



SOCIAL MEDIA AS A POWERFUL BRANDING CHANNEL

"We are living in glorious days where each reader's voice can be heard." — Sara Sheridan

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As a company that is always striving to keep up with various technology trends, we've recently joined the world of social media. Social media has proven value as an effective branding channel, and we are excited to be part of it! If you are interested in starting or refining your social media, then continue reading for some notable social media benefits:

1. Social media lets you initiate a meaningful dialogue.

A social media golden rule, it is important to talk to your audience and not at them. Unlike any channel before, social media gives you a chance to really connect with your audience. This usually starts with the content you share. Sharing content that is engaging, interesting and informative can increase your chances of starting a meaningful dialogue.

2. Social media gives your company personality.

Regardless of the industry you are in, your organization is essentially a group of talented people who go above and beyond the call of duty every day. That is what makes you valuable to your customers and partners. Therefore, social media allows your organization to show that human side of your business. As the name itself suggests, social media allows you to be social, letting you to portray another essential characteristic of being human.

3. Social media is instant.

Perhaps one of the biggest values of social media is its immediacy. Your business may be closed during weekends or holidays, but social media has the doors open for any questions or concerns your existing or potential customers may have. To a certain extent, this is demanding and slightly challenging to monitor, but the pros outweigh the cons.

4. Being on social media shows that you are committed to keeping abreast with the times.

This is important. Having a social media presence can reassure your audience that you are agile and willing to change in order to accommodate their ever-changing needs.

5. Social media can improve your sales in the long term.

As a powerful branding channel, social media can shape positive perceptions of your brand. Your customers will know that you are passionate about your business, but perhaps one of the biggest values of social media marketing is that it can help your SEO (search engine optimization) results. Therefore, the next time your customers search for your company name on Google or Bing or any other search engine, you may come above your competitors who are not on social media. In turn, this will result in a positive return on your social media investment over the long term.



PRINCIPLES OF WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

“Websites promote you 24/7; no employee can do that.” — *Paul Cookson*

Websites are one of today's most powerful communication vehicles. In order to be done well, they require much care and attention to be invested in their development, and especially their regular maintenance. Communication being their main goal, the success of most websites is largely defined by the following 4 areas:

1. Websites need to have an editor in charge.

An editor in charge is essentially someone who understands content and takes care of regular content updates. Users have accomplished their goal on a particular website only when finding the information they need is a seamless process. That being said, technical sophistication on a website should never trump the need for clean, clear, concise and easy-to-find content.

2. Websites need good security measures.

By their very nature, websites, same as networks, are open. This is why they need a good security procedure to be put in place. As hacking

becomes an ever-growing concern on the Internet, you should always be vigilant about security. This process may require an investment in a combination of hardware, software, and human expertise; as no hardware or software is perfect or self-sufficient, human expertise remains critical.

3. Website operations outsourcing can be a good solution, so long it is done with care.

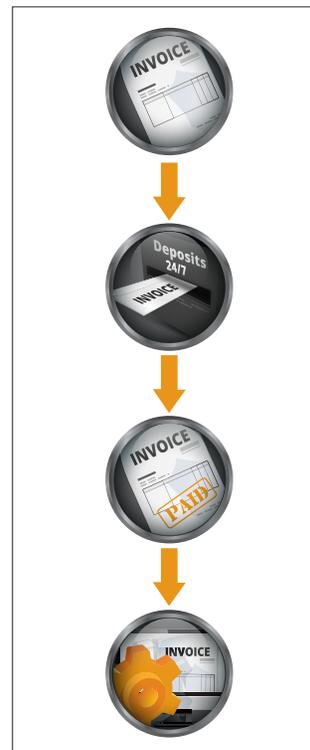
Outsourcing is considered a good business practice because it allows companies to focus on their core business while taking advantage of highly specialized service providers. Website hosting is the easiest operation to outsource. Outsourcing of website development and maintenance can also be beneficial, but is more delicate and requires more care to be invested.

4. Websites need to encourage visitor feedback.

Companies should always welcome visitor feedback. Proactively seeking this feedback will allow you to know

exactly when and where your visitors may be experiencing difficulties. By doing this, you can address those concerns as efficiently as possible. A website which is fully functional and always up to date is a key factor in creating good customer relationships and laying the ground for future success.

Created by the IPS Business Owner Success School (BOSS)



IPS RECOMMENDS:

- Updating your website with new content.
- Regularly checking your website for functionality and possibly broken links.
- Ensuring your website content is clear and concise.
- Applying high scrutiny to website security. It is important for your visitors to feel confident that their information is safe with you.
- Following up with people who reach out to you through your website. Not providing this feedback defeats the purpose of having this feature on your website.

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