

Social Media Cheat Sheet 2010

Overview of Major Social Networking Sites

Facebook (www.facebook.com): More than 250 million members worldwide, membership-based. Once registered, you can then develop your profile and locate people you know via email addresses or name search and “friend” them. In order to interact with them on Facebook, they have to “friend” you back. Options include direct communications via Facebook with other members, uploading pictures, sharing blog and Twitter feeds. Businesses can create affinity groups or “pages” that have similar features to personal memberships, including allowing members to become “fans” of businesses.

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com): Business-oriented site, 43 million registered users in 170 industries. To get started, create a profile and then upload your email contacts, and LinkedIn will a) tell you which ones are already on LinkedIn and b) offer to contact the ones who aren’t. Use LinkedIn to find jobs, people and business opportunities.

Twitter (www.twitter.com): Micro-blogging service with 75 million users. Users send 140 character messages known as tweets. Any Twitter user can subscribe to any other user, making Twitter a micro-publishing platform. Two of the most important conventions on Twitter are the @ symbol, which is used before the username to address the user directly (e.g., @jongreer), and the # (hashtag), which is used to identify a common topic (e.g., #cleantech). Twitter is an open platform and has spawned a cottage industry of complementary applications, which make Twitter more powerful by aggregating and managing content and improving mobile usage. See <http://twitter.com/downloads> for many of the most popular apps.

First Steps to Developing a Social Networking Strategy

1. Watch and listen first
2. Experiment
3. Empower employees

Ways to Use Social Media to Build Your Business

- Customer support: use social media to be on the lookout for problems to solve.
- Look for leads: Potential customers are online.
- New product development: Listen for complaints online and tune into “wishes.”
- Competitive intelligence
- Spread your good news: share important company developments.
- Be a thought leader: Point to cool stuff and link to things.
- Humanize your company: show that your company is made up of people.

Further resources

- Mashable library of social media information: www.mashable.com
- How to get started with social media networking: www.technotheory.com/how-to-use-social-media-guide/
- Mashable social media policy guide: <http://mashable.com/2009/06/02/social-media-policy-musts/>
- Learning the basics of Twitter: <http://tinyurl.com/nry6rn>