



Top 5 Social Media Networking Tips

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With over a billion people on Facebook, over 100 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute, and over 10,000 tweets blasting their way through Twitter every second, there's no doubt that social

media is enormous, and here to stay. It's connected people across the world in an unprecedented way, and aside from often just being fun to use, can also be a very powerful set of tools to have in your networking arsenal. That said, the team at St. George's Society of New York asked me to assemble some things to build into your business as an individual, to help grow your networking capabilities online. So here's some answers to some very common questions:

1. Which platform do I pick?

The simple answer here is to not try to pick all of them. Too often we get seduced by the latest shiny object, and a better guide is to focus and simply pick one, and be awesome at it. I've seen real estate professionals build enormously powerful networks in Instagram for example, or just within Pinterest, so choose one (and Facebook might not be the best choice for you), and stick with it. I've personally seen tremendous return on using Twitter, as it allows for very powerful one-to-one conversations, which has really helped grow not only the brand I work with, but also my personal brand.

2. I don't have time!

If it's important enough, everyone has time. And especially with the advent of mobile, there's even more opportunities to use the white space of your day to check in with your network. An approach I often advocate is for something called '10-1-2-3', which proposes that for 10 minutes a day (every day), you do the following things, and we'll take growing your network on LinkedIn as an example: Connect with 3 new people, or reconnect with people already in your database. Comment on 2 things your connections have posted in the news feed. And write 1 unsolicited recommendation for someone you've worked with in the past. The power of this is what happens at scale – within a month you've grown your network by close to 100 people, been very active in the platform itself, and strengthened your network with enormous positive sentiment, very often to the point where those folks you've recommended will begin reciprocating those recommendations for you.

3. What should I post?

I'm a big believer that the web is truly doubling down on visuals. So much so that photos are easily the most engaged type of content within social media. Much more so than links, videos or written updates. Also, think about what those photos look like on a mobile device – remember that most use of these networks (and email) now happens on smartphones and tablets. The more striking and imbued with 'stopping power' they are as folks scroll by, the better they'll perform in terms of comments, likes and shares. Alternatively, there's enormous value in not posting anything, and simply listening to what's going on in your network.

4. When should I post?

The simple guide here is to post when you have something interesting to share, rather than feel pressure to post all the time. There's no more effective way to be deleted from a news feed than to constantly post mediocre, or self-celebrating, or inflammatory content. Think about what those you're connected to are interested in, and post for them, not for you. I also enjoy things that are timely, especially if I'm surfing the web and watching a sports event, so think about the specific time that you're posting, and try to empathize with what's going on in your network's world.

5. How do I grow my network?

Just like in the real world, social media networking requires discipline, focus, and patience. It's very easy to become seduced by the large user numbers and think that there's a silver bullet to growing your network online. The reality is that by building it into your daily routine in a way that's practical and helpful for you, and strengthens the relationships with those you're already connected to, it will allow you to foster an environment whereby you can develop a culture of hundreds of people talking positively about you each month. That's the most effective and powerful form of digital marketing you could ever have.

I hope these tips prove helpful for you. Remember it's called 'social' media for a reason, so go out there and have fun!

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