

NETWORKING SOCIALLY

STATISTICS SAY YOU CAN INTEGRATE SOCIAL MEDIA AND BUSINESS NETWORKING!

BY DONNA MESSER

According to a recent Nielsen Online survey, social networks and blogs are now the fourth most popular online activity ahead of personal email. Time spent on social networking and blogging is growing at three times the overall Internet rate, and accounting for almost 10% of all Internet time. Nielsen also reports that Social Networks are 68% more popular than emails.

Below are statistics from a Microsoft study on why people use online social networking, along with tips on how businesses should approach social networks for marketing purposes.

The study found that “ego” was the largest driver of participation. People contribute to increase their social, intellectual, and cultural capital. The reasons found for contributing are as follows:

- ✓ 75% - To keep in touch with family and friends
- ✓ 62% - Being “nosey”
- ✓ 55% - To express my opinions and views
- ✓ 49% - To meet people with similar interests

- ✓ 13% - For specific reasons, documenting trip to wedding, etc.
- ✓ 7% - It's a good way to date

We learned through our research that 70% of social networking activity occurs in the evening with 37% of participants visiting daily. Photos, diaries, and music are the preferred content to put on the user's own pages, along with personal experiences, movies, family, and travel.

If you're a social networking buff, how can you maximize your social network and make sure it compliments your business network?

TOP TIPS TO USE SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR INCREASED BUSINESS MARKETING:

Understand the consumer's motivation for using social networks.

- ✓ Learn to express yourself as a brand.



- ✓ Create and maintain intelligent and relevant on-line conversations.
- ✓ Empower people in your social network.
- ✓ Direct them to your business network.
- ✓ Connect your social network to your Website.

Once you've found your comfort level with both social networking and online business networking it's time to get to work. I'm using my Website and my social network as an example.

I have a Website that is full of information that I believe is relevant and timely for my client base. It has both video and audio interviews. There are articles on a wide variety of subjects, all relating to my area of expertise. The Website has links from companies that are in an alliance with me. My Website is a reflection of who I am, not just what I sell. I have worked hand in hand with the experts that are part of my team to maximize my use of the Internet, social media, and Web development.

I blog, I use LinkedIn, I'm on Facebook, I'm learning more about Twitter, and I'm quickly realizing the value of all of the new tools that are available. I encourage everyone to consider how they can benefit from adding all these tools to their Internet tool kit. Visibility is a key to success in our world today—and it is much easier to create that through the social media tools offered.

LinkedIn is a business networking tool, that when used ethically can be invaluable. I use my RISE philosophy—Rapport, Information, Solutions, Ethically—and I don't just "LinkIn" with anyone. I try and find common ground, to make the person I want to know want to know me. Bringing value to the on-line relationship is just as important as the value you bring to your face-to-face relationships. It can be as effective, but only when both sides of the introduction are going to benefit.

I've had people invite me to join their LinkedIn

connections without taking the time to tell me about themselves, or where and when we have connected in the past. This is simply a "fishing trip" for on-line trollers who want to add names to their LinkedIn list; these are people who feel empowered by numbers rather than by quality.

For me, social media is a tool to share resources, sources of information, and to make ethical and effective introductions—it is not simply a promotional tool to raise awareness. When I blog that blog is connected to my LinkedIn site and it is also posted on my Website. What I write about is of interest to the people in my network. The blog topic may also refer to a place, an event, or an organization where I have been. This creates a chain of reactions, because word is spread through those people/organizations/events mentioned.

I have a personal Website: www.donnamesser.com. This is a great way to share information about what I do for a life, rather than a living—it gives people the chance to see both sides of who I am, without having to verbalize everything.

To sum up the value of social media and business development, it's all about using whatever tools are available, and getting the experts to help you maximize their use.

Through one of my initiatives called a "Power Team", I've been able to get an online radio program established for my Website, I've learned to blog effectively, and I'm coming to understand all of the processes around LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and more. Will I ever know it all? Never! But by tapping into the expertise of people who are in my network—I'm making some pretty strong inroads. If you want to know who I know, just ask! My Website is www.connectuscanada.com. My blog is www.donnamesser.wordpress.com/. My LinkedIn address is www.linkedin.com/in/donnamesser. For more information on Power Teams: www.connect2speed.com/contact2.htm. **E**

Donna Messer is an author, speaker, and coach. She was recently named one of five finalists for "The Most Influential Woman in Ontario".



Subscribe to **Enterprise** **SAVE 25%** off the annual newsstand rate!

Complete this form (or photocopy) and send it with your payment—Cheque or Money Order only—made payable to: Enterprise Magazine, Attn: Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 31010, Barrie, Ontario, Canada, L4N 0B3.

Or, if you prefer you can order online with credit card on our secure website: www.enterprisemag.com

ALL INFORMATION SUPPLIED ON THIS FORM IS KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE RENTED, SOLD, OR USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

NAME: _____

COMPANY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PROV: _____ POSTAL: _____

TEL #: (_____) _____

E-MAIL: _____

NOTE: E-MAIL IS USED FOR SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL NOTICE ONLY. YOUR SUBSCRIPTION STARTS WITH THE NEXT ISSUE.

COMMENTS: _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX BELOW TO CLASSIFY THE SIZE OF YOUR BUSINESS BASED ON NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:

1 - 9 10 - 99 100 - 499 500+

ANNUAL RATE FOR 5 ISSUES IN CDN FUNDS (**INCLUDES GST 128907268RT0001):

CANADA*: \$20 USA: \$35 INTERNATIONAL: \$50