

# Making sense of the social media chatter



Everyday it's harder and harder for small business owners to keep pace with all the social media platforms on the Internet.

There are six essential platforms that business owners must have in order to really harness the potential of social advertising. Each social platform plays a very specific role, and the combination of all six is what will take your social advertising campaign to the next level.

## 1. LinkedIn

A popular business profile site, LinkedIn ranks very well in search engines and is a great platform for sending event updates out to business associates.

*Directions:* When optimizing your LinkedIn profile, select one core keyword (or search term you would like to be found under), use it frequently without sacrificing consumer experience, and watch your profile skyrocket in the search engines.

## 2. Facebook

As a closed community, Facebook does not rank in the search engines and makes the best choice if you want to have a personal profile online. However, optimizing your Facebook profile with your business keyword can make it an invaluable marketing effort.

*Directions:* Optimize your Facebook profile for one keyword and become the “go-to” expert in your industry for the more than 22 million Facebook users. Also, include some personal touches, but beware of putting too much personal information online.

## 3. MySpace

As an open community, MySpace ranks great in the search engines, and more importantly, allows businesses to have fully-developed profiles, including personally designed backgrounds.

*Directions:* In addition to optimizing your profile with a keyword, you can also search for your



By Heather Lutze  
The Findability Group  
Englewood, Colo.

## ***If you only have the time or desire to create one social media platform, a blog should be at the top of your list.***

target audience in MySpace friends and create an amazing outreach network.

### **4. YouTube**

The main video sharing platform, YouTube is one of the best forums available to create a viral marketing campaign. From publishing client video testimonials to creating social proof of your abilities, YouTube videos are a great way to get other site owners to link to your website.

*Directions:* Each new video is a new opportunity to optimize for a different keyword. For each video, be sure to include your keyword in the title and at least once in the description section.

### **5. Blog**

If you only have the time or desire to create one social media platform, a blog should be at the top of your list.

Blogs give users a few distinctive advantages over the other platforms that make them absolutely invaluable in the world of internet marketing. First, search engines love blogs. They have plenty of content and are easy for the spiders to crawl and categorize online. Second, consumers love blogs. They aren't hard-sales, but instead are a mix of marketing and education that online shoppers trust. Third, every blog is a new opportunity

## **Painter to Painter: How I Use Social Media**

**By Chris Haught**  
*rcpaintinginc.com*

**O**VER THE PAST FEW YEARS I HAVE SEEN A huge change in the way we do business. It used to be word-of-mouth and a handshake sealed the deal and a tradesperson carried his or her tools in a satchel. Now we also carry a laptop, and websites, search engine optimization, keywords, directory listings, targeted mailers and branding are part of the daily vocabulary.

The "face of our business" has now become digital. In addition to hammering nails or wielding paintbrushes, calloused fingers are now tapping keyboards!

Recently I created Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. Part of it was to learn what the hype was about. I am now hooked!

When I first started, it took a while to figure out what I was doing. Then I started making friends and connections, I now spend about 20 minutes a day and "make the rounds." I set up logins and sharing tools that make it simple to add info at any time.

I am constantly finding new information from all my new online friends. I can talk to like-minded people about business issues, new products, marketing ideas and more. Because I have a "history" with many of the members, they know enough about me and my business practices to be able to offer sound advice and share ideas.

### **LinkedIn**

This is for professionals in many industries and trades. Great place to network. You have to request to connect and let them know if you are from a different area. This lets you control your network. There are many groups you can join and post questions, articles, jobs, etc. It's a great place for a subcontractor to connect with GCs.

### **Facebook**

I have a private profile that I use to keep in touch with family and friends. I have also connected with people "I know of" – you can request to be a fan or a friend, and I connected with locals and post painting info occasionally. There are a lot of applications in Facebook; you can play Mafia Wars, send a drink or a rose, a million others. If you are not into that (like me), you can hide them.

for you to go after a new keyword. Whether you want to dominate a search page with one particular keyword or just have a presence under a different keyword, a blog is a free and easy way to get you there.

*Directions:* As with a YouTube video, every blog is a new keyword opportunity. Use a keyword tool, and select your keyword before writing. Then, include your keyword in the title and throughout the content – but remember never sacrifice consumer experience. Also, be advised that repeating a keyword too many times will show up as spam in the search engines.

## 6. Twitter

The newest, hottest rage, Twitter is a microblog that limits posts to 140 characters. Although you'll typically hear the most skepticism about Twitter, it

can be an amazing tool for your business. Twitter plug-ins allow you to update Twitter and literally push it out to your other platforms, such as Facebook. Additionally, Twitter posts rank in the search engines.

*Directions:* Select one keyword and include that in all your Twitter posts. Also, don't forget to personalize your Twitter background for a totally unique and branded look and feel. **PPC**

*Heather Lutze is CEO of The Findability Group, a Search Engine Marketing firm that works with companies to attain maximum Internet exposure. She is the author of The FindAbility Formula: The Simple and Non-Technical Approach To Search Engine Marketing. Contact her at FindabilityGroup.com.*

I also have a Business Page that is public. I use this to showcase recent jobs and hope to have customers "write on my wall" eventually. It is very easy to add pictures, comments, and videos. Think of it as a mini web page.

### YouTube

Creating a YouTube video was much easier than I thought. I just used the software on my computer and some still pictures, created an account and uploaded a video.

I made a video on new construction procedures to give to customers as part of our proposal packet. I also made one to show a new product to protect bathtubs during construction and was able to use it to sell the service to a contractor.

### Twitter

Some may think of Twitter as a bunch of teenagers texting about the latest music craze. Not so, I have used Twitter to make connections in my area and share info.

You can choose who you wish to follow (yes, there is twitter spam). The posts in Twitter have to be

less than 140 characters, so you get "little bites" or links all day.

With Twitter, I looked for local "Tweeters" and follow them. When you follow someone, they will generally follow you.

I also add the links to Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to my signature line in my email, forum signatures and my website. I continue to learn something every day! I have made some online friends as well, feel free to contact me to network!

By now you are probably asking, "How many leads/customers have you received?" Well, none that I can directly attribute to these efforts – yet! I hope that by slowly building an online presence – along with my website, clean and lettered vehicles, mailers and yard signs – will help to brand my company by keeping it visible in the public eye.



*Chris Haught  
RC Painting  
Beryl, Utah*