INTERNET MARKETING 101

HOW TO MARKET YOUR BRAND ON EVERY SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL AND INTEGRATE SOCIAL MEDIA INTO YOUR INTERNET MARKETING
Social Media marketing is part of internet marketing

Social media is only one part of internet marketing. It will only work if it is effectively targeted. It tells a good story and drives off a strong internet presence.

Internet marketing begins with a compelling website that has been created to focus on buyers and gives them information, rather than selling.

A great website is the intersection between all of your internet marketing initiatives.
No matter what your business, your website has to tell your story

The story on your website has to be interesting enough to engage interest in your organization. Chain hotels, restaurants, shopping locations, and more all have to tell their story in order for travelers to be interested.

Your story must be translated into great content that delivers information about your offerings.

The great content is the foundation of social media marketing. If its not and not intriguing and unique, your message will be ignored.
Every business, destination and location has a distinct story to tell

Being all things to all people is no longer an effective marketing strategy.

Visitors want authenticity and a unique experience from every type of business.

Your story is your unique selling proposition – what makes you different from all of the other suppliers a traveler could deal with; and is the foundation of your brand – what your organization is and stands for.

Let travelers know, how did you start, why did you start, interesting information about your business and your products.
Social Media must be integrated into a marketing plan

Random social media actions, just to be in social media will not be effective.

Any internet marketing plan that includes social media begins with the goals you want to achieve and what you expect internet marketing to do for your organization. The plan is then the path to achieve the goals.

Review the characteristics of your current visitors and determine where and how to reach more of them.

Marketing plans do not have to be complicated. They need only to reflect the actions you are going to take to reach your goals. Think of your plan as a road trip. Plan your actions to your destination.
Social Media is a part of marketing, not a part of selling

Think of social media like being at a cocktail party. You begin a conversation with the people you want to meet.

Create profiles – “personas” as they are called, of your typical visitors because that is how you are going to identify and reach them on social media.

Where do your prospects live, what are their interests, what are their ages, what other key characteristics are important? What are they looking for in a travel experience?

What problem does your product solve for the prospect?
How do you want potential customers to respond?

Of course, you want them to make an accommodations reservation, or visit, shop, eat or otherwise use your product.

Yet, social media is about creating a conversation with your prospect, not delivering an outright sales pitch.

Determine specifically how you want prospects to respond, do you want them to sign up, follow, download, inquire or take other action so that you can count them in your list of serious prospects.
Be prepared to respond instantaneously

An ongoing social media program is a relentless process. Prospects expect to be responded to immediately, in real time.

Make time EVERY DAY to converse, respond, blog, tweet, post and otherwise work your social media. The minimum appears to be 6 hours a week to be even minimally effective.

The purpose is to get your prospects into a two way conversation with you. Ideally, you will think about ways to transform your customers and prospects into a “community”.
Build a social listening dashboard to organize your social media conversations

Use a dedicated Gmail account to create all of your social profiles so you can receive all notifications in one place.

Start small, create profiles in three platforms. Facebook is the platform of choice. If you are B2B, use LinkedIn, if you are B2C, use Twitter, Instagram, You Tube. Once you learn to use those effectively, add more platforms.

Create interesting, image enhanced profiles for each platform you decide to use, to distinguish your organization from other organizations.
You can build a social media network from scratch

Start by listening to others social conversations so you get the hang of the language and what is being said

Stick to a schedule of posts and updates. Create the updates in advance so posts are not delayed

Follow the appropriate etiquette

Be responsive, genuine and helpful

Fill out your profiles completely

Don’t be afraid of starting at zero. Join the biggies, aggressively go after your first connections

Each platform has a way to search for your best prospects

Start with free actions, graduate to paid ads, spend as little or as much as your budget will allow to create a community and a following
It’s becoming commonplace:

97% of marketers use social media
92% say it is important for business
83% indicate that their social media activities are integrated with the rest of their marketing
64% of marketers use social media for more than 6 hours a week, 37% for more than 11 hours per week, 19% spend more than 20 hours a week
80% indicate that social media has increased their web traffic
92% indicate that it has gained more exposure for their business
50% say it has directly increased sales
66% saw increased leads generated
57% say it reduced marketing expenses
58% sat it improved search engine rankings
It’s changing:

68% of marketers will engage in more blogging in the future

67% will increase their presence on You Tube

67% will increase their activities in Twitter

64% will increase their use of LinkedIn

69% of B2C marketers will increase their use of Facebook

Google+ has reached the radar of marketers

81% plan to increase their use of original, written content, video is next
Marketers are enhancing their social media marketing with:

- Email
- Search engine optimization
- Event marketing
- Press releases
- Online ads
- Webinars

Fewer are using Snapchat, Geo-location/Four Square, Forums, Podcasting, Social Review sites, Social Bookmarking and Short-form video.
Social Media

Social media are the platforms such as Facebook and Twitter that allow individuals and businesses to create a profile and share current information, life events and images with other individuals and businesses via the platform. The basic information on each profile includes name, age, gender, location and occupation.

There is space on each profile for individuals to list their interests, favorite books, movies, TV shows, occupation, hobbies, and other details which enable specific targeting of the best prospects among the total user group on each platform.

The search mechanism is used to extract the best prospects via key words, geography, interests and other define profile characteristics. Paid ads on any of the platforms work the same.

The effectiveness of using social media for marketing purposes increases when prospects begin to engage in a two way conversation with your business or organization.
Facebook is still the platform of choice, with over 1 billion users worldwide. Paid ad marketing on Facebook is closer to traditional media buying than social media marketing.

The News Feed on the home page of your profile is constantly updated with posts, status updates, photos and other information forwarded by people, groups and pages you follow. Facebook prioritizes posts from friends and news media over posts from pages in your News Feeds.

Facebook's algorithm recently decreased the organic reach of brand pages on their platform to 2% of their total audience.

Marketing on Facebook should be measured by click-through rates and impressions. Conversations here are about creating awareness, not attempting to make immediate sales.
Despite the increased focus on the purchase of ads, marketers can optimize their brand’s free Facebook Page presence:

Use Facebook Insights to track the total performance of your Facebook presence, posts, likes, etc.

Gain intelligence about competitors

Post great images to attract attention. Photos get 53% more likes, 104% more comments and 84% more click throughs than text based pages

Use Facebook as a forum to post trending topics

Add and track links to other material

Tag other pages in posts

Post on Facebook 5-10 times a week, between 1-4 on the weekends and 2-5 on weekdays
Facebook clearly understands they are a marketing platform and has developed tools that help businesses target new prospects:

Audience Targeting targets highly specific groups of people for a fraction of a national media buy

Calls to Action enable delivery of tailored specific messages to Facebook users on the basis of their location, demographics, interests, and online browsing activity

Streamlined Ad Buying assists marketers to better tailor ads for specific campaigns
Twitter

Twitter is instantaneous communication, short, sweet and to the point in 140 characters. It is a recipient driven information network where the receiver chooses what to receive.

Think of Twitter as a friendly information booth or coffee bar. It’s a place where people strike up spontaneous conversations.

The “useful immediacy” of the information helps to create a more casual level of communication.

Individuals choose to view your updates by searching for specific keywords or by following particular Twitter accounts.

To create awareness, Twitter is the place where your brand can have a personality, in snappy, profound 140 character statements.

Twitter is a great tool for customer service, giving companies the opportunity to respond quickly and effectively to consumer complaints in a public space.
Content tips

Despite the rapid pace at which Twitter is developing its advertising products, the metrics of choice are still retweets, favorites, and followers. Tweets, or posts, will be most effective by:

- Making sure to add a call to action, a link, tag or some other path that leads from the tweet
- Including images to make the message stronger
- Being very human in all communications
- Posting at the right time when conversations are being had
- Tweet at least 5 times a day between 1-3 on weekdays
Advertising tools

Twitter too quickly learned that it is a marketing vehicle.

Promoted tweets and accounts are a paid product offering which targets users with Promoted Tweets.

Lead-Generation Cards capture valuable information about the user, such as their email address and location, through a call-to-action button.

TV Targeting allows brands who are running commercials during a particular TV show to then hit people who talk about that show on Twitter, following up with a Promoted Tweet or a Promoted Account.
LinkedIn is a network of professionals around the world who post professional profiles and discuss various professional topics in groups, forums, posts of white papers, and other materials. It works especially well for B2B marketers.

50% of LinkedIn users report they are much likely to buy from a company they've engaged with on LinkedIn.

If your business or organization wants to reach destination and hotel professionals, travel agents and tour operators, LinkedIn has a huge community.

Unlike other social media platforms, there are few fake user profiles.

The site is used mostly to build brand image and capture sales leads.
Strategies

Content and reach can be optimized with both organic reach and paid strategies. Even though it is not encouraged, you do not need to know the person you request to connect with.

Company Pages promote organizations and receive trending topics.

Company Ads are a paid tool that encourage members to follow your Company Page.

LinkedIn Analytics provides stats on the most engaging posts, the demographics of followers, and performance of competitor brands' pages.

Sponsored Updates deliver specific, targeted content to unique groups of users.

Post one LinkedIn post per day between 7-8:30 AM and 5-6 PM on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
Content and Display Ads are paid display ads purchased for placement on LinkedIn Pages, profiles, search results, and groups.

Sponsored InMail forwards targeted, private messages to lead prospects.

LinkedIn API serves as a gateway for content requiring users to login through LinkedIn to access it.

Marketers can create Branded Communities, forums around a specific conversation, use ads to get the right people to join and then forward branded content once they are a part of the community.
Tumblr is a micro-blogging platform that allows users to place multi-media and other content to a short form blog. The very young audience of teens and millennials are less welcoming to brands, companies and organizations. Canvas, the in-house team of brand consultants educate marketers on how to use the platform without irritating users by being overly commercial. Measuring direct sales and returns on Tumblr is difficult.
Content tips

Create attractive visuals with custom GIFs which get far more attention than static photos because they require less effort to view.

There is plenty of potential to be funny, smart, and engaging. Tumblr pages that appear in more places increases the chances of fellow users returning the favor.

Content should be tagged with search terms researched from Google Trends to find those that are trending.

Post on Tumblr from 7-10 PM weekdays and 4 PM on Friday.
Advertising tools

Sponsored Posts promote the posts of brands to appear on mobile and web platforms to increase engagement.

Sponsored Radar is a rotating showcase present on users' dashboards where Tumblr highlights posts regarded as exceptionally good.

Sponsored Spotlight is a Tumblr page that curates and recommends the best blogs to follow on the platform.

Analytics measures the performance of posts and all engagement stats.
Instagram, short for instant telegram, is a free photo and video sharing application designed to inspire and connect individuals through visual content. For businesses and organizations, it is used mostly for awareness building.

All content and material can be tagged and searched by hashtag.

Instagram’s advertising program is still in early test phase.

Sponsored posts are given extended reach beyond regular posts.

Post on Instagram between 5-6 PM on weekdays and 8PM on Monday. One post per day is more effective than several posts each day.
Content tips

Instagram is about visuals, use imagery that best expresses your brand personality

Offer a view into a world or lifestyle that your brand makes possible, best through the eyes of the people who use your products and services

Find beauty everywhere, show how your company sees the world and make it meaningful

Inspire action, start a movement around your brand

Know your audience. Learn what people love about your brand by asking them and explore how you can capture the imagination of new customers
Pinterest is an online version of the bulletin board that used to be in the family kitchen. The places where visual images were placed for all to see

You cannot post information on Pinterest without a visual

Marketers are using Pinterest to highlight products, drive traffic to their websites, and highlight branded content

Vertical pins are preferable, the longer the better for pin descriptions and positive upbeat messages work better than neutral ones
Tools to reach audiences

Promoted Pins are sponsored pins from brands that are promoted in user feeds to increase brand awareness and click throughs to a specific product or content.

Rich Pins are optimized for rich content such as movies, recipes, articles, products, and places. They work well for adding more details to a pin that starts out as just an image and caption.

Pin It Buttons can be added to branded content which allow pinning to a user's Pin board with a single click.

Analytics track the performance of Pins on your website, including stats on most popular Pins and how they are being shared.
Google +

Google + is a social network launched by Google that enables development of circles to categorize connections into different groups, as a way of reproducing real-life relationships.

Hangouts are a multi-person video chat that can be started within any existing circle.

Sparks enable users to locate specific items of interest based on web-based topics.

There are now 40 million registered users.
Tools to reach audiences

The chat function of Hangouts can be used to engage your customers and your industry’s thought leaders in a more personal way. You can share documents and spreadsheets during the chats.

The link to Google lets you optimize your page for the search function in both regular searches and internal searches.

The verify page function makes your page the “official” page for your brand, which is then given top priority in the search rankings.

A compelling introduction with SEO-rich keywords greatly aids with search engine indexing.
Tips for attracting viewers

Your Google+ page needs to grab attention and interest to prompt users to click and add your page to their circles.

Upgrade the visual appearance of your page with creative use of photos.

Have 3-4 posts appearing before starting to reach users.

Promote your Google+ page using other social media channels and promote your Google+ page on your own website.

Post content on a regular basis, create VIP circles and engagers and follow up with any individual or company who circles you.

Post between 9-11 AM on weekdays.
YouTube

You Tube is a web based service that allow users to post videos and share them with the rest of the world.

It serves as a cost effective marketing platform for businesses and to date is the cheapest advertising channel on the web.

Create how to videos to educate customers on your product or service. Show viewers your “experience” in living color.

For destinations, post videos of several of your primary travelers experiences.

All a call to action to drive traffic to your website.
Maximizing your impact

Introduce several of the people behind your product. Let them convey a message about how they are involved.

Post solutions to common service or product problems.

Embed the videos in your website.

Display company or organization information including website URL, email address and phone number.

Post links to your videos on other social media platforms and backlink to your website.

Introduce new products via video.
Blogging

When you’re getting exposure on other social media platforms and have learned the language of the web, start your own blog

Get ready to communicate directly with your prospects and customers – be committed to the conversations

Welcome the comments and posts of a whole user community and get individuals talking to each other

Create a plan for blogging, know your topics and content, content rich blogging is a real-time endeavor

Create a time schedule for blogging, expect to answer all communications every day

Send your blog out to RSS feeds and complete the circle by linking your blog to all your other social media platforms

At that point, consider that you are fully engaged in social media marketing. There’s much more you can do with internet marketing, webinars, podcasts, eBooks, and other creative endeavors, but you’re on your way
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