

Goal Setting Fundamental for Social Media

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Most people recognise that goal setting is a necessary element of success both professionally and personally. Numerous studies reveal that those who set goals and write them down are more likely to succeed. When it comes to social media, for the most part, businesses don't set goals. They simply engage with a platform (because it's free) and hope that success will come. In the end they become frustrated when nothing happens. Yet, how can anything materialise when objectives have not been established? Those businesses that set social media goals are more likely to achieve results.

Goal setting should be considered the number one foundation of social media. It needs to be seen as a building block to developing a social media strategy. Without this nothing will be accomplished. Whenever businesses embark on any new project, there are always set targets and objectives. Social media should be seen in the same manner.

If you are reading this and thinking, "I know what my goals are. I want to increase customers and sales" then think again. Social media doesn't directly convert into customers and ROI is minimal. It is not about marketing and advertising – it is all about people having conversations, connecting and sharing. If social media doesn't convert then what is the point of engaging with it you may ask? There are many reasons.

Social media can be used for numerous things that can produce tangible and positive results for any business. As it is the conversations occurring in the social media space that provide valuable information, business can leverage this to their advantage. Brand awareness and/or building, relationship management, reputation management,

monitoring or increasing online presence are ideal areas for business to focus on in the social media space. These are all vital aspects of any business, and building and strengthening these areas can see productive results. When setting social media goals, ask yourself:

- What is it that I want to achieve by utilising social media?
- What does success look like short and long term?

Then align these social media goals with your business objectives to strengthen the likelihood of achievable outcomes. Unrealistic expectations based on the hype of social media can be avoided if goals are set.

By interacting in the social media space, you can engage with your audience, encourage online conversation (both positive and negative) and try to influence what people are saying. This is the power of social media. Being in this space means you are able to advance your “unique value proposition”, track what people are saying and to whom allowing you to discover things that you may not have known previously. This is valuable information and knowledge that can be beneficial for business particularly in today’s economic climate and changing communication structures, where having knowledge ahead of your competitors is vital.

Setting goals is essential for social media success. This will assist business in managing expectations and provide a focus for a social media strategy. When you have targeted objectives in place outcomes are more likely achieved. And this is the foundation of any successful social media campaign. Make social media part of an overall marketing plan spending crucial time strategically thinking about what you want to achieve. The outcome of having a structured goal focused approach can mean growth in your business in ways never previously considered.