



10 Ways to Win Fans and Influence Followers on Social Media

So, you've ventured into the world of social media. As Dr. Phil would say, "How's that working out for you?" If social media hasn't worked out well for your business thus far, don't despair. You're not alone. Some of the common complaints business owners give me about their social media accounts include:

- "Oh yeah, social media – It's on the back burner for now." (Translation: We haven't had the time to implement social media yet.)
- "Help! I don't know what I'm doing on social media!" (In other words: social media is intimidating to us.)
- "We have social media pages set up but we just don't have the time to post regularly." (Your last post was who knows when.)
- "We're posting on social media but we're not getting any new followers/fans." (You may be posting wrong or posting the same thing, boring your fans).
- "How do we know we're posting the right information on our social media pages?" (The popular shotgun approach – usually stemming from a lack of strategy).
- "How can we convert social media fans to customers?" (Popular comment by those engaging on social media who haven't tied their social media strategy to their overall marketing/sales goals).

No matter what stage of social media stress you face, here are 10 tips for continued success:

1. **Narrow your focus:** With social media, it only makes sense to go where your customers are. So you need to first do some research to see if your customers or prospects are truly using social media, and if so, which sites. And then, if you're not already, focus your efforts in those areas.
2. **Start somewhere:** If you don't have time to work all the social media networks, it's better to pick one or two social media sites and devote your time to build a following there. For where to start, see tip #1.
3. **Experiment with time of day:** Your fans will vary their social media activity, so you should test different times and days to see when your posts get the most attention. This is especially important when scheduling posts in advance.

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4. **Vary your messages:** Don't post the same content every time. Vary your topics – from sharing internal or external blog posts to asking questions, mentioning a special offer, or posting a picture – so that you don't bore your audience. Focus on fan/follower engagement.
5. **Don't go on autopilot:** Scheduling posts is great for streamlining the process, but don't forget to interact too. Continue to follow others and view news streams for the latest trends and updates from your fans and industry.
6. **Add rich media:** Consider adding photos, videos and other multimedia on social media to make your content more shareable.
7. **Coordinate with other marketing efforts:** This is a given, but work to really integrate your social media effort with other ad campaigns, events or other marketing tactics. Don't leave out this step!
8. **Involve your employees:** Encourage your employees to share company announcements on LinkedIn and other social media sites wherever appropriate. This will increase exposure and engagement.
9. **Track your engagement:** Regularly review your social media site statistics to find areas of improvement. Use the information to see what kind of posts your fans prefer and how you can better interact with them.
10. **Ask for help:** If you are truly in over your head when it comes to social media, don't be afraid to outsource your company's social media marketing. Choose someone who can appropriately reflect your company's brand and voice while making sure you stay consistent and regular on social media.

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