

How much time and effort should a business be putting in to really get Social Media to work for them?

Stewart: How much time and effort should a business be putting into getting social media to really work for them?

David: Well it's a good question and it really is horses for courses. It all stems down to really what the business is trying to get out of their social media channels. At what stage in the life cycle they are within their social, so whether they are just setting out trying to make an impact, whether they've got social channels, and whether they're trying to increase their followers or engagement using them, and whether they have specific goals in mind and they're looking to achieve those goals i.e. Conversions, downloads, traffic for the website. Really, the amount of time that businesses spend on social media really should be down to those three categories.

Stewart: Are there any key considerations that the business should be concentrating on to maximize their use of time?

David: Yes, if a business is looking to start out on social media or looking to start to gain some traction on social media, they really need to bear a couple things in mind. One is like I said before what they're trying to achieve. If they're trying to achieve sales through online channels, then it might require a bit of time just to build the bonds, build the relationships before they actually see any benefit. The amount of time and effort required to run their social media will require some manpower, and they may need to be posting once or twice a day. The resource required is going to be a key factor to determining how quickly they progress towards their goals.

Another thing is to weigh up the benefits versus the effort. If they can post relevant material and they're prepared to put manpower in, the benefit they're going to see out the other side of that and whether that is worth putting the effort in. There are quite a few considerations that a business should be concentrating on in order to make the most of this time.

Stewart: Does more effort automatically mean greater engagement?

David: I would love to say it does, but unfortunately that's not always the case. Just because a business puts in more time and effort and has the manpower to actually deal with posting on a day to day basis, it doesn't necessarily mean that there's going to be a direct increase in engagement as a result. A lot of this is down to several factors. One being how interesting your content is that you post out there. Two is how much the follower or the subscriber trusts you and that she wants to know about your information. Three I guess is how incentivised they are to do something with your information, whether the information actually bodes well for sharing using downloading, etc. There are few things that a business should

think about when trying to gain further engagement and it won't necessarily be as a result of the effort they put in.

Stewart: You mention posting maybe twice a day. If you've selected, I don't know, three channels, four channels. If you're posting twice a day, that's eight posts today. That could take maybe a couple of hours just to find the right content, craft it and present it. Are their shortcuts or are their other ways of speeding this up?

David: Yes, there are shortcuts to actually posting using social channels. There are platform management tools out there that cut across nearly all of the platforms available. What you can do with that is harness the power of that platform to post once and then it will automatically feed it to all of the other channels you have in place. You're literally reducing your time incrementally by writing one message and then posting it out. There's also platforms that allow you to diarise posts. This is really good for businesses that are just starting out or businesses that have a lot to talk about. What you can do is spend maybe an hour, or two a week, and actually put some really good material together that is automatically posted out throughout the weeks. Finally, a really good way to see what's going on and potentially streamline your social media even further is to hook analytics in. Now there is obviously Google Analytics which is huge. But now each of the channels are available for example, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook. They all have their in-house analytical tools which are really powerful and allow you to get to the nub really of what's working and what's not.

Stewart: David, you've mentioned some great sounding tools there. Perhaps we'll go through some of those in detail in a later podcast.

David: That's a great idea Stewart.

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