towards a more “pay-per-view” advertising model.

But do not fret! There are still ways that you can optimize your posts on Facebook. Here are 5 quick and simple tips for further Facebook content optimization:

1. **Every Post Needs a Visual:** Let’s start off with the most obvious tip – visuals are king on Facebook. Visuals have been said to drive increased engagement of 60% over posts without images. So start creating your own images, take photographs, or find some online to increase your posts engagement.
2. **Longer Posts:** We have seen with our own clients that longer posts to their Facebook Page have experienced higher levels of engagement than shorter posts. It has been said that posts with 80+ words get twice the level of engagement.
3. **Hashtags:** Make sure that your keywords are hashtagged for full optimization. Hashtags will increase your engagement by 60% in many cases.
4. **Tagging:** Are you mentioning another Page in your post? Then tag them in it! Even if you are using source material from a newspaper, it is a good rule of thumb to tag as much as possible. This will increase the reach of your posts.
5. **Native Posting:** All of your posts (whether pictures, links, video, anything) should be natively posted through Facebook as the site favors all information that is posted directly through them, rather than a third-party. This is especially true when it comes to video, hashtags, and tagging.

SECRET 3: DITCH SCHEDULING TOOLS, USE FACEBOOK

As a busy professional myself, I understand how it is to be constantly pressed for time on a daily basis. Who isn’t? With all the questions,

requests, appointments, and projects that you need to complete – I am surprised at times that we can keep it all together.

So what is one thing we always look for? Shortcuts and time-savers!

This couldn't be more evident when it comes to us administering our social media marketing campaigns. We are always on the lookout for shortcuts, or shortcut tools, that will help us save time with many aspects of executing our campaigns.

But, little do many of you know, these tools can also come back to bite you in the end – without you even knowing.

Facebook is a prime example.

Facebook has recently altered its algorithm (their custom self-contained step-by-step set of operations and how they are performed) to favor content that is posted DIRECTLY to Facebook.

Not through Hootsuite. Not through Buffer. Not through SocialOomph. Not through SproutSocial. Not through...well, you get the idea.

So, what can you stand to lose by using a third-party tool to schedule your Facebook Page posts? Here are 4 very important factors:

- **Images:** Many scheduling tools struggle with images and in many instances are very limited in terms of customization. This limits your success level as images are powerhouses of engagement.
- **No Facebook Insights:** When you post using third-party tools many times, if not all, the posts you schedule will not be picked up by Facebook Analytics. Meaning that you will not be able to see how your posts stack up against each other when it comes to engagement. This means Facebook Analytics will not track the likes, shares and comments associated with any post that you scheduled using the third-party tool. So if you are using Hootsuite, and then refer to Facebook Analytics, the data that you see is not representative of actual engagement.
- **Drop in Views:** Many companies have reported large drops recently in their post viewership recently. This has been attributed to their posts being scheduled through a third-party application.

- **Tagging:** It is very tough to tag other businesses through a third-party application, which results in a loss of valuable exposure.

These are the current issues that many companies are facing...but there are surely more to come.

How do you get around this? When it comes to Facebook, use the Native Facebook Scheduling tool that is available on your page (and appears as an option on every post that you write).

The process is simple. If you want to work a week at a time, get all of your posts handy and then one-by-one go through the 5 step process:

1. Go to your Facebook Page and input your update in the “What have you been up to?” box at the top of your timeline.
2. Make sure that the hyperlink has produced an image preview. Don’t like the image? Replace it by clicking the “+Upload Image” button at the bottom of the image.
3. Don’t like the headline or the short description that has been automatically generated by the link? Click to the right of the title AND body copy and write something more engaging in each spot.
4. Make sure that you have hashtags in your post and that they are hyperlinked and relevant.
5. Do you mention another company, product, service, etc that has a Facebook Page. Make sure to tag them! Use @ and then the company name to choose them from a drop-down list. The more tags the merrier. Just make sure they are relevant.

Now it is time to schedule, which is even easier!

Click the arrow next to the word “Publish” at the bottom of your update box and choose the time in the future that you would like your post to go out.

Click “Schedule” and you are done!

When the set time comes, the post will go out exactly as you have customized it during the process listed above.

What you may have noticed here is that by doing the scheduling directly through Facebook, you have more options to customize your message and how it appears to your target audience. When using a third-party application you do not get this exact same set of options.

While this may add a bit more time to your weekly schedule, it is time well spent. Why spend your valued time writing, when no one is going to see it. Try this and watch your post engagement go up over time.

SECRET 4: BEST TIME TO POST

When you are executing a social media marketing strategy, there is a lot to think about. You might be concerned about:

- The use of visuals
- Your content strategy
- Who will be executing the work
- How will you measure your results
- When the work will be done

There is such an overwhelming amount of planning that goes into executing a social media marketing strategy that it is inevitable that something will be left to the last minute. In my experience an extremely vital point that gets left out in the cold during the social media strategy planning stage is when is the best time to post content to Facebook?!

While this is a seemingly unimportant factor, I am here to tell you that it is absolutely vital to your social media strategy. Just think, for example, of an email marketing campaign that you have previously executed. If you have looked at the studies done on email marketing, I am sure that you found out that by altering the time and date of your blasts, you can increase effectiveness.

And I am here to tell you that this is definitely true. We have executed email marketing campaigns for our clients and when we discovered the optimum time and date for them to be sent, their success rate skyrocketed!

This holds true also when we find the optimum posting time for our clients on social media. Before, they had a well written post with wonderful content that was languishing at the bottom of the barrel. Once we found the optimal posting time and used it, we could take this same exact post and garner exponentially more engagement...with only changing the time and date it was shared!

Have you ever posted something to social media that you truly believed to be earth-shatteringly good and...crickets? This is a prime example of the importance of choosing the right time and date when posting your social media content. I know how much time it takes to formulate good, engaging content, and I for one want it to be successful every time I post it!

To help you along, here are some times that we have found to be helpful when posting content to Facebook:

Best Time to Post: Daily, between 1-4pm

Peak Time to Post: Wednesdays at 3pm

Worst Time to Post: Saturday and Sunday before 8am and after 8pm

These are simply guidelines for you to use which will effectively bring you closer to finding the optimal time for you to post on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. I know some industries that we work with where these hours don't always hold up as the best.

The moral of the story is to try these out, and monitor your success. You will need to massage these times and dates to find out what works best for you. When it comes to your content, what should be the most important thing is that you plan to deliver it to the correct audience at the time when they are ready to receive it. This will create a social media home run not only for your content, but also your campaign!

SECRET 5: USE FACEBOOK GROUPS

Many LinkedIn networking professionals understand the benefit and power of using LinkedIn Groups to market their business. It is one of those features that enables you to reach thousands of people in a very targeted way.

But what if I told you that Facebook had a similar feature?

Facebook has a (much less robust) version of groups that helps you target a niche group with your message. On Facebook there are countless amounts of these groups with more members than you would realize....with many of the groups in question being centered around business topics and professional niche networking.

To get started, let's talk a bit more about the types of groups and which ones you may be interested in joining. Here are the main three categories that I suggest:

1. **Location Based:** If you search for your target location on Facebook and then sort for Groups – you will find all of the groups that are in your area and/or the groups that have your area in their name.
2. **Networking Based:** There are many groups that are based around networking with other members and other groups that are even referral based. These are great and can be location or subject based.
3. **Topic Based:** What is your company's niche? Search for the words that best represent your niche and you will find a plethora groups to jump right into. For example if you are a pediatric nursing company, there would be many groups for not only pediatric medicine but also for children's health and wellness. Play around with your targeted keywords and look at what you will find.

There are many other types of groups, but I think that these three are probably the key ones that you would be interested in diving into first. Once you put your request to join in, the moderator will either let you in or not – based on their own personal opinion. When you are admitted to the group, first read the rules for posting and interacting with members. Some welcome promotional posts, some do not, and others require it! So make sure that you are going to follow the group rules...or risk of getting the boot!

Then see what the group is posting and discussing and join in. Create content and post it that would interest the group and engage with the discussions as they gain momentum. Also, if there are group members that you want to reach out to, you can view their profile and send them a message about connecting or just send a request with a message. This is a more personal way of building your network – just be careful not to spam: either by your adding friends or too many self promotional posts.

SECRET 6: THE POWER OF FACEBOOK VIDEO

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Posting your videos on Facebook is by no means a new idea. In fact it has been around nearly since the inception of the site years ago. What's new that we want to focus on here is a Facebook enhancement that helps you present your videos in a more professional and engaging way to your audience.

This new feature has benefits for power or casual users alike. I have always instilled in my clients that it is imperative that you have at least one branded video on your social media channels. This video should be one that showcases your company and mission while bringing your brand to life.

Let's get started going through these new elements. The best way is to get on Facebook and look along with me. Go to your Facebook Page and in the navigational tab directly underneath your cover image, you will see either the VIDEO tab or the MORE tab. If it is the VIDEO tab, click on it and meet us at the next step. If you see the MORE tab, click on it and choose VIDEO from the dropdown menu.

Now you will be on the new video screen. The first option that you have is to Create a Featured video. This is beneficial for those with many videos as well as those with just one. Choose the best video that represents your company (especially when viewed by new customers) and set this as your Featured Video. The featured video will now show up at the top of the Video Page as well as on the left hand column of your Facebook Page attached to the ABOUT section. This is excellent, as this portion of your main Page tends to be the place people check when first visiting to learn more about you. Imagine the effect if you could show them what you do instead. Very powerful.

The second feature is more interesting to those power users who post tons of videos (or have more than 10 videos posted already). You are able to organize your videos into playlists to help people find what they're interested in.

This is excellent as now your visitors won't have to be blinded by the endless stream of videos trying to make a decision as to what suits their interests best, they can go through the categories and dig into the ones that interest them with more immediacy. So those videos that you love, which are never viewed, will have a better opportunity to shine.

These new video features on Facebook give you the opportunity to enhance your uploaded videos and provides a better way of showcasing your content. Whether you have 2 videos or 52, this feature will help you organize and present your content in a more professional manner.

SECRET 7: USE YOUR CALL TO ACTION BUTTON

With the competitive social media marketplace, Facebook knows that it needs to constantly evolve in order to give businesses who are using their service for marketing purposes more bang for their buck.

Many business have been trying Facebook Advertising, but the returns have not been exactly what they had in mind. Let's just say Facebook Advertising is no Google AdWords when it comes to ROI.

A better way of marketing your business on Facebook is to ensure that you have made your Page as engaging as possible and keep up on the changes and enhancements that they introduce along the way.

One of the latest additions is the Call to Action Button. This makes it easy for people who visit your Page to take a specific action on your website or app. Choose between buttons to encourage people to shop, book appointments, play games and more.

The process is fairly simple for installing yours, so let me take you through it quickly:

- Log into your Facebook account, and then locate your Facebook Page.
- When you are on your page, look at the bottom right hand corner of your Facebook Cover Image. There you will see a button that says "Create Call-to-Action".
- Click this button and you will be taken to the "Create a Call-to-Action Button" Page. On the right hand side of this page you will see a few items to fill in.
- First, you want to choose your button. So click the drop down menu under "Choose a Button" and decide which you would like to use. Currently your choices are: Book Now, Contact Us, Use App, Play Game, Shop Now, Sign Up, Watch Video.

- After you make your button choice you want to set the destination. For websites you want to add the link in the “Website” field. If you have a mobile website, add it in the mobile website field. Then click Next.
- Now you want to choose a destination for people using IOS. Choose where you want them to go from the drop down menu. Then click next.
- Next you have to choose a destination for people using an Android device. Choose where you want them to go from the drop down menu and click next.
- Click Save and you are done!

Now you will be directed back to your home page and you will see your Call-to-Action Button in the lower right hand side of your Cover Image. If you look to the right hand column of your page under the This Week heading, you will see CTA Clicks. This is a new metric that will automatically count the number of clicks that your Call-to-Action will receive each week.

So as you can see it is fairly simple. Just remember that your Call-to-Action is not written in stone. You are able to edit it at any time, so don't forget to modify it to fit your marketing strategy!

SECRET 8: THE POWER OF FACEBOOK TABS

If you have not already, I'm sure that you have created a Facebook Page for your business. You've got the content locked down, the cover image and logo image perfected and are reaching out and engaging on a regular basis. Aside from advertising, what's left?

Custom Facebook Tabs!

I love these as they can really add something extra to your Facebook Page in terms of branding, but also can provide your audience with a plethora of options in terms of extras.

Here I'm going to share some of my best tips to making the most out of your Facebook Tabs in order to enhance engagement on your page.

First, login to your Facebook Page. Go down to the tab section of your Facebook Page. This will be a series of rectangular boxes residing below your Facebook Page Cover Image. There you will see all of your tabs (all

pages come with the standard LIKES, Map, Photos and Notes). Find the tab that you want to edit and hover your cursor over top of the box. When you do this you will see a small image of a pencil in the top right hand corner. Click on this and a drop down menu will appear.

This is where all of your editing will begin. At this location you will be able to:

- **Change It's Position:** Here you can swap position of the tab. Want your Photos to appear where your LIKES are? Swap them out!
- **Remove It:** Don't have any use for a specific tab? Don't leave it empty, remove it.
- **Edit Settings** (including Tab Name and Image): We'll talk about this below...
- **Get the Link to the Page:** This is really useful if you are doing a contest or promotion where you will be sending the link directly to people via email or mobile. They click the link and go DIRECTLY to the content of the tab. A very under utilized tool.
- **Uninstall Application:** If you do not like an application, you can easily uninstall it here, rather than going through the Applications section on your EDIT page.

I think one of the most important items, when it comes to branding, is definitely the Edit Settings Tab. Let's dive in the capabilities of this area.

Click on "Edit Settings" and you will be taken to a pop-up box where you can edit the image and title of the Tab. To change the name, edit the "Custom Tab Name" field and click to confirm the changes.

If you want to change the image, click on "Change" next to "Custom Tab Image". This will bring you to another page where you can upload your image. You simply click on the right corner of the image currently there, click edit, and upload your new picture. Once this is complete save your work and go back to your home page. Not too hard, right?

When you are coming up with an image for your tabs, you might want to use elements of your header branding to continue the look and feel, or come up with a custom graphic that really grabs your audience.

Remember that the image size of each tab is 111 x 74 – so use your space wisely!

Also, make sure that the title of your tab and the text in your image are not doubled. Use the two spaces to announce and inform, rather than inform and inform. Expert advice: whatever tab background you design, you may want to use it as a background for all of your tabs. So once you create it, hold onto it so when you need to add tabs or change tabs you have the file handy!

And there you go! Play around with your tabs today. Don't have fancy software to edit and create images? There are great free graphic design and picture editing tools that are available on the internet (just Google Free Graphic Design Tools) that can get you started. While they may not be the most advanced tools out there, they will get you off and running while helping you get in there and start branding yourself.

Our next post will be about the best Facebook Tab Applications for you to use on your page and the best ways to get them installed. To see how we use our Facebook Page Tabs, visit us here!

SECRET 9: TAGGING - YOU'RE IT!

Facebook tagging has been around for awhile now and you have probably seen it in action on your personal profile on Facebook. Tagging is when someone writes or replies to an update and mentions someone in the update. For example, say you wrote an update and got four comments. In one of the comments you see your name in blue in the response. When you see this – it is a tag. The tagging in updates is a more advanced version of tagging someone in a photo (which I'm sure we have all done or tried at some point).

In order to tag a company or person, you must first be connected to them or LIKE their page. Then you simply type the @ symbol and begin to write their name. This will generate a drop down list of companies/people to choose from. Don't see what you are looking for? Type more or less of the name you are searching for. When you find it, click on the name and it will then be added to your post.

So...what does this do for me?

The answer: a lot.

If you are trying to get your business in front of influential referral sources, potential customers or persuasive partners, write an update, mention them in the update and tag them. Even share one of their most recent updates that your audience would be interested in, tag them and then thank them for sharing the wonderful information.

Going to their office or event? Tag them in real time while you are there or after you leave saying how great it was to meet them or what you thought of the event. See a potential customer do something wonderful in the media? Congratulate them with tagging.

Tagging will enable you not only to get in front of the company or person you are tagging, but also in front of their entire audience as well. So for example if you only have 150 likes on your page, tagging a person with 150,000 likes could multiply the exposure of your post by 1,000.

To get comfortable with tagging, I always suggest trying it out on your personal account with friends first before doing it for your business. Once you get the hang of it, try it to in your Facebook Page marketing strategy with some current clients or potential clients.

Use tagging when relevant and make sure that the update is well-written. Over tagging can be spammy and can also turn off your current Facebook connections. Monitor the success against your other non-tagged updates to see what works and what doesn't.

SECRET 10: ADVERTISING OBJECTIVES AND YOU

As you know already, I always advise that before you start any advertising initiative on Facebook or any other social media site, that you set forth clear objectives for why you want to advertise. But what I didn't mention is that in this case, Facebook has your best interests at heart and once you click "Create Ad in your Facebook advertising section (yes, we all have them attached to our personal accounts), they will present you with a wonderful list of objectives to help you make the right choice.

Possible Objectives for Your Facebook Advertising Campaign:

Boost Your Posts:

Want to get more engagement on a certain post that you have on your Facebook Business Page? This option will allow you to create a sponsored

post that would be seen by the audience of your choice to increase engagement.

Promote Your Page:

Want more visibility and LIKES? Then this is the choice for you. It is a great way to get started with building your network on Facebook.

Send People to Your Website:

Want hits to your website, blog, or online store? This allows you to create a sponsored ad that will be presented to the audience of your choice...right in the newsfeed!

Increase Conversions on Your Website:

Do you want to promote conversions on your website? Want more email signups, ebook downloads, free consultation appointments? Use this objective to get more conversions on your offer.

Get Installs of Your App:

Are you a developer with a new application that you would like to promote? What better way to promote this than to share your app via an add with a one-click download?

Increase Engagement in Your App:

Is your application just not getting the user engagement that you want? Use this objective to get more people active using your app!

Reach People Near Your Business:

Are you a local business that relies on your community for success? This objective allows you to hit your marketing with laser precision!

Raise Attendance at Your Event:

You may have noticed that the number of people viewing your event invitations has decreased. Promote your event more aggressively with advertising and watch your numbers grow with targeted members outside of your network.

Get People to Claim Your Offer:

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Are you having a sale or special offer? Then this objective is the number one choice!

Get Video Views:

Spend lots of money creating a promotional video or just have a video that you would like to see more people engage with? Use this to promote your video to a laser targeted market!

As you can see these 10 different objectives are a good starting point to better understanding where you need to start when it comes to Facebook Advertising. Now go onto your account and check these out in more detail. Facebook offers lots of flexibility, so click around and learn more about these objectives and what they entail.

CHAPTER 3:

10 LINKEDIN SECRETS

“ 1 out of every 3 professionals on the planet is on LinkedIn.” - Jason Miller

Depending on how well you know me and my work, you may or not know that I am a massive proponent of the powers of marketing your company using LinkedIn. This vibrant and highly active professional social networking hub can offer so many positive outcomes to your business that sometimes it can be surprising.

LinkedIn is one of the tools that is not always the first choice when you begin to consider social media marketing for your company. Many believe that by simply creating a sparse LinkedIn Professional Profile, they are checking off “LinkedIn Marketing” from their to-do list.

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This couldn't be farther from the truth.

There are many activities that make up a vibrant and successful LinkedIn marketing strategy that many companies are missing. But why?

It truly does come down to lack of resources: especially time. Of course time is always at a premium, and LinkedIn is one of the longer games when it comes to building visibility and credibility. Also, the time that you need to spend on the site on a consistent basis can be daunting to an overworked marketing manager. Speaking of lack of resources, this can also relate to the lack of knowledge of how LinkedIn works. Who has extra time to learn an entirely new marketing tool?

Whether you don't have the time or still need to pick up the skills, here is why you need to listen up when it comes to the power of LinkedIn marketing for your company. Below are some of the results that you can expect from a LinkedIn marketing campaign:

- **Visibility:** you will gain visibility to members of your target market by joining groups where you could have hundreds of thousands of eyeballs to your every move.
- **Credibility:** your activity and marketing strategy will build your credibility and position you as an expert/leader in your field.
- **Website Traffic:** you can build valuable traffic from LinkedIn to your website, blog or landing pages.
- **Referrals:** you can connect and network with referral sources in real time to enhance the reach of your business.
- **Connect with the Elusive:** having trouble connecting with leads via email – try LinkedIn and see how your rate of response changes.
- **Event and Service Promotion:** promote your events and/or services to the masses as often as you please (including email blasts).
- **Public Relations Opportunities:** the more consistent your activity is, the more you will be asked to post guest blogs, speak at conferences and have media appointments.

- **Testimonials:** you can solicit and collect useful testimonials that you can then use in your marketing collateral.
- **Branding:** you can brand your company fully via LinkedIn Company Pages and showcase your services through Showcase Pages.
- **Hiring:** looking to expand your staff or need to replace a member of staff? LinkedIn will help you reach some of the most savvy prospects in your area.

And this is just scratching the surface. All of the above results are within your grasp as long as you have a cohesive and strategic social media marketing campaign by your side.

With that in mind....bring in the secrets!

SECRET 10: CREATE AN ENGAGING PROFILE

Would you consider your professional profile maximized on LinkedIn?

If you hesitated, then the odds are that there may be some room for improvement.

When it comes to having a fully maximized profile on LinkedIn, there are many areas where your focused improvements can really make a difference. I've spoken to countless people who were firm believers that their LinkedIn profiles were built to deliver results.

And then I took a look through them. Let's just say their profiles left a lot to be desired.

By just signing up for a LinkedIn account, copying your resume points, and adding a picture – you are not putting your best foot forward. In order to create a profile built for success, you need to really illustrate your value and credibility to your target audience.

How you may ask? Here are 10 quick changes that will help take your LinkedIn profile from a starter to a winner in no time:

1. **Headshot:** Ok, this seems SUPER elementary – but does your picture actually look like you? Have you ever met someone offline that doesn't match what they actually look like? Doesn't really help their credibility right? Use a shot that looks like you!

2. **Keywords:** Before you start working on your LinkedIn account, pull out the list of keywords that people use to find you online. If you don't have one of these, make sure to take the time to put it together. Once you do, use these keywords liberally (within reason of course) through your ENTIRE LinkedIn profile.

3. **Your Professional Headline:** Underneath your name you have the ability to create a wonderful and engaging headline for yourself....so why not. For example here's mine, "CEO of The Go! Agency, Founder of The Social Marketing Academy, Author of "The Go Method." You can do the same. Use this real estate to your advantage.

4. **Location:** Make sure that the location that is mentioned in your profile is most suitable to where you do business. So if I was based in Orlando but did 100% of my business in Tampa – I might consider using Tampa as my location. Also, if you have moved and never updated this, it is a big no-no. This is another way people find you on LinkedIn!

5. **Add Some Posts:** You can easily add some Posts from the homepage of LinkedIn. These will show up directly underneath your Professional Profile header and will allow you to illustrate your expertise to a wide network of possible customers/clients.

6. **Summary:** Does your summary sound like you? Is it in first person? These are things that I strongly suggest. If I wrote my summary in such a way that I said "Christopher Tompkins is the CEO of The Go! Agency" versus "I am the CEO of The Go! Agency"....you can see the difference. You want people to engage with you – so don't sound like a company bio from a corporate website, add a personal touch.

7. **Add Files to Summary:** Make your profile come alive by adding pdfs, links, and much more to your website. This way you can showcase your work in a whole new fashion. Well worth the time and will really look impressive to those who use your profile.

8. **Bring Your Experience to Life Visually:** There is nothing better than seeing visuals attached to the company that you have worked in. And LinkedIn wants to empower you to do this! So you can add Documents, Photos, Links, Videos, and Presentations to your experience to really shine!

9. Testimonials: If you are not getting testimonials to add to your experience you are missing out on POWERFUL third-party endorsements that will really make you look like the expert you are. Don't hesitate to ask and follow up on these.

10. Fill in Everything: I know, I know – there are a lot of sections that may not pertain to you. But fill in every section until it is either maxed out, or it ABSOLUTELY does not apply to you. Think outside of the box – you might just be able to fill out more sections than you had originally thought!

My best tip I have left until last ... DON'T NEGLECT. And by this I mean, don't complete your profile once and then never go back again. There are so many variables in life and these always need to be reflected in your profile. Win an award? Add it to your profile. New brochure? Add it to your profile. New company video? Add it to your profile. Promotion? Add it to your profile.

SECRET 2: POST AT THE RIGHT TIMES

Want to get the most bang for your buck when posting on LinkedIn? Try this schedule as a guideline and monitor your success. Then change and refine as you go.

LinkedIn:

Best Time to Post: Tuesday through Thursday

Peak Time to Post: Noon, 5-6pm, Tuesday through Thursday

Worst Time to Post: Monday through Friday, 10pm-6am

SECRET 3: MAKE YOUR PROFILE MORE VISUALLY STUNNING

I was recently holding a training class at our office and while I was going through the process of explaining how to setup your LinkedIn profile for networking success, there was a key aspect which surprised the class: that you can add files, links and videos to your profile!

As these business owners were surprised by this, I thought it would be useful to share this little trick which will help you enhance your profile to make it much more engaging to your target audience.

While logged into your LinkedIn account, go to your profile page and click the “Edit” button. You will see a square with an arrow near the top right corner of both the Summary and Experience sections. When you click this icon you will see that you have the opportunity to “add a link” or “upload a file”. By adding a link, you are linking to information available online. It will provide a preview and you can edit the description. If you click “upload a file” you choose the file that you want to upload from your computer and edit the title and description.

So, just choose what you like, click save, and the information appears on your profile. You can grab and drag these blocks to be arranged however you want, so it is very easy for you to edit the look and feel of your profile.

So very easy to do....but what content are we talking about here?

Social media is most effective when visuals are used. So when you are looking for what to add to your LinkedIn profile, this is the perfect place to start.

Video.

The most powerful when done correctly, your videos are prime opportunities to show your skill and gain credibility. Choose videos that you have posted online (on your website, YouTube or other site) and copy and paste the link to your video. This can be a commercial, review, media appearance, or even some raw footage of “behind the scenes” at your company. All of these are great opportunities to bring your brand to life on your profile.

Images.

When it comes to adding images, make sure that the images aren’t “stock images”. Look at what visual items you have at your disposal. Your brochure. Your one-sheet sales promotion, coupons, proposals, testimonial sheets, or even advertisements. By posting these on your profile in the right spots you will be able to leverage the power of these visuals to tell more of your company’s story as well as elevate your credibility in the LinkedIn climate, as well as your niche.

Documents.

Do you require potential clients or current clients to fill out any forms? Add them to your LinkedIn profile and share the link with them to download. This will send more traffic to your LinkedIn profile as well as have these people learn more about you than they knew before. By doing this, you at times can convert a warm lead into a hot sale.

Presentation.

Have you painstakingly created a compelling presentation, either by video or Power Point? Share it on your profile! There is no better way to show off your deck than to add it to your already exciting profile. The best way to do this is to share a link to where it is located so that the viewer can easily click and view it. Don't have one? Create one for just the purpose of showcasing your brand on LinkedIn. It is as easy as creating a professional looking Power Point.

These four visual points are my top suggestions when it comes to adding some intrigue to your profile. One point to remember is to post the items in the right spots on your profile. You can add them to your Summary and then to your professional Experience. As everyone has a different way of presenting themselves on LinkedIn, ensure that your choice of visuals coincide with your messaging flawlessly.

Otherwise you will come off as inauthentic...which is not good. Adding strong visuals to your LinkedIn profile will enable you to take your visibility and credibility to the next level.

SECRET 4: INCREASE INFLUENCE BY PUBLISHING POSTS

There are many ways to showcase your credentials and knowledge on LinkedIn. It goes without saying, that the first step is to create an engaging profile and company page. You can also join groups. You can also write updates.

Now you can do one better.

Long-Form Posts.

LinkedIn launched these with the view to help its users showcase their knowledge in a whole new way. Now when you publish a Long-Form Post your original content will be showcased in a few different ways:

- It is immediately shared with all of your followers

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- It is immediately shared with all of your connections
- It is searchable both on and off LinkedIn
- It gives someone outside your network the opportunity to follow or connect with you
- It becomes part of your professional profile, with its own section.

Not too shabby, right?

So how can you start using this today? Find suitable posts from your content arsenal.

If you have a blog or regularly write articles that you share across the web, this is perfect content fodder for the LinkedIn Long-Form Post. Remember, the term is long-form, so we are not talking 200-300 words. Go long!

Now that you have your content, here's the step by step (and simple) process of publishing your first post:

- Log into your LinkedIn account.
- On your "Home Screen" you will see your picture with a white box next to it with the words "Share an update..." in it. If you look to the right side of this box, you will see a small pencil icon. When you cursor over it, the words "Share an Update" appear. Click this.
- A new screen will open which looks similar to a Word document. Here is where you can cut and paste your existing content or get to writing something fresh. You have all of the basic formatting options here as well as the opportunity to add pictures, hyperlinks, and embed media.
- After you have added your title, completed your content, and formatted your post – it is time to post! I suggest clicking the "Preview" button to see how your Long-Form Post will look to other LinkedIn members. Once you are happy with what you see, simply click publish...and you are done! By the click of that button, everyone that is connected with you will receive a notification that you have just published a new post.

While this is a fairly simple process to reach so many, make sure that your message is worth everyone's attention. Crafting a useful note which is packed with value for the members of your target market is an absolute

must! My top tip here is to always think about what your target audience is interested in while coming up with anything that you post online. If your goal is to engage future referral sources or clients, provide information that they would enjoy.

SECRET 5: DON'T NEGLECT YOUR COMPANY PAGE

Another great way to promote your business and extend your reach on LinkedIn is to create a Company Page. While they have been around for awhile, there have been many enhancements over the past year that have made these an eye-catching spot to showcase your brand on LinkedIn.

But, how do you do it? Here are the quick steps that you need to know to get setup in under an hour!

- After you have logged into LinkedIn, Click on the “Companies” tab from the top menu.
- On the main companies page, if you look to the top right hand side of the page you will see “Add a Company”. Click this.
- Now you will see the “Add a Company” page where you will need to verify the company and your involvement with it. So add your company name (as you would like it to be found in searches) and your email address at the company. If you have multiple email addresses that you use for work, use the one that contains the domain of your website. For example, I would use christopher@thegoagencyusa.com as our website is <http://www.thegoagencyusa.com>. Once you have done this, click “Continue”.
- Now LinkedIn will send you a verification email that you will need for the next step. Check your email and when it comes through, click on the link to verify and create the page.
- Once you do this, you will be taken to your main Company Page – but it will be blank. This is where you start. If the screen is not in editing mode, click the “Edit” button on the right. A rule of thumb is that if you want to add, remove, or edit any information on your company page, click the “Edit” button. The “Publish” button is the equivalent of “Save” and will publish your information when you have completed editing.
- First, choose the language you want to optimize your Company Page for.

- Then make sure your company name is correct and how you would like it to appear.
- Now it is onto the “Company Description”. Think of this as the “About” section of your website. If you have an About page on your website, I would simply cut and paste it, and then make any edits for keywords and space.
- Next move onto the “Designated Admins” section. This will be the list of people who are able to edit this page. So if you have more than one person editing the page, simply type their name in the space provided and they will pop up. Select them and they will be added.
- Next, the “Image”. This will be the splash image that will be displayed on your LinkedIn Company Page. Make it eye catching and keep it to 646 x 220 pixels and no more than 2 MB in size. To add the image, click “Edit” then “Browse” (choose your photo from your computer) and “Upload”. After a few seconds your image will appear and you can crop it if necessary. If you like what you see, click “Save”.
- Now you will have to edit your “Standard Logo”. This will be a rectangular representation of your company logo. This will be highly visible, so make sure that it is a hi-resolution and looks sharp! Your logo needs to be 100 x 60 pixels and a maximum size of 2 MB. To add your logo, repeat the instructions from step 10.
- Next is your “Square Logo”. This will be 50 x 50 pixels and a maximum size of 2 MB. Again, repeat the instructions from step 10 to add.
- Now onto your “Company Specialties”. You will need to key in your key service offerings, specialty areas of focus and unique keywords. For example, for The Go! Agency will have “Social Media Marketing, Website Design, SEO, Custom Copywriting” as ours. If you have more than 4 specialties that you would like to add, click the “Add more specialties” button and more spaces will appear.
- The last fill in section on the left hand column is for “Featured Groups”. These are for groups that you have either created, are an admin for, or are a member of. To find the groups you would like to feature, simply add the name in the space provided and select.

- Now onto the easy side, the right column. You will need to fill out all of the basic information about your company, including: Company Type, Company Size, Company Website URL, Main Company Industry, Company Operating Status, Year Founded, Locations and Contact Information. This is all very straight-forward, so take your time and fill in everything completely in order to properly represent your company to the millions of members of LinkedIn.
- Once you have completed the left and right column, click the “Publish” button on the top right hand of the page.

SECRET 6: ADVERTISING OBJECTIVES AND YOU

A large part of LinkedIn has to do with your reputation and how you are viewed by not only your peers, but also the masses at large. Credibility and visibility are two other factors that, when paired with a solid reputation, can make for not only a killer LinkedIn profile – but also a more successful LinkedIn marketing campaign.

Two elements that help you elevate your LinkedIn reputation are endorsements and recommendations. Here I want to give you a quick overview of these two topics and show how they can help you build your reputation on LinkedIn.

The first thing you need to do is create a list. I know, I am always telling you to create lists, but this is the best way to move quickly through certain social media marketing functions such as this. Your list should be made up of two categories: peers/influencers in your target area as well as those who can recommend you, your work, your company’s work.

On this list, make sure to have the person’s full name (first and last) and their current email address.

Now let’s move onto the endorsements and recommendations:

Endorsements:

One of the newer features of LinkedIn, endorsements allow you to go to a person’s profile and “Endorse” or vet them for certain skills (and vice versa). So for example, if you go to my profile on LinkedIn here the first thing that you will see is a large blue box above my profile that says “Does Christopher have these skills or expertise?” From this list, you can select

all of them, click the x to remove, or type in another area of expertise. When you have made your selection, click the “Endorse” button. This will immediately let that person know that you have given them a thumbs up about their skill set.

Now, using your list, search and locate peers and/or influencers (as well as potential clients) that you wish to get in front of, visit their profiles and endorse them. Has someone endorsed your skills? Send them a thank you! This is a great tool to build credibility on your profile and to begin engaging with people you normally wouldn't.

Recommendations:

These are more familiar to LinkedIn users as they have been around since the beginning of LinkedIn. The most straight-forward explanation of these are that recommendations are testimonials you are able to post to your public or private LinkedIn profile. You can see how they appear by visiting my profile above and scrolling down through my experience.

Obviously, having a testimonial on your profile looks great – but why should you recommend others?

So that your picture, words and links are visible on others people's profiles! Just think if their profile is viewed 100 times more than yours and your testimonial and profile link are visible on their page....pretty powerful right? While it can be a bit tough and time consuming, recommending pays off.

My only rule? Don't ask or write recommendations for ANYONE that you do not know or haven't worked with.

To get started, click on Profile, then Recommendations. This will bring you to the main recommendations page where you will be able to manage your recommendations, request recommendations and make recommendations. This is where your list comes in handy. Make sure that if you are going to make or request a recommendation, you choose the right relationship from the list provided. And off you go! All recommendations are reviewed before they are posted live, so do not worry about anything being posted that you are not aware of.

These two functions, while a little tricky, can be a great way for you to not only get in front of those decision makers you are so eager to meet, but

they also give you the power to pop up everywhere on LinkedIn, thus increasing your visibility!

SECRET 7: USE ADVANCED SEARCHES

As you get more familiar with social media marketing, you will find that you want to find new and exciting ways of finding information – in a quick and easy fashion. Beyond this, you want to be able to find the EXACT results you are searching for, not a bunch of unrelated information. Of all of the social media sites, I find the search engine on LinkedIn the most robust and accurate.

But what should you search for?

The answer is, it depends on what you are after. To best explain, first I want to show you how to get to this search screen we are going to discuss here. Once you login to your LinkedIn account, you will see a white search bar with a magnifying glass on the status bar towards the top. Leave the box blank and click on the magnifying glass. This will take you to the Search screen and all of its options.

Now that you are there, let me explain the different basic search categories that you can choose to search with:

1. All: quite simply, this searches all search criteria (People, Jobs, Companies, Groups, Updates and Inbox). This is the broadest search and many times can turn up mostly jobs on the first few pages. If you want to dive in deeper to this search, you can use the left column which will give you more advanced criteria to refine your search such as Relationship, Company, Location, Date Posted, Salary, Job Function, Industry and Experience Level.

2. People: this searches everyone on LinkedIn and is the most powerful search if you are prospecting or looking for specific people to link up with. This also comes with more advanced options such as Relationship, Location, Current company, Industry, Past Company, School, Profile Language, Groups, Years of Experience, Function, Seniority Level, Interested In, Company Size, Fortune and When Joined. If you click on “Advanced” right under the word “Search” near the top left corner of the page – all of these options will open up in a more easy to use box.

3. Jobs: this category will enable you to search all of the available vacancies that are posted on LinkedIn by companies and recruiters. It will give you the option of refining your search in many ways. Refining your search in this category is very important, as there are a plethora of jobs posted on LinkedIn, so if you are job searching you want to be as exact as you can. The extra search refining options are Keywords, Company, Title, Location, Country, Postal Code, Relationship, Date Posted, Salary, Job Function, Industry and Experience Level. If you click on “Advanced” right under the word “Search” near the top left corner of the page – all of these options will open up in a more easy to use box (similar to that you will find under the “People” category).

4. Companies: the Companies category will enable you to search all of the REGISTERED companies on LinkedIn, which means all of these companies have corresponding LinkedIn Company Pages. The advanced search section here allows you to filter by Relationship, Location, Job Opportunities, Industry, Company Size, Number of Followers and Fortune.

5. Groups: this is a search that I have taken you through on a couple of previous posts. Here you will be able to find the memberships groups available on LinkedIn that pertain to your search criteria. You will be able to refine your search through Relationship, Categories and Languages.

6. Updates: this is a terrific, and little used, search by newcomers to LinkedIn. This allows you to search all of the status updates that are made on LinkedIn. These include profile updates and status updates. This gives you refining criteria such as Network, Company, Location, Industry, Time, School, Group, Topics, Seniority and Update Type.

7. Inbox: this is the final area where you are able to search on LinkedIn in this section. This will enable you to search your inbox for any messages that are relevant to your search term.

And finally one last search tip: when you are using the LinkedIn search function, use it the same as you would Google, Bing or any other search engine. So, with that in mind, if you search for social media Florida, you will get the results for each of the key terms (social, media, Florida). But if you type in “social media Florida” or social+media+Florida – you will get EXACT results in any category. This will help laser focus your search.

SECRET 8: JOIN THE RIGHT GROUPS

As I'm asked this question again and again, I thought I would take a moment and give you 10 criteria on how to choose and join the right LinkedIn groups to support your online marketing efforts using LinkedIn.

One thing to keep in mind before we begin: it is extremely easy to join and leave LinkedIn groups. So the groups that you choose you will not be saddled with to the end of days. You are always able to leave groups that are a poor fit and try out new ones that can be more suitable. Also, you are allowed to join a maximum of 50 groups on LinkedIn. As many require a group manager to "OK" your request, it can delay you joining groups at a fast pace. But slow and steady wins the race – stay patient and you will receive.

Here are my 10 criteria for choosing the perfect LinkedIn Groups for your business:

1. **Choose Niche Keywords First.** It is tempting when first searching the GROUPS section of LinkedIn to go for terms like "ceo" or "hospitality". My suggestion is to first go uber niche with your search and get specific. Think about who your exact target market is, and then use that as your search criteria. For example, skip just using "hospitality" and go for "hotel managers florida". If you put your search between quotes, you will see the ONLY groups with this phrase in their description. While it may turn up less results than a general search, it will be extremely targeted and you may just find a gem.
2. **Read the Group Description.** The description, which appears under the title of the group on the results page, should give you a good idea about who the group is targeted to and what types of discussions are fine to be posted. Make sure that this matches the type of content that you would like to use to engage and the audience is suitable.
3. **Check the Group Activity Level.** It is always better to be in an active group. Below the group description, there is a grey line of text that will tell you about the activity level of the group. My favorites are "Very Active", but "Active" is good as well.
4. **Check the Number of New Discussions Created.** If the activity level is not present, you need to go to the next check which would be the number of discussions posted per month (this will be found at the same place below the group description). If in a 30 day period there were only

9 discussions and the group has 12,345 members – it would not be a group that I would join immediately as it seems pretty inactive.

5. **How Many of the Group Members Are in Your Network?** The green text at the bottom of each search result will give you the number of the group members that are also members of your LinkedIn network (in the form of connections). If you have a very targeted LinkedIn network, this number is a good indication if the group is on target for you.
6. **Does One Person Post All the Discussions?** Once you join a group (or if an open group, when you look at the main discussions page) look to see if one or two members are monopolizing the conversations/discussions. If this is the case, I tend to leave the group and keep a note to circle back later. As a new member, it is hard to break through in a group where certain members are posting new discussions extremely frequently, so it is better to go with a group that has less competition.
7. **Explore “Similar.”** If you find a group that is spot on using the criteria above, make sure to click on the green link at the bottom of the description that says “Similar”. This is a great way to discover harder-to-find groups that can be right on target for your marketing.
8. **Beware of Brand Groups.** You will see that some groups have a brand name in their title, description and/or logo. While some are membership groups only for members of the company’s team, there are others that function as a normal group but have their members of staff marketing in it consistently. I try to avoid these as comments and discussions can be held in moderation and never be posted, making it extremely challenging to engage and connect with other group members.
9. **Open Groups are Good, But Can Be Spammy.** There are many groups that you are immediately able to join without going through a vetting process with the group manager. While these Open Groups allow you to quickly join the conversation, make sure to look at the first page of discussion posts to see if they are mostly self-promotional or filled with job seekers. If you see this, I would leave the group (unless this is a market you are trying to target).
10. **Where Does the Group Manager Belong?** This is a close second to using the “Similar” link under the group description. You will be able to see (sometimes before and sometimes after) who the group manager is. Click on their name, go to their profile and then scroll down to the

bottom of their profile where their groups are listed. Go through their groups to see if there are other ones there that may benefit your business.

Now you should be able to properly and effectively choose a LinkedIn Group that fits your company's targets and needs. It is up to you to generate good solid discussions, add to discussions and engage with other group members. But this is much easier when you are in the right spot and in front of an audience you are familiar with.

SECRET 9: CREATE YOUR OWN LINKEDIN GROUP

On LinkedIn you are not stuck only participating in someone else's group, you can start your own!

If you have opened and completed your LinkedIn profile, you have the ability to create your own membership group, branded to your niche with you in the driver's seat.

Where do you start and how do you do it?

Here are some straight-forward tips on how to create the perfect LinkedIn Group for your business, quickly and efficiently:

1. Your Group and Your Purpose. You should create your LinkedIn Group around the subject matter of your business and topics your target consumer would be interested in. For example, we have The Go! Healthcare Marketing Insider (you can join here). One of the sectors we service at The Go! Agency is the healthcare market. So we created the group to interest healthcare organizations by sharing discussions related directly to using marketing to build their business online.

2. Create a Name and Logo. All LinkedIn Groups have a name and logo, so you will need to create one. There are many free logo services available, just Google them. Make sure your logo has the same look and feel as your company logo and the Group name reflects both your company and the Group itself. Make sure not to use your own company name as the name of the Group as it will confuse people. They may think this a company related membership Group?

3. Register Your Group. Go into LinkedIn and click on the Groups tab. On the next screen you will see a link to "Create a Group". Click on this

and fill out the form supplied. Make sure to fill it in completely and use as many keywords as you can. This will enable you to be found when someone is searching for a group with your subject matter.

4. Post Discussions. To get the ball rolling, post three or four discussions. Get your other co-workers to start a few as well. The more content that you add to your Group initially will enhance the amount of conversion once you begin to invite people to join.

5. Start Inviting! When you click on your Group, click next on the “Manage” tab. On the left hand side you will see “Send Invitations”. This will enable you to send invitations in batches to your LinkedIn connections. Want to promote via Facebook, Twitter or the main LinkedIn feed? Click the “Share” button on the top right of your group at any time.

And you are off! Now you have your own LinkedIn membership Group which will enable you to market in many new ways. In the next post I’ll explain how you can effectively market and manage your group for the best results possible!

SECRET 10: QUICK AND EFFECTIVE GROUP MANAGEMENT

Here are the top 5 things you need to know to effectively manage your LinkedIn Group to foster growth and engagement:

1. Check in Daily. Log into your group once a day and click on the Manage tab. Take a look at the Submission Queue, Moderation Queue and Requests to Join. If you have your Group settings configured in such a way that you have to approve all new members, comments, discussions, promotions, etc (which I highly recommend) it is important to check in consistently in order to keep the conversation going and your audience interested.

2. Use Your Templates. In the Manage section, look on the left hand side and click on the Templates link. This page will help you create, manage and automatically send custom messages to people interested in your group when they ask to join and once they are approved! Make sure to add your other social media links, weblinks and maybe even a special offer to your templates to increase your visibility.

3. Set the Rules. In the Manage page, you will also see the Group Rules link. It is important to set the rules of your group in order to best suit your

market. For example, if you do not want people hocking their wares or posting job vacancies all the time – set this in stone by stating this in your Group Rules.

4. Send Announcements! One of the most under utilized tools in LinkedIn Groups is Announcements. As a Group Manager will have the ability to send announcements once a week (or every 7 days). Make sure that they are group related: either a promotion, discussion or an update that you feel is important. Remember, if you abuse this people will leave the group just as they would opt-out of an email blast that turns spammy.

5. Keep Track of Your Statistics. Conveniently hidden and hard to find, the LinkedIn Group statistics page is very helpful in terms of you getting more familiar with the demographics of your custom Group. When in your Group, click on the “More...” tab and select “Group Statistics” from the drop-down menu. You will see helpful items such as Summary, Demographics, Growth and Activity. By monitoring these trends you can see how you can improve your group, enhance engagement and attract better quality members.

Extra Credit: Now your homework is to login to LinkedIn and explore these items in your LinkedIn Group today. Write some templates, send an announcement and check out your statistics. These 5 items will help you get that extra benefit from LinkedIn Groups that many don't take advantage of.

CHAPTER 4:

10 TWITTER SECRETS

“The is not an information age. It’s an age of networked intelligence.” - Don Tapscott

Twitter always is a polarizing topic when I discuss social media with anyone. Some people love it - some people hate it.

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In my opinion, the biggest negative with Twitter is that it looks and works vastly different from anything that we have ever used to market our businesses. When I introduce my clients to Twitter, I get comments and questions like these:

- How will I get my point across in 140 characters?
- It moves too fast!
- It's so confusing!

I hear you loud and clear. Thinking back to when I first started using Twitter, I had a hard time making sense of it, too. Much of it seemed like an inside joke that I wasn't let in on. But in time, I began to understand its purpose and flow of information, and I developed methods to manage it when marketing my business. Everyone has their own "Aha!" moment when it comes to Twitter. To help you get to your "Aha!" quicker, here's some of my secrets to getting the most out of your time on Twitter!

SECRET 1: LEARN THE LINGO

If you are new to Twitter, you will understand almost instantly that this social media juggernaut has its own language and lingo. To help you climb this terminology mountain, my team and I have assembled a quick glossary of the most used and important Twitter terms that you should come to terms with as you navigate your way through Twitter.

- **Tweet(s):** This is the Twitter version of a status update. They must be no longer than 140 characters in length. So concise and impactful is what you are after.
- **Follow:** This is the act of connecting with someone on Twitter. Once you "follow" someone, their tweets will appear in your main Twitter feed.
- **Followers:** These are all of the people that are following you and get your tweets hot off of the press.
- **Unfollow:** This is the act of removing a person as a Twitter connection. You physically go to their account and click "Unfollow" and will no longer receive their tweets and in turn they will no longer be able to send you Direct Messages (DMs).
- **Interactions:** This term is used to define any interaction anyone has with your account and covers, follows, mentions, retweets and favorites.

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- **RT or Retweet:** This term is used to define the art of sharing someone's tweet. So if you choose to share one of my tweets, you RT it to your audience from your Twitter account. (Example: "RT @chrisgoagency What is the best time to Tweet in your opinion?")
- **Embed a Tweet:** This is if you want to add a Tweet directly to your blog or online site. When you click on this (next to the original tweet), Twitter will reveal the code that you need to add it to your site.
- **#:** This is a hashtag and is used to categorize your tweet and is usually attached to a keyword (for example, #socialmedia or #medicare)
- **@:** The at symbol is used to hyperlink your tweet to another users profile. Meaning that if you type "Great radio show @chrisgoagency, will be listening more! #socialmedia" this tweet will not only appear on your feed, but also on the chrisgoagency feed. The @chrisgoagency will be clickable directly to chrisgoagency's profile. If your account is the one with the @ in front of your username, this is called a MENTION.
- **Reply:** This is responding to a tweet that has been sent to you publicly in the main feed.
- **DM or Direct Message:** This is a private message sent between you and one of your followers. These cannot be sent to you if you are not following the other person, and you cannot send a DM to a person if they are not following you first.
- **FF or #FF:** This literally means "Follow Friday" and is a regular occurrence on Twitter where a user thanks all of their best tweeters. They usually look like this "Thanks to all my great tweeters this week @chrisgoagency @thegoagency @agingcarefl #FF." This gives them all a public shout-out on your profile and links it to their Twitter feed.
- **Avatar:** Your profile picture that appears next to all of your outgoing Tweets.
- **Geotagging:** This is a function on Twitter that allows you to add location to your tweets. If you like people to know that you are a globetrotter or constantly traveling to different cities, this would be a great function to use. But if you like to keep it private, don't.

- **Lists:** These are basically a user-created group of people that are all connected in some way to a specific topic. These can be broad or uber specific, depending on the user's purpose. These are a great way to keep a group of people together for quick reference. (For Example the list can be of "Social Media Marketers" or more specific with "Social Media Marketers Florida"). You can create a list, subscribe to a list, or be a member of a list.
- **Activity:** This refers to a page in the #Discover section where you can see all of the activity of members of your network.
- **Trends:** This is a box that appears on nearly every page and refers to what the top hashtags and topics are on the ENTIRE Twitterverse at that moment and are constantly updated.
- **Blocking:** This is the act of preventing someone from being able to connect with your account and see your tweets/content. You can do this by visiting the person's profile and removing them.
- **Report for Spam:** To be used sparingly, this is tagging an account for harmful or obscene content. This should be used if the account is sending you endless promotions, sexual material or other offensive unsolicited tweets or DMs.

SECRET 2: WORK WITH YOUR SETTINGS LIKE A PRO

Once you have created your Twitter account you will need to come to terms with the administration panel on the backend of your Twitter account.

While the words "backend" and "admin panel" can make be a bit off putting, in reality it is very straightforward.

Your admin settings can be found by clicking the cog icon on the top bar, next to the bright blue box. This will give you a drop down menu of options, click on "Settings".

This will bring you to the main settings screen of your admin panel. If you have read my piece on making sense of your Facebook admin panel, you will see it Twitter's is very similar in format. The tabs for the different pages run down the left hand side and when you click on them, the right hand side of the page will show the content for that page. Now let's go through what

you need to pay attention to in each of these tabs and what they mean to your marketing your business on Twitter:

Account:

This tab shows all of the baseline information on how your account is setup. Here you can change your username (if you choose to do so at anytime), change your email, and choose the settings for how your tweets and account will be viewed at large. My advice here is to check if your information is correct, add the correct language and timezone. The other settings have to do with personalization and privacy. Each of these settings are very self explanatory – so read through them and set up your account accordingly. Also here, you will be able to “Request your archive” – this can be very useful down the road if you want to have a full record of the tweets that you have put out on Twitter. Once you are done, click “Save Changes”.

Password:

This tab simply allows you to change and update your password. This is handy if you need to increase security at anytime.

Mobile:

Do you want to enable Twitter to be used on your mobile phone? Click this tab and enter your phone number. Only downside is that every time it alerts you, you will be charged for a text if used OUTSIDE of an application – so keep that in mind! My suggestion is to not use this feature and download an approved or highly rated Twitter app to your mobile device/ phone and use that to Tweet....free of charge!

Email notifications:

This tab will enable you to decide what information Twitter will keep you up to date on via email. Choose wisely – as if you choose all of these options, you could be receiving emails from Twitter constantly....to an annoying level. Keep the noise to a minimum by only choosing a few options and changing them as you go.

Profile:

We discussed this tab previously when we spoke about branding on Twitter. Here you will be able to change your Profile Image, Header, Name,

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Location and Bio. So if at anytime you need to update these aspects, this is where you would do it. Also, you are able to connect Twitter to Facebook here. Use this feature with caution, as in time it can be a bit off putting to your Facebook audience as your content may look like Tweets, rather than status updates.

Design:

We spoke about this section in detail in the branding yourself on Twitter article as well. Here is where you will be able to change your background and link color on Twitter.

Apps:

Very simply, this tab shows you all of the third party applications that you have allowed to access your Twitter account. In layman's terms, if you are using Hootsuite to send out tweets, it will appear on this list. Also, if you login to Pinterest using Twitter – Pinterest will appear in this list. My top tip is to check in with this page every so often and “Revoke access” to any application that you are no longer using. This will keep your account safe from hackers and spam.

Widgets:

Have you ever seen a Twitter box showing a company's Twitter feed on their website? Chances are that it could have been created here in the Twitter Widget page. Simply add the information that you would like to add to the widget and click “Create widget” – and there you are. In this step you will need someone with website design expertise in order to have the widget integrated into your website.

These 8 tabs will help you manage your Twitter settings so that you account is full branded, up to date and safe. These are all important factors because of the speed of Twitter.

Take a moment now to login to your Twitter account and review the “Settings” administration page. Going through it once and understanding what your options are is powerful and will help you easily manage these functions of your Twitter account effectively in the future.

SECRET 3: CREATE AND USE LISTS

One of the best features of Twitter, but little used by Twitter newcomers, is the Twitter Lists function. If you want to get the most out of this popular site, this is a great way to target your marketing efforts while shaving valuable time off of your daily onsite work.

Before you create your list – you need to figure out what the list will be all about. This is where the planning comes in. How would you like to use your list? Some of the most popular way to use lists is for prospecting, following power users, keeping abreast on a specific topic or keeping tabs on the competition. Whatever you choose, create your list accordingly and then start adding members.

Creating your first list is simple. Here's what you will need to do:

1. Login to Twitter
2. Click on the “Me” button on the top black tab
3. Then on the menu on the left, click “Lists”
4. On the right, you will now see the main Lists page. It will show you the Lists you are Subscribed to and the Lists that you are a Member of. Next to that, you will see a button that says “Create List”. Click this.
5. This will pop up a little window where you can create your new list. First name your list. Here you want to choose an identifying name that will help you quickly reference the list.
6. Then write a description. Here you want to describe what the list contains in 100 characters or less.
7. Then choose if you would like to make your list Public or Private. Basically, if you do not want ANYONE to see the list, keep it Private. But if you are creating the list so that its
8. Click Save list.

Now....you need to start adding people to the list. This is fairly simple as well. While logged into Twitter, find the person that you want to add to the list and go to either their main page or profile summary. There you will see a little button with the outline of a person. Click on this button and a dropdown menu will appear. Choose “Add or remove from lists...” and a window will pop up where you “Include @person in:” the list of your choice.

Tick the box next to the list that you would like to add them to and click the x on the top right to save and close. Then...move onto the next person!

If you ever want to reference your lists at anytime, repeat steps 1-4.

SECRET 4: USING TWITTER TRENDS

No matter what your skill level, it is safe to say that when you are trying to keep abreast of all of the activity taking place on Twitter help is always handy. Twitter itself offers many great features to help you make sense of their fast-moving landscape. Among these features are: suggested people to follow, lists, searching, and the Trends feature – one in particular which is under utilized by Twitter newbies.

Trends on Twitter are (basically) the most popular stories, topics and hashtags currently being tweeted about. These trends are reported in real-time and change quite often, and are a great way to see what hot stories you can relate your business to and/or join in on the discussion to create exposure for your brand.

The only problem with Twitter trends? It was tough for local marketers (or those focused on specific cities and regions) to see what was trending in their city. While Twitter would pull from your network, not all members of your network will be focused in the area that you want to target. So finding out what was important to your target market was always a bit tricky.

Twitter has since changed this and has enabled you to fine tune your Trends search, now to include laser focused local markets! And the best part? It takes less than 5 steps to get it done. Let's get started:

1. Log in to your Twitter account.
2. Once logged in, on the left hand side of the page you will see a box that says "Trends". Next to this title is the word "Change" – click this.
3. This will generate a pop-up window which will ask you if you would like to "Change" or "Keep tailored Trends". Click "Change".
4. On the next pop-up window you are able to specify the specific city you want to generate Trends for. So either choose from the supplied list or "search locations" in the top bar. Once you have found your city of choice, click "Choose Location" and the window will close.

So in those 4 simple steps, you were able to change your Trending topics to reflect those of your specific target market. And it doesn't end here folks. If you are targeting numerous cities, you can go back in and repeat the process to see exactly what people in your cities are talking about.

What is the power of this?

Quite simply, you can create your content and outflow based on and around these trending topics. By using the same hashtags and joining in on the discussion, you will be able to get more exposure to your target market in the specific city you wish.

For example, if you were an assisted living facility in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, you would change your Trends to be focused on Pittsburgh, PA. Then in the list of Trends for Pittsburgh, say one of the top suggestions is #dementia. As this is a popular topic, you can either create an update ("Interesting new report on the relationship between friendship and #dementia: <http://www.xxx.com>), join in the discussion ("What is the best #dementia resource that you have found?") or click the topic in the Trends result box. When you do this, on the right hand side of the page, all of the tweets related to #dementia will pop up, including those who have tweeted them. You can then respond to their queries, ReTweet them, follow them, and more. My tip here is to remember to continue using the trending topic and associated hashtag so your outflow will be put into the trending feed.

A word of caution – Twitter moves fast, so if you want to utilize a trending topic, you must do it quickly as they change often. Depending on how many major things are happening in your target market, it can be multiple times per hour.

SECRET 5: TWEET LOCALLY

So you're tweeting away on Twitter about your latest blog...posting links to industry related articles...engaging with people, and so forth. You've followed some of your favorite folks, tweeted about your favorite place to eat sushi, and others are now following you. Like the dentist in Calgary and the life coach in Scotland.

What about the users in your own backyard? How do you find geographically closer prospects who may be interested in your offer? Try these tips to finding and engaging with local people and businesses:

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1. Twitter Search. Type in your city's name to access a list of Twitter users in your region. The advanced search feature finds peeps up to a 15 mile radius.
2. Do a simple Twitter search for people tweeting about your area using the # (hashtag). Simply type– #your city name– or abbreviation in the search box.
3. Twellow – (Twitter + yellow pages) is exactly what it sounds like — a listing of Twitter users. Access your region by clicking on Twellowhood, then your location on the map...or type in your city and state.
4. Look for apps - there are tons out there and more fresh apps are created every day to help you to find people in your area. TwitterLocal, Twinkle and more.
5. Search the lists of your local followers and those that you follow in town. This search is bound to yield some like-minded locals.

SECRET 6: TWEET AT THE RIGHT TIMES!

When you are executing a Twitter marketing strategy, the power is putting out a higher volume of content than you would on other social media marketing sites. For example, for many people I would suggest sending upwards of 10 tweets per day!

But...when is the best days and times to tweet? Here are some useful guidelines:

Best Time to Post: Monday through Thursday, 1-3pm

Peak Time to Post: Monday through Thursday, 9am-3pm

Worst Time to Post: Everyday after 8pm, Fridays after 3pm

These are simply guidelines for you to use which will effectively bring you closer to finding the optimal time for you to post on Twitter. Give it a try and keep track of what is working best for your company.

SECRET 7: MAXIMIZE YOUR IMAGES

When you first start to get your visuals together on Twitter, you will quickly see that the parameters for the design aspects of your profile are not always straight-forward.

Here I want to explain three aspects to you, one old and two new, that will help you adequately brand your business's Twitter account.

1. Profile Picture: This is extremely important in order to brand yourself on Twitter. Your Profile Picture can be edited from your main Twitter screen by clicking and choosing edit. This will be the avatar that shows up next to EVERYTHING you do on Twitter – so make sure it looks good, is easy to read and of a high-resolution. You should make sure that your Profile Picture is your logo and is 400 x 400 pixels in dimension. Using the design program of your choice, I would suggest opening a blank design doc within these dimensions and importing your logo into this file – and then get creative. As you can see from the dimensions above, it is a perfect square – so if you have a rectangular logo you will either need to “stack” it or use your brand image, but only if it is well known enough to be instantly recognizable. Stacking a logo is not a bad idea, especially if you are new to the Twitter world. Remember: this is not set in stone and can change later as you grow on Twitter.

2. Header Image: Also found in your Settings-Profile section of your Twitter account, this is yet another way for you to properly brand yourself on Twitter. The dimensions of this image are 1,500 x 500 pixels. I would suggest choosing an arresting image from your Website or branding collateral and add it there. My top tip would be using the main image from the homepage of your website. If you do not have access to this image, use a free tool such as Skitch to take a high resolution screen snap and add it up. It is very easy to change as well – simply click on “Change header”, then “Upload photo”. Just make sure that the resolution is high due to the massive size of the image.

3. Photos: There are two different photo sizes that you need to be aware of when you are sharing images on Twitter: Shared Photo and In-Stream Photo Preview. The shared photo is the actual size someone can see when they click the image. This should be sized at 1,024 x 512 to maximize the resolution. But in the Twitter stream, photo previews appear. This is the In-stream Photo Preview - and this will show up sized 220 x 440.

SECRET 8: USE TWEETDECK

A word of caution before we move on. If you are just starting out with Twitter, I suggest you make yourself familiar with Twitter.com FIRST, learn the terminology of Twitter second, THEN open a TweetDeck account and explore its capabilities.

Back to TweetDeck. What can I say, I think you will absolutely love the capabilities of this platform. Getting started is easy: go to TweetDeck.com and sign up for a free account. Once setup, add you Twitter account and you are ready to start exploring the many different features.

The first thing that you will notice is that TweetDeck uses columns to organize the data. Each column contains a different batch of information that you specify and add. This platform is highly customizable, so you can focus on the aspects that you think are important to your business. Make a mistake? Columns are easy to edit, delete and move.

Here are just some of the benefits of using TweetDeck and suggestions on how to use it to save time, frustration and garner higher results for your marketing efforts on Twitter:

- 1. Track Your Mentions:** By creating a column to track your Mentions, you can keep up with all of the people that are interacting with you in the public stream (and respond).
- 2. Track Your Direct Messages (DM):** Create a column for your Messages (DM) and you will be able to track and reply.
- 3. Create Custom Searches:** Use the Search column to look up keyword phrases that your customers would use to find products/services similar to what you offer. Great for prospecting!
- 4. Interact with Your Twitter List:** Have you created a custom list on Twitter.com? If so, you can add it as a column here and interact with it in real-time.
- 5. Keep Up With Interactions:** You can easily add a column which shows all of your interactions as and when they happen.
- 6. See Who Followed You:** Create a column for Followers and you can see who recently followed you and engage with them.
- 7. Keep Up With Your Activity:** Track your Twitter account's activity level by adding the Activity column.

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8. Use the Mobile App on Your Smart Phone: Get all of the platform's capabilities on the go.

9. Manage Multiple Accounts: You are able to add multiple accounts, so manage all of your Twitter accounts in one place.

10. Keep Up With Trends: You can add the Trends column to see what is trending on Twitter in real-time.

And this is scratching the surface. I think that if you jump onto TweetDeck and have a click around, you will see that it is definitely something that can be valuable to your Twitter marketing strategy and daily efforts. It gives you a more organized view of Twitter in order for you to focus your marketing more effectively.

Again, before using a service such as this, you need to have a strategy, predefined targets and a daily schedule in place. Without these pieces there are no tools out there that can make you more successful.

SECRET 9: AIM FOR THE ALMIGHTY RT

I think one of the most interesting and misunderstood aspects of Twitter is the ReTweet (otherwise known and further referred to in this as RT). The power of this alone should make a Twitter naysayer listen a little closer.

Imagine if you had a market on Twitter of 50 followers (which are similar to LIKES on Facebook, but MUCH more powerful). You wrote an update sharing your latest blog. Someone searching Twitter for information about the topic of your blog comes across your "Tweet". They like the content and decide to share it with their audience and RT it.

They have 100,000 followers.

You just got the potential number of eyes that would see your Tweet from 50 to 100,000. Also, the person who RTs it was an opinion leader in your field or maybe even a prominent media outlet. Imagine the credibility this will give your Tweet.

I'll stop there. If Twitter is a marketing channel that you have been avoiding, just think about the power of this ONE aspect of the whole experience. This alone could help you reach more people than a typical print advertisement or television advertisement. Not to mention the endorsement that you would receive from a trusted source.

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SECRET 10: SAVE TIME WITH HOOTSUITE

Hootsuite is a tool and can be an asset to your Twitter marketing strategy. Here are some reasons why Hootsuite could be good for your Twitter strategy:

Easy Tweeting:

This is definitely one of the areas where Hootsuite excels as you are able to schedule your posts to go out on your chosen social media networks whenever you want. It allows you to do both the date and time, allowing you with lots of flexibility. I am not saying that social media marketing all comes down to scheduling posts to go out via Hootsuite and waiting for the wonderful results to roll in. Scheduling posts helps you stay consistent when you have to travel, have a busy week ahead, lost a member of staff, or even if you are just starting out and need to use a bulk of your time researching your new social networks. Scheduling really can be a help at these times.

Tracking:

There is a reporting area on Hootsuite which will track links from the accounts you specify. Then a report will be generated and emailed to you showing how many total clicks your links received as well as which links were clicked. Of course, it will only track the links that you schedule through Hootsuite, but still it is handy to check and track the effectiveness of your campaign!

Instantly Share:

There is a wonderful plugin for Hootsuite called Hootlet. Once installed into your internet browser bar, when you are reading a story online that you want to share with your audience, you simply click the Hootlet button and a popup window will appear with the link shortened and a title. Just customize this as needed and share instantly....or schedule it to go out later. Another great way to share your knowledge in real time.

CHAPTER 5:

10 SOCIAL MEDIA SECRETS

“A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is - it is what consumers tell each other it is.” - Scott Cook

Marketing departments have been acclimating to the changes that technology has presented for years. Marketing professionals have figured out the best and most trusted methods of achieving results in an ever-changing marketplace, whether it be email, cloud computing, or website design.

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Don't forget, a key skill of top-notch marketing professionals is dealing with curveballs on a daily basis.

So here I want to present some of my all-time favorite social media secrets that will help every social media manager out there stay on top of their campaigns in order to continually increase their success.

Only downside? You actually have to do the work. But its not that bad, let's take a look!

SECRET1: EXECUTE A SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

Time for a marketing audit! What is the monthly plan? What is the annual budget? What changes will be made? What are the goals? Where is improvement needed?

While, depending on the time of year, this can be a fun or excruciatingly painful exercise for marketers, we now have an additional marketing channel that we need to work into our overall strategy: social media.

Believe it or not, for many companies, social media is still looked at as an insignificant marketing channel. While this is fast becoming the “exception” and not the “rule”, no matter how you view social media and its importance to your company – the odds are that you are not doing the following:

- Setting Goals
- Tracking Your Progress
- Reporting Your Goals
- Incorporating Late-Breaking Elements

Why? Because you don't have this setup yet – simple as that.

But I want you to see how social media can be successful for your business. I want you to learn what you can gain when you invest your time and money. I want you to see what returns that you are getting, and see if the ROI is there for your company.

What I am proposing here is to properly set up your social media management structure for the year. Let's go and set this up:

Step 1: Organize Your Data

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Write down the social media channels that you plan to utilize during the year. ONLY the ones that you plan to use, not every profile that you have ever created. Remember, being more focused will reap more success.

Step 2: Your Goals

Now its time to be honest with yourself. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE? More traffic? More leads? More referrals? More visibility? More credibility? Write down your top 3-5 results that you want!

Step 3: Measuring Tools

Now that you have set your sites and goals, how are you going to measure your success? For example, if you are looking for more traffic to your website – do you have a way of finding this out on your website? If you are looking for more referrals, how are you going to measure it?

Step 4: Use Real Numbers

How are you going to know if things are going the right way if you don't use real numbers to track. Move away from "I want more" and start saying "I want 5% more this month." This is a real number. I always find it odd that when companies begin to track their social media, they don't use real numbers to track growth....but when they are tracking growth in every other aspect of their company they use defined numbers. Think about it.

Step 5: Action Plan

Now, you need an action plan on when you are going to be taking your numbers and when you are going to be reporting them. I would suggest that you do this on a weekly to monthly basis to start. Then if you want to change the frequency, you can once you are comfortable with the system that you have created for yourself.

One thing that you may have noticed above is that this has NOTHING to do with the actual marketing on social media (your posts, outreach, network growth, etc). The reason is that I want you to have a defined tracking and reporting system so that when you roll out your consistent content and outreach strategy, you will see what is bringing you closer to your goals... and what is taking you further away.

Having this 5 step process in place will ensure that you kick off your campaign in the social media drivers seat – and what a wonderful and insightful journey you will be embarking on! Happy travels!

SECRET 7: ABO (ALWAYS BE OPTIMIZING)

Attempting to master social media marketing can be both confusing and overwhelming at times. Keeping track of all of the latest changes and trends, while trying to implement all of the newest tips and tricks can be challenging for a busy company.

When it comes to social media, the nucleus of all engagement is content. So no matter what different changes may happen to the structure of social media sites, the one thing that will remain the same is the importance of well executed, optimized, engaging content.

Say you already have excellent content in place, but your posts are not generating the results that your campaign needs to deliver. What's the problem?

While writing great content is a constant, optimizing it is a constantly evolving medium. Optimizing your content for social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter can be as specific as changing an element within your post to work with the infrastructure of each one of these juggernauts.

We all know that writing custom content for your social media marketing campaign can be time consuming, so let's make sure that all of that time spent is an investment that will go towards accomplishing our goals.

What I want to share with you here are ten of my own personal tips for helping your social media marketing content truly “pop” online so that you will get increased engagement through shares, likes, comments and much more!

The list below is not in order of importance: these are all vital factors that will help enhance your social media campaign's success over time:

1. Keywords: When developing strong social media content, keywords are absolutely essential. The words or phrases that your target audience use to find your company (both online and offline) should always be handy when you are developing your content. My tip is to create a list of

keywords that you can add to your updates, and then use them when suitable. These keywords will turn into hashtags and will help increase your visibility and engagement (more on this later).

2. Be Conversational: What does your content look like? When you read it out loud does it sound like a used car advertisement? Does the post draw you closer, or push you away? Imagine your post intermingled with all of the other posts (of direct and indirect competitors) vying for your target audience's attention. Does it still stand out? One of my top tips with social media posts is to remember that they need to be "social" i.e. conversational. You want to start a conversational exchange with your audience – which is what engagement is! So read your content out loud after you write it and make sure that it reads as if you are saying it – not writing it. Having your content sound "human" and not like "sales and marketing copy" is absolutely essential.

3. Use Different Content Lengths: Not every social media site is looking for a 140 character solution. So writing one update and sending it through to all social media networks is not the best rule. The ideal way of optimizing your content for size is to begin by writing a short update for Twitter (maximum 120 characters to promote sharing). Then write a slightly longer one that you can post on Facebook and LinkedIn. This way you are able to move beyond Twitter's character constraints when writing content, giving you freedom to enhance your posts with more engaging content, as well as giving you the ability to add further optimization through additional hashtags, tags, links, and more.

4. Call to Action: One of the first things I learned when I launched our online marketing agency 7 years ago was the power of asking for what you wanted. People move through social media content so fast that they don't have time to read your mind and or read between the lines. If you want someone to perform a certain action, make sure to tell them what you would like them to do: read this story, click this link, sign up today, etc.

5. Shorten Your Links: On some social media sites, namely Twitter, size is everything...when it comes to characters of course. So when you are sharing a link within your allowed 140 characters, and the link takes up nearly 60% of your available characters allocation – how are you supposed to engage your audience? Use a link shortening tool to save space to allow your content to breath. Also, if you are sharing links on other social media sites, a short and concise link will prevent the link breaking when

posting to your social media profile. It's a little extra insurance that will come in handy.

6. Hashtags: A hashtag is a type of label used on specific social media sites which makes it easier for users to find social media updates (or messages) with a specific theme or specific content. In basic terms, a hashtag indexes a post to be about a certain topic, rather than just mentioning it in the conversation so that it can easily be found and referenced. By hash tagging your KEYWORDS within your social media content, you will enhance your "find-ability" on the social web exponentially, thus optimizing it.

7. Tagging: Tagging on social media is a way of connecting YOUR social media content with another person, company, topic, or event. So whereas hashtags connect general KEYWORDS together (such as #socialmedia, #onlinemarketing, #contentstrategy), tags connect social media content to specific social media accounts. This is a great way to increase your visibility with not only potential customers, but also referral sources and influencers. These are essential in helping your content gain more visibility and engagement through association.

8. Photos/Images: While many people are getting wrapped up in the semantics of writing the "perfect social media post", they are forgetting one of the most straightforward engagement enhancer: visuals. While you can have a perfectly optimized post, it is not truly optimized unless you add a visual. By adding a complimentary picture, a custom designed graphic, infographic, or even a candid shot that you took with your phone, you engage your audience in a more instantaneous way. For example, think about when you scroll through the newsfeed, are you reading the content or looking at the pictures? You'll find yourself engaged with visuals more quickly than the actual written words.

9. Videos: Videos have long been heralded as the "be all and end all" of online marketing optimization. So why aren't more people doing them? Time, money and lack of know-how. Well, you are not alone if this sounds like you! Videos done professionally or casually with your mobile device, can bring your content to life and create engagement. You don't have to be Steven Spielberg to create an engaging social media video. As is true in the previous point (visuals are crucial to enhancing engagement), videos really promote enhanced engagement. For example again, think about how many times you stop at those auto-play videos on Facebook. You

probably remember the video as opposed to the content. Or the video led you to actually reading the social media posting associated with it, which you would have normally overlooked.

10. Don't Always Rely on Third-Party Scheduling Tools: Especially when it comes to Facebook and LinkedIn. While third-party tools won't affect your Twitter posts, they really do reduce your optimization opportunities on sites like Facebook and LinkedIn: your hashtags won't work, your tagging won't show up, and your previews are tough to edit. Not to mention the fact that many sites don't add posts scheduled through third-party tools to the insights that help you understand what posts are successful and which ones aren't. By adding your content directly to Facebook and LinkedIn you will escape this risk. This way you will have full control over how effective your content is. It will take extra time, but will increase your overall effectiveness!

These are my top 10 ways of optimizing your social media content to promote increased engagement. While they may take a little extra time, it is a worthwhile investment. Engaging your audience with your content is one thing, but actually having the tools to make your content more findable is absolutely essential to success.

SECRET 3: SKIP THESE MISTAKES

Over the years I have seen some of the most irritating mistakes made by some of the largest brands time and time again. New brands coming to social media make many mistakes as well.

So...what are they?

1. Your Profile Picture is pixelated. Would you ever use a blurry or pixelated picture on your business card, brochure, website, or billboard? Then don't do it on social media please.
2. Your Cover Image is pixelated. See point number 1.
3. No Descriptions. Don't leave sections of your social media profiles blank. How are people going to find you? Onsite SEO anyone?
4. Last Update in 2013. If your last social media update that you posted was over a year ago...maybe you should either post something or take down your profile.

5. Your Facebook Page name is not your company name. It needs to be.
6. No links to your website anywhere in your profile. This legitimizes you and helps your target audience find you. Add it.
7. You want customers in your store, but you provide no address. Add your address!
8. #Hashtaghashtag. Don't over hashtag. It is annoying and doesn't help you.
9. Spelling and grammar errors in your posts. To err is human, to consistently err is
10. Pictures posting sideways. Preview everything before you post to make sure they post correctly!
11. No comments to your comments! If a member of your audience takes the time to write you a note or comment on a post – reciprocate with at least an acknowledgement.
12. Posting dead links. Make sure that all of your links are working before posting...or wait until everyone else tells you publicly that they are dead.
13. 100% self promotional posts. It is hard to be social when all you talk about is how great you are.
14. Always posting 140 characters on Twitter. Use less characters so people can share your information more easily. 120 is a good idea.
15. Using old logos, company names, imagery. This goes without saying.
16. Using out of date information. Again, this goes without saying.
17. Not tracking success. How successful is your social media campaign? Why don't you know?

Are you making these mistakes? If you are, every SINGLE one of them is easily rectified. With a little time and focus you can create the perfect social media campaign that creates success for your company!

SECRET 4: DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME

With all of the importance companies are beginning to place on social media, it's imperative to stress the right aspects of your business. When we speak with potential clients at The Go! Agency, we find that many times their focus is not on their message, but on the return they can expect.

While I think that ROI is an important topic to discuss, what's more important with social media is the term "social". When a business gets involved with social media marketing, what they are agreeing to is the fact that they are ready to join the online conversations that are already happening regarding their industry, and their very own company.

So....what are you going to say?

Formulating creative and engaging content on a regular basis can be overwhelming. On average, companies are putting out two status updates per day per network. So as a baseline, the average amount per week is 14 individual posts. That's a total of 56 per month!

Here are a few ideas that you can add to your monthly content list which will help you to reduce the amount of time that you spend generating new content. Sometimes by half!

Themed Days

Above and beyond, this is the easiest way to not only create a conversation with your target audience, but help engage them in a familiar way. Have you heard of "TBT" or Throw Back Thursday? This trend has swept through the social media world and now more and more companies are using this tactic in an effective way. My suggestion is to choose one or two days per week to start. For example maybe you can use Monday and Thursday. If you are a healthcare related business, perhaps Medical Monday and Thankful Thursday and share content that is branded to those titles and ideas. Remember to use visuals as much as you can.

Ongoing Quizzes

Asking questions is always a great way to engage your audience, but if you want to go one step further have an ongoing quiz plan. First, you can create the theme of your quiz around a certain month. For example, Breast Cancer Awareness Month for a woman's hospital system. You probably have many interesting statistics and FAQs about breast cancer that you can share. So why not run a quiz for 5 days in a row each week – Monday

through Friday. Come up with a new question (along with a visual) dealing with breast cancer and ask your audience. An example could be: “True or False: Breast Cancer is the leading killer of American Women.” Something as simple as that can work wonders!

Fill in the Blanks

People love engaging and sharing their opinion. Providing fill in the blank statements is a terrific way to get your target market talking. I wouldn't suggest going overboard with these, but once a week why not try one out. It can also be used in conjunction with your Themed Days, for example on a Thankful Thursday you can share “Today I am most thankful for _____.” These also can help you see what your audience is most interested in.

Now, by just using these few tools listed above you can cut down the amount of content you have to create by half, if not more. Creating an ongoing content strategy is a must, and by adding these elements to the mix, you cut your work down while creating instantly engaging content for your audience!

SECRET 5: BRAND SANS SPAM

Since the day they cut the ribbon on the worldwide web, there have been people working hard on ways to spam you. Spam is marketing gone wrong and spammers are the much-hated scourge of the Internet – and the social media realm is no exception. Most users try hard to evade these spammy interactions. When marketing your business, you want to avoid being viewed as a member of this pesky crowd.

But how do you avoid that pitfall and still use social networking as a tool to market your business?

Two words: Be Genuine.

Social networking is all about making connections and building relationships. As any top salesman worth his salt will tell you, “You're not selling a product, you're selling yourself.” Social media platforms are all about authenticity. Branding couldn't be easier for those willing to open themselves up and truly connect with their potential clients.

Be Real – Connect with people by sharing who you are, your thoughts, feelings and ideas. Don't project a false "image"—sooner or later, you'll be found out.

Have Conversations – Participate in and create discussions that are stimulating and informative. Spreading ideas and providing respectful and thought provoking debate can get you noticed.

Build Relationships – The most loyal of customers are people who know and trust you.

Don't Pitch – No one likes a salesman, so save the pitches for the car lot. Trust that you have the "right stuff" (a unique service, product or perspective) that will draw those who need that "stuff" to you.

Listen & Be Helpful – If you are listening to what people have to say about their likes, dislikes, needs and desires, you will know better how to serve them. You might also know how to help them solve a problem. When you give, you get in return.

Provide Value – Whenever you do post something, make sure it's something of value. Whether it's a witty status update that brings a smile and leaves them with a little piece of your personality or a quick blurb and link to a relevant article, make sure you're not only making contact but sharing something valuable. Can it brighten their day, teach them something, get them in on an incredible deal? Then it has value. People prefer value over bottom barrel prices.

No Expectations – Don't have expectations for how and when people should respond to what you give, building any relationship takes time. They may not need you today but they might tomorrow. The person they trust the most, who is freshest in their mind, gets the business or referral.

Spamming is very recognizable. That's why email servers have created a file and filters to catch it. You don't want to end up in the SPAM file. Provide value, practice authenticity, care about people, and you should do just fine.

SECRET 6: USE YOUR HEAD

Human nature is a very complicated thing and many times our emotions can rule our actions. I'm sure everyone, at one time or another, has had an

awful day and snapped at someone at the office, on the phone or even over the dinner table.

Now, these instances happen in real time, where the interaction is not documented (unless there is a hidden camera at the water cooler). So if you make a mistake, you can apologize and smooth out the situation. Many times you can even improve on a poor first impression.

But when it comes to online interactions, it isn't as simple. Your words last forever and can be seen by millions.

There have been many high profile stories in the news about everything from children finding out about their parents' divorce by reading their mother's Facebook profile (yes, real story) to job seekers losing their opportunity based on the negative things they "tweeted" about their interview on Twitter. So the first points to consider are to not only think before you write, but also make sure that what you are writing you don't mind everyone seeing.

When choosing to interact with others online, you are in a way "going public" with your profile and building your (online) reputation. Yep, even if you are playing on Facebook your online footprint is being documented. That being said, when it comes to interacting and marketing online, your reputation is the most important thing in the world. And this reputation goes further than your profile page or online resume/CV. What your online reputation consists of is everything you write, every interaction, every message you send, every person you connect with. Your reputation will fuel what people say and think about you, with many of these opinions never being shared with you.

As your reputation is built around interaction, let's talk about something to be wary of – negativity. Every person you interact with online is part of your virtual community. So whether they are directly connected with you or not, you share common contacts and associations (many of which can be unbeknownst to you). So it is important to be mindful of your words.

Let's take LinkedIn for example. When you go into your favorite group, read through the latest discussions, you find one that peaks your interest. You click through, read the article and when you are halfway through discover that you completely disagree with the points being shared. They are totally wrong! Why? Because in your experience this is not true. Great! That's what LinkedIn discussions are all about, sharing different

points-of-view, insights and experiences. Who knows, your point could change the point-of-view of the person posting the discussion. Your information is pretty powerful.

But, how do you make your point? Remember, LinkedIn is a professional site. Do you insult the person? Speak in a condescending tone? Send them a private message telling them that they are silly and way off point?

If this sounds like you, please be careful with what you write (and this goes for all of the other social sites as well)!

When you want to share your point-of-view, do it in a productive professional manner. Remembering that this is a public forum, watch your words. If you don't agree, don't just say that. Make a case, share your wisdom and experience. By engaging with others (especially if the person you are interacting with has a large following) you have a prime opportunity to grow your own online visibility. The point is that you want to build your reputation, not tarnish it.

Being consistently negative can result in word of your behavior spreading, people will discuss it, you may be ignored and more. The worst part? Many times you won't even know it is happening until its too late.

If someone irritates you, ignore them or remove them as a connection. This constant refinement will also help you get the most out of your time online. Sending them a message telling them you don't like them is not the answer. And guess what? Sometimes these "hate mails" get forwarded, shared and discussed. Again, this activity is something that you won't know is occurring.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying you shouldn't have your say. Opinions are crucial in the social media space. My point is to make your contributions online productive and aligned with your professional acumen. This will help you build a strong, credible profile and help your business grow. Being negative and antagonistic isn't the answer.

With that said, many of the so-called social media rules are not new, groundbreaking or even shocking. They are based on the fundamentals of communication and interaction. So whether you are using the online media for personal or business reasons, treat others as you would like to be treated.

So what do you think? Have you come up against this while online and how have you dealt with it?

SECRET 7: MARKET SOCIAL MEDIA OUTSIDE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

While going through numerous articles on social media strategies it dawned on me that there was a glaring omission: tactics on how to promote your social media profiles OUTSIDE of Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

While it may sound odd, cross marketing is an essential part of a successful social media marketing strategy (as well as a successful marketing strategy). It is completely understandable that when you launch a social media campaign, you really want to spend a bulk of your time logged into the site trying to achieve penetration and engagement. For example, when marketing your business's Facebook Page, you are logging in on a daily basis to update your page, share it and use different onsite tools to engage with your target consumers.

But what about the people that you speak to everyday on the phone or at events? How about those who you give your business card to? How about the people on the receiving end of the 100+ emails that you have to respond to daily?

This is where you need to focus on what I call Off-Site Social Media Promotion. The best part? It isn't that tough (which is always a good thing, right?).

Here are my top ten tactics that you can instantly use to promote your professional social media presences...off-site:

1. Add to Your Email Signature: When it comes to promoting your social media presences off-site, email is your first stop. In your email signature, add a link to one or all of your social hubs. Just be careful not to overdo it! If you are a member of 100 different networks, don't add them all. My rule is to try to keep it to around 3 or less.

2. Add to Your Business Cards: A trend that I have been seeing is the adding of social networks to business cards. This is a trend that I definitely support as it adds more relevance to the handing out of business cards (especially in our growing "green" landscape). The same rules apply, but with business cards I suggest adding the networks where you are the most active. For example, I may be the most active on Twitter, so that would be

the one I would add. When adding the network address, make sure that you have a custom username so it is easy for the recipient of the card to read and then type into their browser.

3. Add to Your Website and Blog: One of the best ways of promoting your social networks off-site comes courtesy of the networks themselves. Many have plug-ins that are free and easy to add into the structure of your blog and website. These look like boxes with your logo, recent activity and a box for the viewer to click to connect. These allow people who are visiting your blog/website to easily engage with you on the social platforms WITHOUT leaving your site. Plus, as you update your social networks, it reflects on your blog/website badge which not only makes you look up to date, but it provides your website/blog with fresh content on a consistent basis.

4. Add Share Buttons to Your Website and Blog: If you are constantly publishing content to your website and blog, why not allow others to share it? This is a bit more complicated, but a web design professional can help you do this. If you don't have this, you are definitely missing a trick. Also – make sure that you have an RSS feed on your blog, it is very important and can be used in many wonderful ways online!

5. Add to Your Advertising: This one is a no-brainer – make sure that you add the link to your social media presence in your magazine, newspaper, radio and television advertising. Just think: you are spending quite a bit on advertising, why not get the most bang for your buck. Also, you can use your social media presence to support a contest that you are promoting through your advertising.

6. Add to All of Your Marketing Collateral: This is another no-brainer. If you have brochures, media packs, flyers or physical promotional products – add your social media link to them. Easy as that!

7. Add to Your Events: When putting together the promotional schedule for an exhibition or event that your company will be represented at, make sure not to forget to add your social media profiles to the game. Make sure that it is on the collateral and stand, but you can even run a Twitter contest during the event and promote it through a bag drop. There are lots of ways...just think out of the box!

8. Add to Your Contest: I touched on this earlier, but when you are holding a contest, a great idea is to use the opportunity to showcase your

social media profiles. Especially on Facebook, you are able to nearly duplicate the look of your website on your Facebook Page – it is just down to making the cross marketing happen and finding a designer to complete the job.

9. Add Your Networks to Your Phone: This little tip does involve a bit of on-site promotion. One of the biggest tips that I have is that if you have a smart phone you should have the main social media sites you use downloaded and ready to use on your phone. This way you can share pictures, video and information in real-time from anywhere. There are always things that you miss that you regret not sharing, this makes sure that it doesn't happen again. This tip is also helpful when you need to show people your profile in a pinch if you are meeting them face-to-face and describing your online work. I've had to do it about a million times, so it does happen.

10. Add it to Your Vocabulary: Do you ever tell anyone about your social media presence? Or do you just think they will find it on their own? In order for people to find and engage with you online, they need to know that you exist online....and many times if you have a very common name brand or name, it can be confusing and difficult to locate you. So make sure that you talk about your presences on your calls, when you meet someone new, at events and more. The people you interact with everyday can be some of your biggest supporters on sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

I think the overriding message here is to mention your social media presences as much as possible. Remember, if people don't know that you are using social media sites to promote your company – they aren't going to look for you. Let them know, it's the best way to go! At the end of the day, you wouldn't send out a marketing material without your web address on it, would you?

SECRET 8: FOCUS ON STRATEGY

You are using social media to market your business. You are engaging every day, meeting new connections, finding new business, and starting exciting discussions. There is so much going on at times that you feel a bit overwhelmed, but are still eager to keep learning.

But, after a while, you begin to slip. You start cutting corners and begin to get unfocused. But this is normal right, happens to everyone?

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No! You need to nip this in the bud now, before you go any further. When you spend time marketing on social media, you are investing time (and money) into your future online success. In order to keep the ball rolling, you need to keep your activity consistent!

I Will Plan Before I Do Anything

As you begin to engage with social media sites, you will come across new and exciting tactics, markets, ideas, and opportunities. When you hit these, do not drop everything and throw all of your effort that way immediately. Take a minute and see how you can approach new ideas in a way that is aligned with your overall marketing strategy and in a manner where you can get the most bang for your buck in the least amount of time.

Your marketing plan will be constantly evolving if you are incorporating social media into it, so please make sure to always approach each new idea with care. By having a well-thought-out approach, you will get the most out of the new opportunity that has been presented. Never turn anything down, but look at it objectively and strategically.

Listen Before Speaking

Many of us make the mistake of not listening before we leap. Our gut instinct is to stick to the same communication style as our conference calls, client meetings, email blasts, or corporate website. If you are going to use that style, you better make sure everyone else is speaking your language. In the social media world:

Listening = Reading

Speaking = Writing

When you are marketing in social media, it is 100 percent reading and writing until the time that the conversation moves to a phone conversation or in-person meeting. One of the aspects of social media marketing that you will have to come to grips with is that it requires a lot of writing and grammar skills.

Before you even write a single sentence, always read everything that has been written already. If someone sends you a direct message, read the entire message before responding (no skimming). If you are getting involved in a discussion on LinkedIn, make sure to read all of the points

made by other members before leaving your own comment. If you are going to share someone else's tweet, make sure that they don't share explicit content regularly and make sure the link is valid.

For example, say that you are the leader of a national animal rights organization and are highly visible on Facebook. You look at some of your network's Facebook updates and find a humorous one where they shared a YouTube video of a dancing dog. You loved it! And from the look of it, so did 34 other people. But since there are so many comments about the video, Facebook has hidden them, and you only see the most recent ones. One comment says, "My daughter loved the video, thanks!" You jump in and comment, "That couldn't be cuter! Love everyone's comments!"

The problem is that you didn't read through those 34 comments because if you did, you would have seen that 25 of them were talking about how they would torture the dog. And then there you are, the leader of a well-known animal rights organization, endorsing this behavior.

Listen before you leap.

Give Your Customer What They Need, Not What You Want

Any discussion of social media ethics would not be complete without first understanding the vital necessity of selflessness. I know it sounds pretty heavy, but stick with me here.

This is a good time to mention the terms "push marketing" and "pull marketing." These terms refer to promotional strategies defined by the method of engagement. Push marketing requires pushing your brand message or offer onto your audience. Pull marketing requires customer engagement, wherein the customer pulls your products or services closer based on interest.

Push marketing is passive, but it can be pretty aggressive. The customer may or may not be aware of what you have to offer them, as is the case with traditional advertising. Even in an online environment, push marketing talks "to" the customer, not "with" the customer. In the online realm, push marketing can come across as "spammy" and heavy-handed. Most importantly, push-marketing methods are generally based on short-term strategies, such as discount offers for a limited time or coupons with expiration dates.

On the other hand, pull marketing is active. The customer chooses to seek out and engage with your highly visible brand. Creating relevant content that interests customers, entices them to register for your newsletter, or encourages them to join your community, are all effective pull marketing methods. Pull marketing methods focus on developing trust, reliability, and long-term perceived value. Prospects learn to believe your solution is the best for their needs. Pull marketing is the basis for social media marketing with a dash of push thrown in for good measure.

The point of this mantra? Every day you want to focus on getting your community to engage with you, not just read and forget. You want to create new and exciting opportunities for them to get close to you and share ideas, feedback, and their needs and wants. Your strategy needs to be focused on pulling your target audience closer rather than blasting them with one-sided content.

SECRET 9: STAY EDUCATED

Lifelong learning is not necessarily a new trend. As a business owner, marketer, sales person, whomever – in this fast moving world, it is impossible to survive unless you are able to be malleable and learn new things on a regular basis.

I find this attitude applicable to how a business views social media marketing. I've come across so many entrepreneurs, CEOs, CFOs, marketing, and sales professionals who have gone to one social media seminar or read one social media marketing-themed book and thought they had the game down pat.

But little did they realize that within ten minutes of putting down that book or jumping into the car to ride back to the office after the event, that the information they had just learned was outdated.

Over the past 7 years of working in the social media space, I have seen hundreds (if not more) of people fall into this trap of “learning it once, and done.” They hit the social media information circuit hard for a month, and then vanish for life – utilizing all of the tips that they gleaned in that one month of information gathering.

I hate to tell you folks, but if you want to be successful with social media marketing, you need to be constantly evolving your skills and organically changing your approach on a weekly (if not more frequent) basis.

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This is why I am a huge proponent of ongoing social media marketing education. So much so that I actually created an online social media marketing school (The Social Marketing Academy) where students can log in and learn more about whatever topic they are interested in the most. On-demand. When they learn best. With the wonderful response to that, I expanded it to include in person workshops and bootcamps.

From this time I have spent with the students at The Social Marketing Academy I have truly seen a difference in how they approach their social media marketing, due to their exposure to ongoing education.

Whether you are a student of The Social Marketing Academy or not, there are ways for you to constantly stay abreast of the changes and advances that are constantly being made to market your business more effectively.

By focusing on constantly developing your social media marketing knowledge you can expect the following benefits overall:

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By focusing on constantly developing your social media marketing knowledge you can expect the following benefits overall:

- **Being Ahead of the Pack:** There is nothing worse than logging into your Facebook Business Page and finding out that all of the image sizes have changed, resulting in your page looking ridiculous. Or how about finding out about the secret time saver on LinkedIn that no one is using...too late so that it is no longer effective. Keeping abreast of social media advances will keep you in a proactive mode, rather than a reactive – which is not ideal for social media marketing success.
- **Competitive:** Allowing your competitors to be privy to effective social media information before yourself is doing your business a massive disservice. This is public information, that when you stay on-top of it you can implement it quickly. And sometimes with these tools or tactics, the first-adapters get the highest return.
- **More Control:** By having a clear understanding on an ongoing basis, you will have more control over the design and execution of your campaign. You will know what to anticipate, how to implement it, and how to organically change your campaign for success.
- **Tools and Metrics:** As a lifelong social media learner you will get access to major time-saving or cost-saving tools that will help you take your social media campaign to the next level. Ever heard someone talking about a tool that they use that you never have heard of? If you are

ignoring the social media news, it could have been around for years...and you could have been using it. Some tools can save hours a week!

- **Reporting:** You will also be able to fine tune your objectives to be more aligned with what each site can really offer your business. With this knowledge you will be able to set more realistic objectives, measurements, and report on your results in a more informed manner.

And this is just scratching the surface. I urge you to take this to heart, especially if you dip in and out of following social media trends. Put some time aside every week to learn something new, check in on the trends, and check in with what your competition is doing.

If you need some help, I proudly suggest that you check out The Social Marketing Academy. It is a great tool to help you stay on top of social media education and trends. Also, what sets us apart from other educational institutions is that we develop the courses that you suggest. Our curriculum is based on what YOU want to learn about. So get started today – click the following link, learn more, and enroll today: <http://www.thesocialmarketingacademy.com>

SECRET 10: ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

If you are reading this article right now, the odds are that you are considering having someone else handle your social media marketing campaign. Maybe you are just too busy to dedicate any time to it. Perhaps you just don't have the time to learn the "ins and outs" of social media. It could even be that you have been trying, but getting nowhere with your campaign. You need an expert opinion!

Sound familiar?

You are not alone. A recent poll done by Social Media Examiner found that 92% of marketers said that social media was important to their business. That is a huge number, especially considering the amount of people who just don't have the time, resources, and know-how to really gain the benefits of a strategic social media marketing campaign.

If you have ample time, budget and are extremely experienced in how social media marketing works, then I say "Do it yourself!" There is no reason to outsource if you are successful and able to harness the power in-house.

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But this scenario is unfortunately the minority – especially when it comes to mid-sized and smaller companies who are either struggling to grow or are growing at a lightning fast pace. Both of these type of organizations need a helping hand, and outsourcing can do just that.

I want to share some of the MOST common areas where companies need outsourcing the most and how my social media firm, The Go! Agency handles these concerns:

- **Design and Development:** The benefit of outsourcing to a company like The Go! Agency is that we have a team of experienced graphic designers and programmers that are able to optimize your social media profile as well as create visuals throughout your campaign. And we do this for existing or brand new social media accounts.
- **Content Creation:** Let's be honest – who really has time to sift through the latest news and trends to come up with engaging content for their company's campaign? We do! The Go! Agency's team comes up with cutting edge content both written, and image and video for our clients every day!
- **Analytics:** Is it a constant battle to try to figure out what is actually happening in your accounts? Our custom social media reports will give you a full detailed monthly look at your social media campaign as a whole, without you having to do anything.
- **Monitoring:** Do you have time to log into each one of your social media accounts every day to check in? We do! Our team will go into your accounts on a daily basis to manage your reputation, reply to comments, and answer any incoming messages – all without you having to lift a finger.
- **Research:** What is the best way to market on social media? Our trend analysis team stays on top of all of the advancements in social media so that we can protect your profiles and enhance them in real-time. We are proactive and NOT reactive. The result is a social media strategy that positions you as a leader, not a follower.
- **Strategy:** How am I supposed to create a social media marketing strategy when I don't even have time to work on a marketing strategy for my business? Don't worry – we will do it all for you. We have been creating custom-designed social media marketing strategies for our clients for over

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6 years. And, our clients must agree that they are working – we have a 90% client retention rate after the initial contract! In fact...I wrote the book! *The Go! Method: 22 Simple Steps to Creating a Social Media Marketing Strategy That Works!* Check it out on Amazon here.

If you need a solid social media strategy and are not sure where to start, outsourcing to a social media specialist firm like The Go! Agency will enable you to remove the confusion, get results, and be able to focus on what's most important: running your business! Get in touch today to learn more! <http://www.thegoagencyusa.com>

CONCLUSION

“You don’t build a business. You build people, and then people build the business.” - Zig Ziglar

Now we have gone through the entire list of 50 social media secrets that when utilized, will help you gain more followers, visibility, credibility, leads, referrals and overall exposure.

If I were to leave you with a parting thought, it would be this: Rome wasn't built in a day.

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Yes, I know, a cliché - but a very true one. When it comes to social media marketing and your business, you will not be an overnight success. You might say “What if I go viral?” Well, congrats if you do. The odds are that you won’t and it will take time to build your campaign into the success that I know it can be.

Take your time, set clear objectives, consistently market on your chosen social media networks, and then measure your success. This is how you can track your progress, make useful changes, and improve exponentially!

If there is any further support that I can provide, I’m happy to do so! If you would like to learn more about our social media marketing campaigns at The Go! Agency (<http://www.TheGoAgencyUSA.com>) please call us toll free on 866-926-2636 or via email at christopher@thegoagencyusa.com.

If you would like to do it yourself and want ongoing social media marketing education on-demand when you need it, I urge you to check out The Social Marketing Academy at our website here: <http://www.TheSocialMarketingAcademy.com>.

Here’s to your success! Now get out there and get started!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHRISTOPHER TOMPKINS

CEO. Social media specialist. Speaker. Educator. Athlete.

Christopher Tompkins is the CEO and Founder of The Go! Agency: a full service marketing company focused on helping you grow your business, and visibility, online. What sets their agency apart from the competition is their distinctively client-focused approach. Their team of designers, digital marketers, account managers, writers and support staff work together to deliver cutting-edge social media marketing campaigns, website design, graphic design, custom written blogs, eye-catching articles and press releases, email marketing campaigns, blog site design, and much more. You can learn more about The Go! Agency here: <http://TheGoAgencyUSA.com>

With this point in mind, Christopher is passionate about helping other professionals make sense of the online landscape and is regularly asked to speak at national and international conference (sharing the dais with companies such as Google and YouTube in cities around the world such as London, NYC, Brussels, Washington DC, and Atlanta to name a few).

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When not speaking at conferences, Christopher can be heard on his highly popular radio show "The Social Marketing Academy" which you can find in the iTunes store here: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/social-marketing-academy-blog/id395978834?mt=2> .

He is also the founder of The Social Marketing Academy - an online marketing school which teaches students from all over the world the best practices to use when using social media to market their businesses online. Learn more here: <http://www.TheSocialMarketingAcademy.com>

In his spare time Christopher enjoys athletics and is an avid triathlete, runner and swimmer. Aside from athletics, he also enjoys performing long form improv, cooking and learning new skills.