

Marketing To Commercial Clients Using Social Media

by Dick Wagner, www.AskDickWagener.com Disaster Restoration Consulting



If your cleaning company targets commercial accounts, i.e., a business-to-business (B2B) company, this social media strategy is critical to your business success!

You can readily reach out to your hundreds (or thousands) of business customers more often and effectively with social media than using any other tool currently available. The key is to provide information they want to hear. It won't work if you try to approach B2B social media just like a business-to-consumer company does. They are an entirely different type of customer and require a completely different action plan.

For a business-to-consumer (B2C) company, it's all about how many followers (friends, circles, connections) you have and how much activity you get. For a B2B company, it's not about quantity; it's about quality - does your social media directly drive business results?

Business-to-Business (B2B) companies will often use social media to give potential customers an idea of "who, what, when, why, where and even the how" of doing business with them. Commercial prospects and clients like this interaction and information, especially when it's presented in a non-selling format.

The difference with social media is that it's more about the conversations and the community. B2B companies have to balance both building a community and directing it toward a sale. To do this, you should implement the following social media strategies, donating about 33% to each one:

- Advertising, marketing, promotions, deals
- News, events, happenings (in your business or industry)
- Relevant content (preferably with interactive conversations) about legitimate topics for your audience. You can certainly "steer" the conversation toward your products and services, but it needs to be very subtle and limited. Your conversations should involve and engage your "community." The instant it

appears to be a conversation in the conversational

Blogs are a great place to post "white papers" and other technical notices and articles. They will draw the attention of those that are truly interested, and you'll be surprised at how many views you get. The more relevant and useful posts you have, and the more you interact with those who do read and comment on your posts, the stronger the following and the more trust you will build with your readers and followers. If they aren't reading it, you likely aren't posting info that is interesting, helpful or useful. If your company does not have a blog yet, then you are already seriously behind in marketing B2B in our new world of SM.

According to comScore, social networking has reached 94.7 percent of users age 55 and older, representing a 12 percent jump between July 2010 and October 2011. During that same period, the use of email for this group rose merely one percent, while email usage among every other age category fell by more than 30 percent, peaking with a 42 percent drop among users age 15 to 24. (This group spends the largest amount of time on social networks, at an average of 8.6 hours per month).

The quality of the relationships you create are far more important than the number of followers or likes that you have. It's rarely about how many followers you have; it's almost always about interacting with interested participants that can affect your business positively while bringing value in advance to them.

Dick Wagner has served the disaster restoration industry for over 16 years, providing disaster recovery services to both regional and national clients. Wagner brings expertise in Structural Drying, Environmental Inspection, Remediation, and Fire and Smoke Restoration. He also brings extensive experience in Personal Contents Inventory and Replacement Cost Pricing for the Insurance Claims Industry.