

Net Branding



Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and LinkedIn are all examples of the spreading phenomenon collectively referred to as social media. But the question remains, what is social media?

In simple terms, social media is a form of online media that relies on conversation. This is in contradistinction to traditional media which delivers actual content, for example an advertisement on the back of a bus. "The primary difference" says Cathy Mellett, founder of social media company Net Branding, "is that traditional media does not allow potential customers or readers to participate in the creation or development of the content, whereas social media stimulates and allows this."

There are a few basic items to consider prior to embarking on a journey in this online space.

Do a trademark search even before deciding on a business name, website / blog name or social media profile. You do not want to establish a great website or online brand only to have an existing registered trademark owner invoke their legal rights.

Claim your URL. This is the basis of strategically laying a solid foundation for your online brand. If you are thinking about a new and exciting business, secure your online "real-estate" before announcing your idea to the world. So many businesses have not secured their domain name and sadly, once they have spent money on their logo, stationery and other business necessities, they identify that their chosen domain name is unavailable.

Keywords. Engage an expert to source some primary online keywords within your business product or service space. If you are deciding on a name for your business, attempt to include these words into your business name alternatively, if your business is already established, consider including keywords within your slogan or catch phrase.

Secure your Trademark. A trademark potentially covers your business name, slogan and other items used to identify you in the marketplace.

You have laid the foundation for your entry into this online realm. This can however, also be fraught with difficulty. Take the recent example of Charlotte Dawson and the negative publicity that has ensued surrounding the misuse and abuse of social media. Ms Dawson has publically

revealed how her Twitter trolls sent her into a spiral of depression, illustrating that one's actions can have far reaching consequences within this medium. Cathy believes that those using social media should acknowledge that whilst they are dealing in a very "inhuman" computer environment, real people are on the receiving end of the words they place online. If you find yourself in an unhealthy online situation, seek help immediately. This may be obtaining the assistance of a friend, lawyer, trademark specialist, social media expert or any person in whom you can confide.

Notwithstanding this, social media can when managed successfully leverage new channels for either you or your business. It can develop brand loyalty and improve service for customers. Conversely, social media can prove to be a source of extreme embarrassment and dissatisfaction.

So how can you engage social media to best advantage?

Appropriateness. Remember that certain subject matter has the potential to offend people or certain groups of people. Carefully consider your words, always remembering to be polite and reflecting on how those words could be received. Because of the nature of social media and the way in which people within social networking communities interact and behave online, the relationships that people share online are bound to be different than physical face-to-face interactions.

Judgement. Carefully consider when and how to engage with your audience. Each situation is different but never hesitate to divert communication to another medium if required.

Respect and manners. We need to acknowledge that although social media is still in its infancy, one should not forget that good old-fashioned manners are still important: be polite, show respect, and say thank you.

Be responsible. Employ this strategy not only in your use of technology but in the acknowledgement that any content you post online could potentially tarnish your company's image.



Cathy of Net Branding

The Net Branding team have assisted local and international businesses to use these powerful new online and marketing platforms to gain visibility, internet traffic, leads, customers and engaged fans. Our social media solutions are affordable yet offer pragmatic and practical strategies allowing you to succeed in this online space. For more information contact Cathy on mobile 0211229116.



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