

# Dos and Don'ts of Social Media Etiquette

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Social media is becoming more a part of every day business life even if business doesn't want to. This is because there are millions of people who use these different networks. These sites are a great resource to expand your network and directly tap into your audience.

However, most businesses are not really sure how to utilise these networks and use traditional media rules to guide them. This is not the way to go about it. There are certain unspoken rules about social media etiquette, what you should and should not do. Breaking these rules would not be wise for your business reputation.

Here are some dos and don'ts of social media. Stick with these and your reputation will remain intact.

## DOS

1. Use your real name to maintain a genuine and professional profile. Update your profile regularly with new information so that the profile doesn't become static.
2. Social media is 'social' so be friendly and obviously social. Use it to connect and interact.
3. Think before you write. Not everything should be shared so take a moment before publishing.
4. Your brand philosophy is a must. Just because you are online using social media doesn't mean you abandon your business beliefs and values.
5. Learn the social culture of the networks you are part of. This way you are less likely to make a social gaffe which will have you thrown out of the community.
6. Be authentic and honest but at the same time professional. Engage in the conversation. Your audience will know if are misleading them so don't even try.
7. Build a strong social network. Make sure those in the network are the people you want to be interacting with. A huge following doesn't equal a strong community.
8. Listen to what others are saying. Social media is a two way conversation. It is not all about you.
9. Write inspirational posts. Reveal how you overcame problems, you will appear real. People gravitate to motivating tales.
10. Keep trying. Social media success doesn't happen overnight. It takes time and effort to gain a reputation and a following.

## **DON'TS**

1. No spamming. You will lose your credibility and all your efforts will amount to nothing.
2. No 'full on' marketing tactics to sell. Any marketing must be subtle or you will lose your connections.
3. Don't send automated message to new followers. It is annoying.
4. Negativity is not on. Don't criticise your competitors or constantly complain about your bad days or your clients.
5. Never forget your online reputation management. Monitor what people say and take what they say seriously.
6. Don't try to speed up your social marketing campaign. Social media is a slow process which takes time to actively engage conversation.
7. Excessively linking to your own sites is a common mistake. You can link but not with every second message you send.
8. No sabotaging of your competitors by saying stupid things or pretending to be an unhappy customer. You will be found out.
9. If people unfollow you, don't automatically unfollow them. This is childish.
10. Don't forget to regularly update your social profiles. Social media is not static, it is constantly moving so when you have something new, add it to your profile.