The CMO's Guide to: The Social Landscape

2010 IS THE YEAR CMOS WILL HEAVILY INVEST IN SOCIAL MEDIA. HERE'S A GUIDE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND HOW BEST TO LEVERAGE MAJOR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES.

**WEBSITE**

**CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION**

A microblogging site that enables users to send 'tweets,' or messages of 140 characters or less.

- **Twitter**
  - Use keyword search monitoring through a program such as Hootsuite, Twitimport or Radian 6 to track what people are saying about you and your competitors.
  - Offers unique opportunities for Web site integration and to engage with customers in a viral way, helping your company stand out from the masses.
  - Facebook brand pages are great for brand exposure. Jump-start your brand exposure through the ad platform, or hire a Facebook consultant to help you grow your brand presence.
  - Leveraging tools on the Web when you build your channel, promote via high-traffic sites, and brand your videos.
  - The grandfather of traffic spikes, so become active in the community or find someone who is. If you're not corporate then consider launching an industry blog on a noncommercial Web domain to establish yourself as a thought leader.

**LINKEDIN**

A social networking site for business professionals

- Whether you seek to entertain, inform, both, video is a powerful channel for quickly engaging your customers, responding to complaints, and demonstrating your social-media savvy.

**YOUTUBE**

A video sharing website where users can share and upload new videos

- Paid StumbleUpon traffic can be a very targeted method of communicating, but whether you're reaching your existing customers is purely random and costly to determine.

**DIIGO**

A social news community where users can discover and share content

- Editor-driven and moderated, so this shouldn't be your primary focus.

**DEL.icio.us**

A social bookmarking site used for sharing and storing bookmarked pages

- Site is intended for people to bookmark content. You can see what people tag with your brand name, but communica-
tion with them is nonexistent.

**GOOD!**

- Value to your site's SEO is limited, but tweets will rank high in search results -- good for ranking your profile name and breaking news, though nonguested URLs are of little benefit.
- Little to no value, aside from being picked up by featuring your posted links. Not worth the time expenditure.

**OK!**

- Highly indexed in search engines, passing links and page ranks. Also helps images rank higher in Google Images and in building inbound links.
- Very high page rank -- almost guaranteed on the first page of search results -- especially for your company name or individual employees' names, but that's about it.

**BAD!**

- Unlikely to drive any significant traffic to your site, though you never know who those few visits might be from -- perhaps a potential client or customer.
- Heavily indexed in search engines, passing links and page ranks. Also helps images rank higher in Google Images and in building inbound links.

**TRAFFIC TO YOUR SITE**

**SEO**

- Unnecessary to spend too much time on this, though properly tagged photosets of company events can help customers put a face on the team behind your brand.
- Participation in industry-related groups might get your photos, and thus your brand, viewed by people with similar interests, but numbers will be small.
- Effective for personal branding and demonstrating your organization's professional prowess. Encouraging employees to maintain complete profiles to strengthen your team's reputation is advisable.
- One of the most powerful branding tools on the Web when you build your channel, promote via high-traffic sites, and brand your videos.
- Effective for promoting objective press/blog coverage of your brand. Make sure content doesn't read like an ad, or your site might be banned for being overly commercial.
- Enables a diverse range of people to discover your content and share links via the site, without having to be a registered user. Tagging helps, but you don't want the same people repeatedly giving you a thumbs-up.
- Get in the moderators' good graces, and you have a chance to hit absolutely massive numbers -- but it's a long shot.
- If you make the front page of Yahoo, then you will get a ton of backlinks, but chances are unlikely unless you are a large, established brand.

**FACEBOOK**

A social networking site where users can add friend, send messages and build their own profile

- Great for engaging people who like your brand, want to share their opinions, and participate in giveaways and contests.
- Facebook brand pages are great for brand exposure. Jump-start your brand exposure through the ad platform, or hire a Facebook consultant to help you grow your brand presence.
- Traffic is decent and on the rise thanks to shared buttons and counters, but don't expect massive numbers of unique visitors to go to your site.
- Even if you get tens of thousands of visits to a photo hyperlinked with your URL, click-through rates are among the lowest around.

**YOUTUBE**

A video sharing website where users can share and upload new videos

- The community is fickle, and anything perceived as spam will be destroyed. However, look deep into the categorized ‘subreddits’ to unearth smaller, niche communities, and you could get valuable feedback.
- Unnecessary ongoing brand recognition to make it worth your while unless you want to be known for providing reference content for later retrieval.
- If Reddit loves you, then traffic is often right up there with Digg and StumbleUpon. Be careful. Push too hard for votes from your friends, and you'll be banned, but don't push at all and you'll wind up with nothing.
- Pretty much everything about the site helps. When your page is bookmarked, it's a direct link back to your site. When you're on the front page of the site, the big category tags pages are full of links which pass directly to your URL.

**BAD!**

- Nonenough ongoing brand recognition to make it worth your while unless you want to be known for providing reference content for later retrieval.
- Not as big as it used to be, but informative, massive reference pieces bookmarked for later use can net you a few thousand recurring monthly visitors.
- The site is intended for people to bookmark content. You can see what people tag with your brand name, but communica-
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