



A D I G 249 Page Street San Francisco CA 94102

Friday, May 29, 2009

Twitter Starter Program

This is an especially interesting marketing scheme for those with a very focused product appealing to a specific client demographic. Because you can target your “followers” based on their prior Twitter associations and their profile, you are not marketing those to who may not be interested in your product. As one would use direct mail or an email blast to a somewhat random group and certainly more carefully directed than that of traditional print advertising.

A thirty-day program will tell you if this technique works for your company. Here’s how it works:

1. Create your Twitter account
 - Use a thoughtful appropriate account name
 - Make sure your profile reflects your product
2. Integrate your other social networks accounts such as Facebook, Flickr, Y-Frog
3. Begin to attract followers
 - Solicit followers of like-minded Twitter accounts (magazine, associations etc.)
 - Follow their followers (ideally a percentage will return the follow by following you)
4. After a forty-eight hour period, un-follow those that did not respond and follow another new group.
5. Tweet 10-20 times a day. The mix of your tweets will be important and will be “merchandised” as you would your product. They must not be obviously self-serving. Since you are tweeting to like-minded individuals, this will not be that hard. Grist for your tweets can come from a variety of sources: quotations, current events appropriate to your customers, personal experiences and photographs

End Game

1. The success of this program can be determined through the statistical analysis of your web site hits (Google analytics, Urchin)
2. Based on that result there are at least 3 courses of action:
 - a. Contract with ADIG to maintain your presence in the social media community
 - b. Take the maintenance of the social media effort in-house (following the course we have previously defined)
 - c. Abandoned the concept

(415) 575-4820
Telephone

(415) 575-4821
Facsimile

feedback@adiginfo.com
e-mail

www.adiginfo.com



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Twitter Pros

Easy to navigate and update, link to and promote anything Reach far beyond your inner circle of friends One feed pools all users; anyone can follow anyone else unless blocked Pure communication tool, rapid responsiveness You don't have to be logged in to get updates; you can just use an RSS reader Very interactive, extensible messaging platform with open APIs Many other applications being developed (Twitterific, Summize, Twhirl, etc.) Potential SMS text messaging revenue from wireless networks (although Twitter states they are not currently getting any cut) Potential future advertising and/or enterprise subscription-based revenue streams With its "thin" overhead, Twitter is probably more scalable than Facebook, giving it a cost advantage

Twitter Cons

Limited functionality; find people, send brief messages, direct replies Limited to 140 characters per update Not all people find it immediately useful Over-emphasis on follower counts Easily abused for spam and increasing the noise level Relatively smaller installed user base As yet no readily apparent monetization strategy

Facebook Pros

Application mashup; find people, make connections, email, instant messaging, image/video sharing, etc. Most people can quickly grasp the value of connecting with friends, family and established contacts; some people report they use Facebook instead of email and IM More emphasis on deep connections with others vs. who has the most connections "True Friends" feature increases your transparency to selected connections; almost like having private and public profiles Huge, rapidly growing installed user base Inherit stickiness, third party applications, "gift giving" and personal data collection make Facebook a powerful advertising platform

Facebook Cons

More difficult to navigate and update Requires investment of time to realize sustained benefit Opt in model requires a user to allow others to connect Less immediate responses; unless you stay logged on continually Overhead of mashup and "thick" applications could limit scalability, bloat cost structure

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