

Volume 14, Issue 2/2012 - Social Media

Most Common Forms of Social Media

Twitter

In their own words "Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting. Simply find the accounts you find most compelling and follow the conversations." People communicate on Twitter by writing Tweets: 140 character long posts. Twitter is the place where conversations start, where people comment on current affairs and express their opinions. Therefore for many businesses Twitter is an ideal way of connecting with customers, sharing information about their products and services, gathering real-time market intelligence and feedback. The key here is building relationships with customers and other stakeholders. Many companies realise that there are already conversations about them on Twitter and joining in is the only way to become part of the dialogue.

Facebook

The founders of Facebook define their mission as giving "people the power to share and make the world more open and connected". Predominantly used on a personal level, Facebook is how many people keep in contact with their friends and family and share information about their personal lives. Businesses also use the site, creating profiles and company pages that users can like and comment on. Many hospitals in the US have Facebook pages.

LinkedIn

As of February 9, 2012, LinkedIn operates the world's largest professional network on the Internet with more than 150 million members in over 200 countries and territories. LinkedIn's tagline is "get the most from your professional network". It has three main functions: - Re-Connect: Find past and present colleagues and classmates quickly. Makes staying in touch easy. - Power your career: Discover inside connections when you're looking for a job or a new business opportunity. - Get answers: Your network is full of industry experts willing to share advice. Have a question? Just ask.

Blogs

Blogs are a less complicated form of social media with clear-cut articles on a range of topics. Traditional in the sense that they can be read like regular online newspapers, blogs have the added bonus of encouraging conversation.

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