



Article 295

May 26, 2013

Strategy Drives Success in Social Media Marketing

By Julianna Silva, Albuquerque Regional Manager, WESST

Many business owners feel a sense of urgency and peer pressure about creating a social media presence before they're ready because they assume they're losing business to more tech-savvy competitors.

But panic is a poor driver of decisions, and that's why the entrepreneur needs to begin with a set of clear business objectives that will guide his use of these versatile tools.



When it comes to business and marketing planning, strategy comes first and tools second.

Whatever the marketing tactic, a business owner needs to know what he wants to accomplish before the ads start to air or the social media channels go live. Every business needs an overarching strategy for reaching its goals. The strategy is the foundation of its marketing plan, which, in turn, supports the company's social media plan.

Dynamic Document

Goals for social media marketing should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound — or S.M.A.R.T., in business jargon — so the business owner can stay on track and adjust her strategy to suit changing circumstances.

A well-enunciated strategy helps the business know which social media platforms — such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and countless blogs — are best suited for its products or services because they're the places frequented by the business's target customers.

A strategy helps the business decide which departments will use social media tools and what functions social media will serve. Sales and marketing, for example, are natural matches for social media outlets, but businesses can also use these platforms to provide fast customer service and to recruit employees.

A strategy should also be clear to everyone in the organization who will execute it rather than being the fiefdom of an individual employee. It should be a living document that the business adjusts and refines based on real-world results of its social media outreach.

And that's where metrics come in: The business has to have a way to measure its efforts, just as it measures other marketing initiatives.

WESST offers workshops to help small-business owners develop a social media strategy that's right for their business. Workshops are held at WESST's six regional offices located in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Farmington, Las Cruces, Roswell and Santa Fe. Visit www.wesst.org to find an upcoming social media strategy workshop.

Finance New Mexico is a public service initiative to assist individuals and businesses with obtaining skills and funding resources for their business or idea. To learn more, go to www.FinanceNewMexico.org. Sponsored by:

