
SOCIAL NETWORK MARKETING

EXTREME



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Executive Summary

Social Network Marketing (SNS) has opened a whole new world of possibilities for marketers.

Organizations are aiming to gain credibility in their online marketing communication by moving it towards exchanges between individuals and consumers rather than directing it to the market from their internal marketing department. The whole process is geared at gaining the bandwidth for the company and its brand through engaged communication.

Being different from conventional marketing, e-Marketers are approaching their Social Network Marketing initiative through a thorough study of the best practices in the industry and the market dynamics for formulating a sturdy, yet adaptive strategy.

The presence on Social Networking Sites is not limited to merely advertising with the use of banner ads. It is extended to participation in blogs, forming and moderating groups, sharing consistent and newsworthy information, creation of a suitable profile that promotes traffic to the company's website and continually post company related information like events, jobs, achievements, milestones, etc.

The following pages contain useful information arranged as a step-by-step guide for eMarketers in order to set up the Social Network Marketing process and capture the ROI for the company.

1. Introduction

Social Networking Sites (SNS) have made real time communication with total strangers a reality. In fact, they act as equalizers and make it all as simple as chatting up with a friend. Individuals are made powerful with the ability to make or break a brand even if it belongs to a large corporation. In order to gain credibility, big corporations in turn are representing themselves as earnest individuals without any corporate motives. The one weakness in social networking sites is that any can make a fake profile and spoof a person or organization with fake messages, thereby tarnishing the image of the other party. So organizations need to be wary of the bad propaganda that they may receive through individuals who may efficiently broadcast negative information.

Every aspect of commerce is being shaped up by the burst of public opinion set forth by the powerful SNS. Because of the personal touch, Social Network Marketing is more like a word-of-mouth marketing from the online communities and has come to play a decisive role in customer's opinion on the brand and the related purchasing decisions.

To keep up with the competitive strategies, marketers need to leverage these SNS. Social media which encompasses Social Network Marketing, has become as important as advertising. The one prime difference being that it is considered a more trusted source of information by the consumers; and, because consumers control the content, marketers cannot have any direct play on messaging and positioning.

For making the most of the social networks, businesses need to understand the ways to participate in the conversation and influence the message. The more the members share the content about a business entity within their social network, the bigger would the consumer base of the entity become – with almost no effort and with zero spending.

Social Network Marketing cannot be limited to making public service announcements or adding focus groups or merely including a popular internet tool. It's more about building the relationship with focused groups of potential customers and ensuring their association with the company / product brand at a deeper level. In short, it is about understanding and connecting to the audience through thorough participation by addressing their belief system, latent needs and motivators.

2. What is a Social Network Site?

A social networking website can be defined as one that equips any internet user with the ability to add self-generated content that includes but is not limited to comments, reviews, own dedicated pages, feedback, ratings etc.

These are strongly knit online communities of people who usually have a common interest or goal. Members of these communities interact with each other through a wide range of ways - e-mail, instant messaging, blogs and news feeds that carry valuable and relevant information. They are no doubt powerful in their ability to facilitate communication and influence the players.

These social networks on the Internet provide marketers with potential user information that includes the user's preferences as well as their social relationships. They determine who is associated with who, how frequently they interact online with each other, what are the common interests, what are the current issues that are discussed etc.

Depending on the website, we find the online community members share common interests in lifestyle, hobbies, learning, religion, or politics. Once enrolling as a member of the site, it grants access to the whole networking website and the socializing process can be started. As part of socialization, one may read the profile pages of other members of the site and can contact them.

The simple and powerful Social Networking Sites have gained tremendous popularity with an increasing number of people spending substantial time on SNS.

Examples of social networking sites include Facebook, Myspace, Orkut, and professional networks, like LinkedIn, LabRoots etc.

3. The Emergence of Social Networks

Social networks are evolving rapidly.

There is remarkable increase in online social networking activity; considering the numbers in US alone shows that 37% of adult users and 70% of teens from the online population engage in this activity every month. As per the projections of eMarketer, by 2011, 50% of adult Internet users and 84% of online teens in the US will use e active members on social networking sites.

This kind of numbers is encouraging marketers to invest extensively in social network advertising. From \$920 million spent in 2007 by the US marketers on social networking sites, the number has hit \$1.6 billion in 2008. The same showed an 81% growth in the world market and has reached \$2.2 billion in 2008. The numbers for the subsequent years are further encouraging as e-marketers realized the power of peer recommendations.

More and more numbers of e-marketers who are new to the field, are honing their skills to emerge as expert practitioners of social network marketing. The entire advancement is targeted towards achieving the social marketing objectives and improving the promised return on investment (ROI). In this pursuit, marketers are seen researching the medium and monitoring audiences to establish realistic objectives before formulating the strategy and implementing tools for accomplishing those objectives.

Initially, marketers have approached social network marketing tactically and simply included various social networking and media sites to the marketing mix. Having realized that this was counter-productive, they have now, started working on the same strategically.

Social network marketing is soon reaching the point of maturity with most of the organizations moving into the transition phase from the initial trial period to the strategic phase of the learning and adoption curve.

4. How Social Networks Work?

The first step in participation by an interested individual is to create a profile for themselves. The profile is a consolidation of some basic personal information that also includes interests and activities.

Once the profile is ready, users start connecting with friends and contacts from the real world or other users who have similar interests. All such connections generically referred as “friends”, are formed by searching the network or by inviting others to join.

To be linked in the network, most services entail that both users confirm that they are friends. Once linked, it is very simple to communicate within that group and also update them on the activities of common interest.

The significant points of interest for an e-Marketer in the whole process are:

Members tend to move along common interest groups and organize themselves based on psychographics more than demographics. This makes social networks very useful as an exceptional tool that helps in targeted marketing.

Users influence the decisions of the members with shared opinions and recommendations. For making purchase decisions on any product or service, consumers are always found to look out and trust opinions of people in their networks rather than advertisements or advertorials. The trust in these suggestions and opinions is multi-fold because they are perceived as non-commercial, objective and beneficial than the commercial oriented marketing messages driven by the company. This kind of advice and help sought by members is no longer an incidental benefit for e-Marketers as there is a growing number of consumers who are approaching these online sources especially, social networks for opinions.

Members of all social networks serve the dual role of a supplier and consumer of content. Those who majorly play the role of content creators are targeted by marketers as they are very influential and have the ability to engaged prospective consumers in the group significantly. This is a key function of the organization when it includes social networks in its marketing strategy.

A message directed by the company to the influencers, if it has substantial value has the potential to become viral. This would be a winning strategy as users consider it referred to them by a trusted friend in their dependable network and would neither get intimidated nor defensive, feeling that the information is being pushed at them.

Social networks have turned into a cultural phenomenon. Members of social networking sites regularly update the content (pictures, diaries, music, etc) of their own mini-home pages and visit the homepages of their friends to keep abreast of their updated content. If users feel some content on their friend's mini-home page interesting or useful, they can use the same information from their friend's page onto their own mini-home page.

Typically, the networks have nodes that number from tens of thousands to millions. Massive quantities of data are available on social network sites which are filled with enormous data that is generated from social network sites, newsgroups, blogs, chats and other knowledge sharing websites. This data is powerful because it is all at the level of individuals.

5. Social Network Marketing Vs. Conventional Marketing

Social network marketing uses similar techniques of conventional marketing, but the implementation of the same is done using a different set of tools. The purpose of social network marketing is in establishing a long standing relationship with the prospective clients through non-commercial interactions. So, rather than focusing on sales or volumes achieved the objective of the ultimate outcome is enabling a behavior / belief change.

This shift in brand building from conventional mass marketing to focused social network marketing requires new approaches and different goals. The prime objective here is to launch deeper relationships by initiating conversations with prospects and optimizing their value rather than merely aiming to acquire a new customer.

If market share is the prime driver in conventional marketing, share of customer mind space through share in customer voice and communication forms the crux in social network marketing. Improved and extended service offerings give the added dimension for enhanced customer relationship.

Apart from setting a new marketing approach, a context for the dialog needs to be established to gain legitimacy in the conversation in the case of social network marketing. More often this dialogue is not directly the company's but those of the influencers. This, bridges the distance between the seller and customer by building on the trust. Conventional marketing directly extends the brand and offers the service / product through direct communication that is clearly commercial in nature.

Social network marketing is all about innovative and creative interaction with the available online communities to generate exposure, opportunity and sales in a non-compelling way.

6. Social Networking Vs. Social Media

Most often Social Media and Social Networking are assumed to be the same, but there is a significant difference between the two both in terms of meaning and features they offer to clients. While Social Media is a tactic of connecting with a target audience, Social Networking is a means of sharing information and interacting with other users.

Social Networking sites are primarily used for connecting with old and new friends, but Social Media sites are business driven as they are generally used for promoting or broadcasting of

products and help various businesses in spreading the information about their offerings. As they are more about direct communication, businesses find them easier to use and consider them a wonderful online marketing tool and for promoting and popularizing their product and services.

The differences between social media and social networking can be better understood in context of the following features. This understanding will help the e-Marketer in formulating strategies to leverage them for brand building and business development.

The Objective

Social media is a means for transmission and sharing of information with a broad audience. Anyone can easily create and distribute this information and all that one requires to be part of social media is an internet connection!

Social networking refers to deeper engagements. Groups of people with common interests, associate together and form online communities to build relationships through social networking sites.

Communication Style

Social media is a communication channel like television, radio or newspaper, that is used to deliver a message. Social media is not a location that is visited but basically a system or format that broadcasts information to others.

Conversations form the core of social networking; hence this is all about a two-way communication. Based on the subject and topic, members come together to share thoughts, experiences and opinions. Through this exchange, deeper relationships are nurtured for a long term.

Return on Investment (ROI) Measurement

Social media is about creating the buzz, hype and excitement about the company's services and products. Measuring ROI in such a case becomes tricky as one finds it complicated to assign a value to the hype generated. Because of this limitation, marketers choose a different mode of ROI measurement and assess the depth of the conversation or type of conversation or the influence achieved from the conversation.

ROI measurement is straight forward in social networking. For example, measurements of website traffic, volumes of conversations, size of the network base, etc., are clear indicators of the effectiveness in the marketing efforts.

Network Size

Building a following on social media is tough and prolonged. Unless an established brand, one can neither generate a following overnight or auto-generate individual conversations.

If smartly used, social networking can lead to an exponential growth in the network. This is primarily due to the rapport established between the company and the focus group members through direct communication which is not only personal but also purposeful.

Exchange Control

Requesting contacts to put in positive comments or cast votes is risky and laborious in the case of social media. Skewing or manipulating comments, likes, diggs, etc., for a desired image building may result in a black mark in terms of dishonest practices.

Social networking is less informal and more discussion oriented. Hence this provides the scope for businesses to not only introduce the company and its offerings but also request for suggestions or feedback. These conversations, once established as genuine have the potential to convert many members into loyal followers / fans.

Knowing the differences in the two separate marketing concepts, despite the overlaps, can greatly influence the strategies made in this direction.

7. The Benefits

Increased awareness of the brand and offerings

The foremost benefit of social network marketing is gaining more eyeballs. More than 85% of the e-marketers indicated that their social networking efforts have multiplied the publicity for their businesses. With social network marketing, there is an increase the awareness and recall value of products and brands through increased online presence and activity. With every interaction, any promotional activity initiated by the group created on a social networking site gets noticed by the members.

Increased traffic

Improving web traffic is the second major advantage for marketers who have realized a rise in search engine rankings with the adoption of social network marketing. Improved rankings show a positive impact on the business exposure, lead generation efforts in spite of a reduced marketing budget.

With web links included on almost every posting in the networking site, traffic gets automatically driven to the company's website. The nature of the elements comprising social networking sites, be it interesting snippets of information or recommendations or updates, ensures that these links are aimed at prospective clients who have proven interest in the company and its products or services. Website links predict more site visits, visitors and increased brand and product awareness.

Improved SEO

With every discussion on the company or product associated with appropriate web links, it is observed that a better rank is given by search engine results when there are more links to the content. This guarantees that more people read the content and perhaps, visit the page. Hence, marketers look at social network marketing campaigns as a critical part of every Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy.

Links are evaluated by search engines in context to how they are associated to the company's website. Search engines approve the valuable 'linking back process' by users sharing content. The irony is that, these links from social networking sites are significantly less expensive but considered by search engines as more valuable than paid links.

Enhanced customer loyalty

The right approach to social network marketing not only promotes the company and products but also contributes to improving customer loyalty. Since the shared messages are more personal, by supplying useful and valuable content, companies send out a consistent and honest message thereby building trust and credibility.

Rather than 'selling', the strategy of smart e-marketers is to be identified as a trusted resource or a subject matter expert. This is achieved by offering assistance or support without any commercial intent. Once that is done, the services and products are promoted either when directly enquired about or when found appropriate. Any haste may result in all the carefully build communication being trashed as spam.

Lead Generation

With regular and meaningful participation, social networks have been proven to generate 'qualified' leads. The information posted is often positively received as nothing is imposed to the members who actually join the groups based on their free-will and what information they are interested in.

This fact is a prime contributor to the number of leads generated. The benefit is more pronounced when it comes to sole proprietors in comparison to regular businesses.

Successful product launches

Social networks provide a convenient platform to survey the pertinent community on their products wants and needs. The product wish-list can be made without much investment and the product can be developed with the community's involved participation and guidance. Lending a voice to the customer and prospect increases loyalty and guarantees successful product launches.

Forging new business partnerships

The time, number and quality of interactions directly influence the number of enquiries for partnerships. Businesses that are actively involved in B2B selling rather than B2C are more likely to achieve this benefit.

Reduced marketing expenses

The benefits to e-marketers through the smart use of social networks are numerous and come with a high ROI. Marketers look up to it as an important initiative even when the efforts take substantial time to trickle down into results. The biggest plus about this initiative is that the benefits percolate into other areas of marketing giving a tremendous ROI.

Social Network Marketing makes a deeper and faster impact on the target audience while maximizing word-of-mouth marketing. Its contribution in market research and idea exploration for advertising, product launches and promotion is immense.

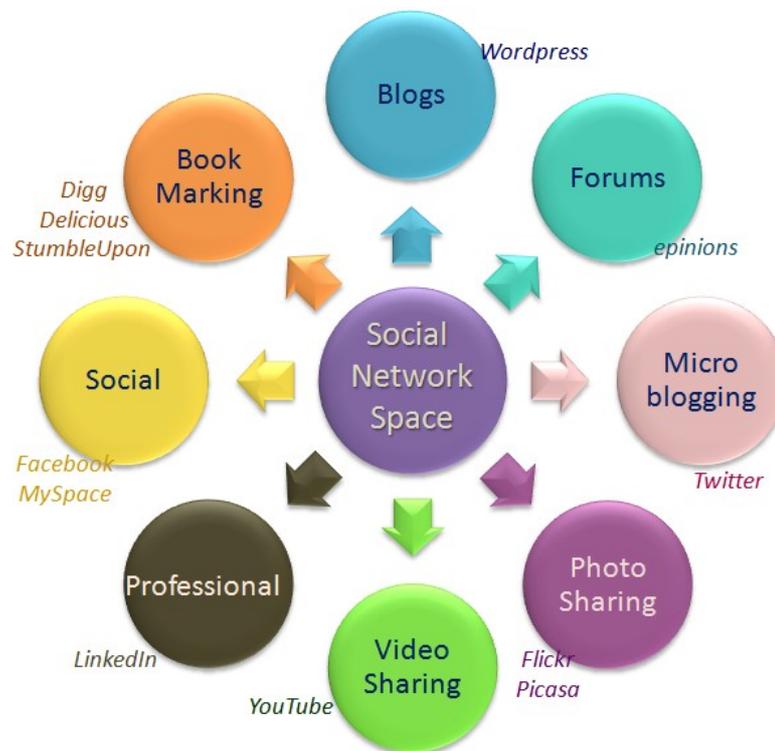
Others

Social networking sites offer scope for various initiatives in other areas of business as well. These definitely have an impact on the company's bottom-line and are listed as follows:

- Idea generation & new product development
- Co-innovation
- Customer service
- Public relations
- Employee communications
- Reputation management

8. Types of Social Networks

Social networks can be classified based on various categories like membership fees, geographies, usage base, demographics etc. Depending on the service / product offered and the marketing objectives, e-marketers can make a choice of the social networking sites that need to be targeted.



The different communities hold the interest of their members through their utility and entertainment value with scope to expand their networks.

There are a whole range of social network communities existing on the web. These communities are organized based on the kind of interactions that people share. The types are only limited by one's imagination.

Professional

Professional social networks provide opportunities for career advancement in the same company or with the industry. The various opportunities for getting recognized are: answer questions posted by other members, online writing communities; recommendations given, etc.

Eg: LinkedIn, SixApart Professional Blogs, LPN - the Latino Professional Network

Informational

Informational community networks are for people seeking solutions to everyday problems. This is the key segment for Marketers to start with as they are often connected to businesses and companies' networks. Information is organized in a 'how-to' style format written by professionals and subject matter experts.

Eg: Forbes Stock-Picking Community, HGTV Forums, Do It Yourself Chat-room

Educational

Educational networks are student oriented and enable collaboration with other students for help on academic projects, conducting academic research, or to interact with the teaching faculty. Services and products targeted at the student community are leveraging these networks as they are extremely popular.

Eg: The Student Room - A UK-based student community, The Math Forum - A large educational network for math students, ePALS School Blog - Connects school students from around the world to promote world peace, eLearners - A community for online degree students

Research

The research oriented social networks are academic in nature and greatly enable academic researchers to take up collaborative works.

Eg: ARPANET – US Defense Dept., Thomson Reuters Scientific Research, OVID Health Research, Connotea Collaborative Research, MIT Annotation Community

Hobbies

These networks are informal and have a mixed group of users. The sole objective of these groups is the common interest or passion. The whole community revolves around sharing information about the interests and gradually extends to other topics as well. The wide range of profiles, topics, geographies that these SNS cater to makes them highly popular.

Eg: GardenWeb, Automotive Forums, Sports Pundit, Spout Film Lovers Community

News

News related social networks are content driven and are about publishing "community content." Members generate interesting content in the form of news stories, commentaries etc but sometimes

the quality of the content is also very low as none who post the information need to be qualified writers. When left unmonitored, the conversations tend to get megalomaniac self-promotions.

Eg: Associated Content, Helium, Suite 101, Triond, NowPublic

| Users Type | Style of Use | Gender | Age | Typical Sites | No. of People |
|-------------------|--|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Alpha Socializers | Flirting, meeting new people | Mostly Male | Under 25 | Bebo, MySpace, Hi5 | Minority |
| Attention Seekers | Posting photos to get comments from others | Mostly Female | Teens to 35 (esp. mothers) | Bebo, MySpace, ICQ | Some |
| Followers | Keeping up with friends | Male & Female | All | Bebo, MySpace, Facebook, Hi5, ICQ | Many |
| Faithfuls | Finding old friends | Male & Female | 20+ | Facebook | Many |
| Functionals | Pursuing interests & hobbies | Mostly Male | 20+ | Facebook, MySpace, Bebo | Minority |

9. Business Models

The business models vary greatly based on the target audience. But the key success factor, in any business model apart from the content, is that it accomplishes emotional engagement with the members of the network.

MySpace

MySpace offers multiple options for creating home pages which at times can be termed as chaotic. The other unique point of the site with over 200 million registered accounts is, the music services over 3M bands and musicians registered on it.

It is also worth mentioning that MySpace has crossed MSN search engine in terms of traffic referrals to HMV.co.uk.

Facebook

Facebook, a social network that originated in US colleges worked on an open model where anyone was allowed to develop and run the application on the social network site at absolutely no cost. This encouraged members to not only play Scrabble, Farmville or Chess with each other but involve in an idea exchange by comparing each others' preferences and send 'virtual gifts'. This has become a treasure trove of product ideas in terms of the new ideas floating and vying for attention.

A few facts that underline the popularity of the site are: Users worldwide spend 3.0 billion minutes every day on Facebook. There are over 850 million photos and 5 million videos uploaded on to the site every month. More than 70% of members in Facebook are outside the U.S. as a result of which the site, for the convenience of its varied user base, has come up with over 35 translations.

Bebo

Bebo is specifically targeted at school and is grouped around schools and colleges. This has made it a success through the great membership numbers. This trend has surprisingly affected the viewership numbers of conventional media such as TV and magazines. This volte-face is definitely of significance to the Marketer as it is considered as the ultimate victory of social network sites in terms of popularity.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn, in terms of the user base, is the most mature network. It brings in professionals and business contacts onto a online platform. Usage of the basic services is free but all the extended services fall under different payment schemes. In spite of this closed approach, it stands on par to Facebook (open approach) in the professional category for people aged 25 and over.

Ning

Ning, a paid social networking site, comes with the tagline: "Ning: Create Your Own Social Network". Structurally it can be likened to wiki service or a WordPress installation. Members initially join a single service but later on move up to the many social groupings and networks

existing within Ning. This is all about many whole and discrete social networks rather than just mini-pages of any other network site. There is a degree of privacy that makes it popular with professionals in informal groups for discussions.

Orkut

Orkut is a clone of Friendster and is set up by Google. To match the popularity of Facebook and MySpace, Orkut has added applications to profiles, modernized its look and used Open standards. This helped in building a huge user base in Brazil, Asia, and India in particular.

Twitter

Though Twitter per se, is not an SNS, it needs a mention in this space as it allows users to follow each other for discussions and building social relationships. Twitter allows users to post updates in 140 characters and Twitter "hashtags" that create these live information streams are very useful from a Marketer's perspective.

The open API allows integration of Twitter updates into applications, mobile devices, gadgets, etc; that sit on other websites, social sites etc. This makes it very much a part of other SNS.

Cyworld

This has started before Myspace and Facebook and is an online social networking site initiated in Korea – one of the top countries in terms of SNS user base. It has over 90% penetration in the 20-29 year old market there. Members can create mini-homepages which they decorate using virtual items. Marketers need to note that users have contributed to 70% of revenue solely by purchasing virtual items such as furniture, household items, wallpaper, as well as music for decorating their mini-homepages.

Cyworld has a unique feature which gives members the ability to search outside of their first-neighbor networks by means of a function called first-neighbor waves. This function allows individuals to search and connect to the networks of their first neighbors.



The common thread observed in the above examples representing the unique business models adopted depicts:

- Usage of transparent and consistent communication
- Marketers being wary of the communication dynamics among friends/fans
- Extended engagements that go beyond the first interaction
- Limited scope of direct purchase for products / services through profile pages
- Benefits spread across all brands
- Significance in user comments and suggestions
- Creativity and innovative communication is critical for every engagement
- Converting members into brand loyalists rather than customers

10. The Big Questions

With marketing budgets getting hit badly in 2009, unlike others, social media marketing budgets have shown a positive growth in 2010. But even when there are so many positive signs, e-marketers find many questions looming large in their minds.

These questions can be grouped under three heads:

- (1) Strategy: What are the best tactics to use?
- (2) Metrics: How to measure the effectiveness of social media?

(3) Process: Where to start?

Strategy

To decide on the right strategy, the following questions need to be answered:

- Which SNS is most successful and has maximum popularity?
- How should it be leveraged?
- For forging on strategic partnerships with those in similar business, what should be the USP?
- What are the different ways to use SNS for building brand awareness and credibility?
How should the messaging be on status updates?

Metrics:

The first question that needs to be answered is, how to track the returns on social network sites?

This must be followed by:

- What are the key metrics that would correctly indicate the ROI in terms of customer satisfaction, revenues or brand loyalty?
- What are the returns on the resources needed to maintain the social network marketing effort?
- What are the industry benchmarks?

Process:

Before deciding on where and how to start, e-Marketers need to know the best practices in social media network marketing. After having a thorough knowledge on the best practices, one must decide on "what works?" based on their unique business objectives. The other questions that follow thereon are:

- How to make the message stand out in the noise?
- How many SNS should be used initially?
- What are the DO's and DON'Ts in SNS?
- How to meet the business objectives without spamming?
- How to make the messages viral?

Time: Social Network Marketing is a time-taking process. Hence, it is essential for marketers to decide on time allotment, constraints, facing time-related objections, etc.

Target Markets: How to reach the target markets based on demographics, geographies, channels and niche segments?

Traffic: In order to convert the marketing efforts into sales leads, marketers have to understand how to generate and drive traffic. They must also plan on how to reach larger audiences that are outside the current network. Most importantly, the strategy to drive more traffic to the company website using social network marketing should be well chalked out.

Implementation: It is advisable that first-timers approach it in a step-by-step fashion and gather all the know-how and tactical advice before plunging into the implementation stage. The knowledge base must cover the various features of every SNS that is selected and how these features must be enhanced to contribute to the success of the marketing efforts.

Apart from the above 3 categories, an e-Marketer must be aware of the latest social network trends and the future expectations of the end users. This knowledge helps in staying current with all the changes and taking on the big opportunities as they come.

11. Impact of Social Influence

Every marketer is as keen on catching the attention of members with a large connection network, as with those members who have the widest circle of influence.

The former are referred as “Max Connectors,” i.e., people with more than 500 social connections.

Consumers like to track brands and companies through social networks for very predictable reasons. While some get motivated by getting the first look at features of just-released products, most, especially Max Connectors, are interested in the beneficial pricing. A few others do it just to know more about the company and monitor and comment on it as stakeholders.

The roles that are taken by the members in a social network may overlap but they may be basically categorized as::

Influencers

Members from this category keep up with the latest brands and often make recommendations on products and services

Promoters

These are members who are primarily information dissipaters. They tell the other group members about new sites and features online.

Recruiters

These have the capability to make a disproportionately large number of other members visit their favorite sites

Organizers

They are mostly into arranging a lot of group events using their handhelds

Networkers

These members have high net worth as they have unusually large networks of online friends.

12. The Next Big Sales Channel

Social Network Marketing is all about tapping the biggest sales channel. The pivotal steps that would make this a possibility are:

Understand the members' psyche by studying their pages

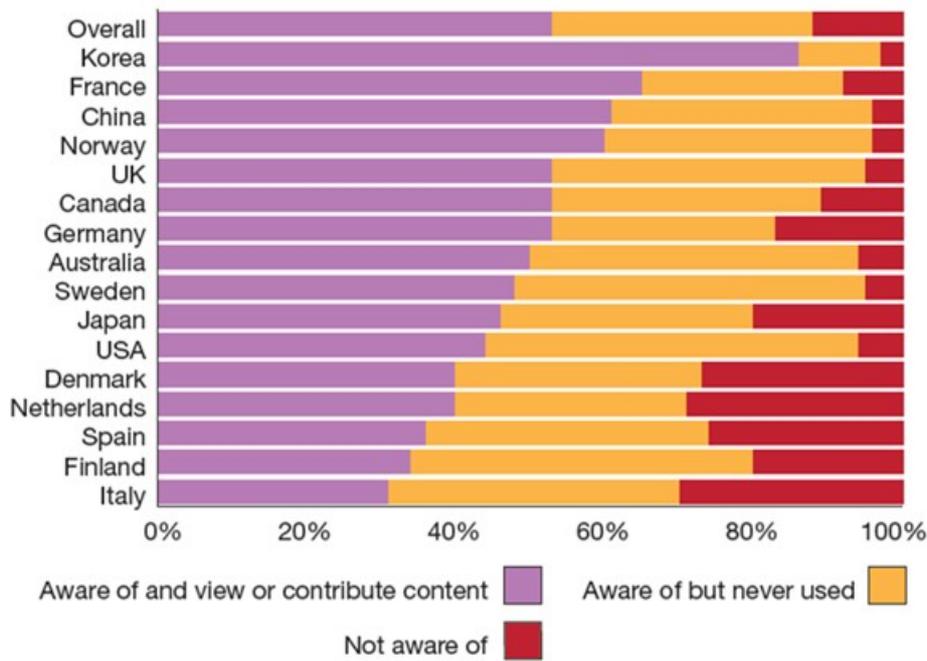
A thorough check on the supporters' pages gives the feel about what the network site is all about for its members. Additionally, one needs to study on how the pages are structured, how the galleries are organized, how the features are utilized, etc . This can also be done in the perspective of strategies adopted by competition.

Create a similar page for your own business

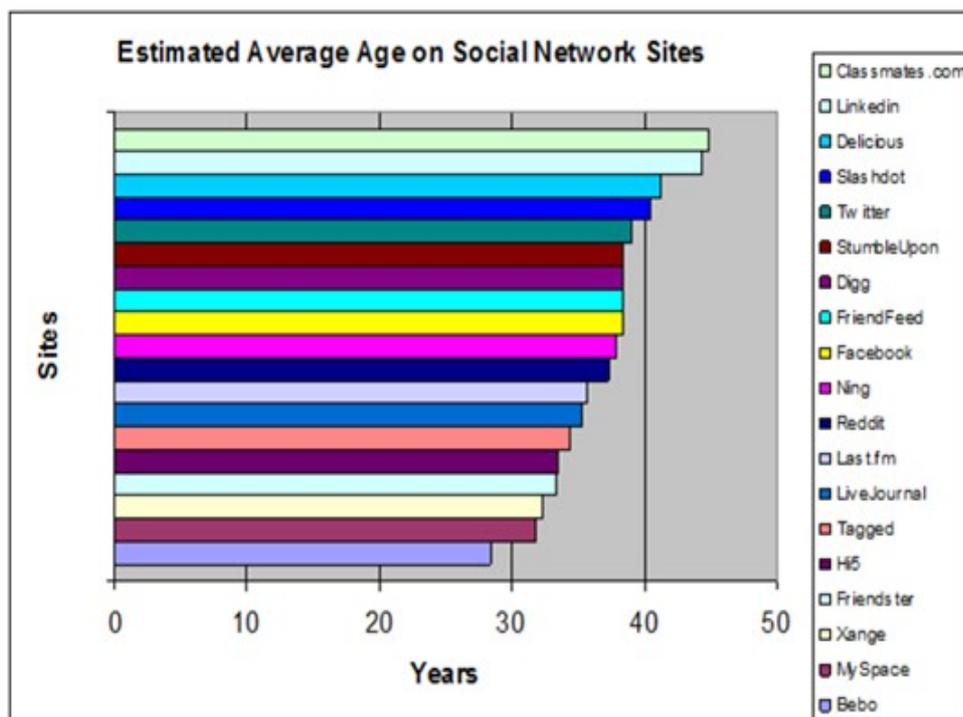
All social networking sites have the unique capability that results in a deep connection to the business or brand by its users. Customers actively voice their support by adding themselves as a fan, writing on the brand's Wall / Board, uploading pictures or joining in enthusiastic discussions with other supporters.

Gain insight on Social Network Marketing

Before taking the big leap, it is suggested that the marketer gets a deeper understanding on the entire concept of Social Network Marketing. The knowledge base must include the dos and don'ts of the implementation as well as the tools, benefits, user psychographics and study of various social network sites that are available. All this should give the e-marketer the capability to create a business presence through the social network sites.



Involvement in Social Networking Sites (%)



Adding Information

The initiative for Social Network Marketing includes adding basic information such as website, company overview, values and offerings. It is necessary to include the logo or a consistent picture and message that represent the business for publishing in the mini-web page.

Promoting the Page

After making a page which has high scope for member interactions, in terms of the open applications and other features, promoting the participation in as many sites as well as to as many customers and fans is important.

13. Mining Social Networks

To make the most of the social networks, businesses need to understand about 'engaging communication' - the ways to participate in the conversation and influence the message for a continued period of time. The more the members share the content about a business entity within their social network, the bigger would the consumer base of the entity become – with almost no effort and with zero spending.

The Maths

Scenario: An e-marketer has sent 1,000 contacts an email message that has a link that makes immediate posting of the message to a social network site possible.

The Conservative Estimate: If just 30 contacts post that message on their social networking site, say MySpace, and each of them have an average of 20 contacts in their social network, the message would have the potential to be viewed by 600 contacts! If a mere 10 percent of those contacts respond to the offer in the email since it had been recommended by a friend, the e-marketer would have a remarkable 60 conversions with zero additional investment.

A clear set of strategic objectives is the first step to mine social marketing sites. The goals entail user volumes, demographics, response patterns and actions that influence the brand image. After the attributes of the target member communities are defined, based on preferences, business challenges, commercial and business objectives they should be re-validated based on company's timelines, resources chosen, budgets allotted etc. It is more of matching the goals with actual effort / investments. Whatever be the chosen goals and strategic plans, they should include the following:

- Brand – Value over volumes should be the main concern

- Commerce – Avenues in which returns and gains can be felt should be finalized
- Customer Attitude – Member's opinions and preferences to be given priority to build stickiness into the site through engaged interactions
- Community Management – Must be a daily activity

Mining the potential in Social Network Sites is all about making the right decisions based on the information available, namely:

Highly Targeted Communication

Specifically targeted messages can be developed from the detailed user profiles available over SNS. These detailed profiles help the user connect with others who share similar interests and activities. Such granular Information is invaluable for marketers.

Descriptive statistics for the sample demographics (percentages)

Source: Communication Studies and Sociology, Northwestern University

Design The Right Campaign

A campaign can be considered 'right' if it results in the desired actions and creates sense of connection in its readers. This is the prime element that cuts off the noise and gives a competitive position to the company and its brand.

Build A Sustainable Brand Image

The brand image gets empowered through word-of-mouth communication on SNS.

The better the focus of the brand and its unique value proposition the more the chances of it emerging as a powerful brand. It is all about authenticity in the claims regarding the features and claims.

In mining, the customer's network value extends beyond the immediate acquaintances. Those acquaintances in turn influence other members of the group and so on recursively until potentially the entire network is reached.

14. Metrics in Social Networks

To make the giant leap, it is not sufficient to include Social Network Marketing into the company's Marketing Plan per se. Marketers need to benchmark the data to understand what works and what does not, and continuously fine-tune the strategy to steadily sail towards social marketing success.

The metrics that are considered for this purpose are:

- Click-through: the process of clicking on an online advertisement to move to the advertiser's destination. But sometimes, visitors may choose to type the company's name into a search engine box or enter the company's URL directly into the browser bar.
- Click-through Rate (CTR): The average number of click-throughs per hundred ad impressions, expressed as a percentage. The CTR measures what percentage of people arrived at the destination site by clicking on the advertisement.
- Conversion Rate: The percentage of visitors who take a desired action. It is about any activity beyond simple page browsing. Eg: Sales of products, registrations, newsletter subscriptions, downloads etc.
- Cost-per-action (CPA): This is an online advertising payment model in which payment is based solely on qualifying actions such as sales or registrations.
- Cost-per-click (CPC): The cost or cost-equivalent paid per click-through.
- CPM: Cost per thousand impressions.
- Customer acquisition cost: The cost associated with acquiring a new customer.
- Hit: Request of a file from a Web server.
- Hybrid model: A combination of two or more online marketing payment models.
- Impression: A single instance of an online advertisement being displayed.

- Page view - request to load a single HTML page.
- Pay per click (PPC): Online advertising payment model in which payment is based solely on qualifying click-throughs.
- Pay per lead (PPL): Online advertising payment model in which payment is based solely based on qualifying leads.
- Pay per sale (PPS): Online advertising payment model in which payment is based solely based on qualifying sales.
- Site stickiness: The amount of time spent at a site over a given time period.
- Unique visitor: Individuals who have visited a Web site (or network) at least once in a fixed time frame, typically a 30 day period.
- Web site traffic: The amount of visitors and visits a Web site receives.

15. Usage Patterns

In order to make the most of the marketing potential in Social Networking, it is imperative to understand how consumers adopt new kinds of physical products and new methods of communication. This gives a fillip to marketers on how they can adapt to the new method of communication.

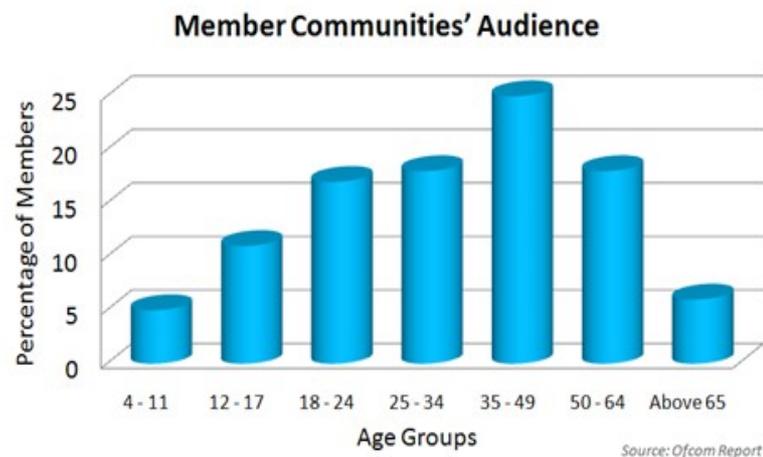
All the industries have realized the importance of social networking and increased their social network marketing budget significantly even when the overall marketing budget took a beating. The increase in the budgets ranged from 40% to 80%; internet based retailing ranked the highest, followed by media. Manufacturing, Travel and Computer hardware and software remained in the next level. Education and Healthcare took the final rung at 40%.

The budget allotment when further split up showed more than half of the allotment accounting for content development, staff salaries for blogging, social monitoring and about 20% allotted to external agencies and consultancies that enable social marketing services.

According to a survey conducted by Red Bridge Marketing, approximately one-third of the companies in the life science industry have incorporated social networking at some level in their marketing plan for 2009. This shows a more than 100% increase in companies that have used social networking in their 2008 marketing plan.

Facebook has emerged as the most popular social networking site for the student community. 70% of it has both a Myspace profile and a Facebook profile. On average the students are spending two hours a day on either Facebook or Myspace. They are also logging on to their individual social networking accounts an average of four times a day.

The other feature commonly observed was that men were more likely than women to be using social networking sites for dating and were more comfortable to share information about themselves. This is further proven by the fact that a men set their profile to private less often than woman and also tended to have more friends linked to their profile than women.



16. Marketing Tools

Among all the social media tools, social bookmarking sites are ranked the highest followed closely by Twitter in terms of interest generated in the marketing people. When the choice is confined to social network sites alone, the top two preferences of e-marketers based on the popularity of their

usage are: LinkedIn and Facebook in that order. But these are preceded by Twitter and Blogs, which are categorized broadly under social media sites.

Social bookmarking also called elaborately as social network marketing bookmarking is a prominent SEO generators. This effective tool, though a new technique, needs to be part of every Social Network Marketing strategy as it boosts up the company's search ranking.

In social bookmarking, users of social network sites use different "tags" for identifying and categorizing the sites visited. Sometimes, the site to be bookmarked suggests these tags based on other users' tags. Once tagged, they are shared with other users in the shared group on the website.

Book marking takes up the SEO ranking of the SNS remarkably. This is a relevant and efficient tool for increasing the ROI in Social Network Marketing as it also helps in back-linking blogs, websites and content pages to multiple SNS. Social network marketing bookmarking increases the visibility to new and extended network of people and is a time-saving tool for keeping track of relevant information.

The value of social network sites is defined by their page rank.

All those who have just started on Social Network Marketing use Facebook as the initiation tool. This is mainly because it has emerged as the number-one choice of most of the users. This is closely followed by Twitter and LinkedIn.

B2C businesses are also more focused on the usage of Facebook as compared to B2B who utilize blogs and LinkedIn.

17. SNS To Reckon

| Name | Description/Focus | No. Of Registered Users | Type Of Registration |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Advogato | Free and open source software developers | 13,575 | Open |
| ANobii | Books | | Open |
| aSmallWorld | European jet set and social elite world-wide | 550,000 | Invite-only |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|---------------------|
| <u>AsianAvenue</u> | A social network for the Asian American community | | Open |
| <u>Avatars United</u> | Online games | | Open |
| | General, Meet new people, | | Open to |
| <u>Badoo</u> | Popular in Europe and LatAm | 69,000,000 | people 18 and older |
| | | | Open to |
| <u>Bebo</u> | General | 117,000,000 | people 13 and older |
| | | | Open to |
| <u>Biggadda</u> | Indian Social Networking Site | 3,000,000 | people 16 and older |
| <u>BlackPlanet</u> | African-Americans | 20,000,000 | Open |
| <u>Blogster</u> | Blogging community | 85,579 | Open to |
| <u>CafeMom</u> | Mothers | 1,250,000 | moms and moms-to-be |
| <u>Cake Financial</u> | Investing | | Open |
| <u>Care2</u> | Green living and social activism | 9,961,947 | Open |
| | Not for profit providing free websites that connect family and friends during a serious health event, care and recovery. | | Open to |
| <u>CaringBridge</u> | | 9,500,000 | people 18 and older |
| | Mobile social game network, | | Open to |
| <u>Cellufun</u> | Number 8 US mobile website | 3,000,000 | people 14 and older |
| | | | Open to |
| <u>Classmates.com</u> | School, college, work and the military | 50,000,000 | people 18 and older |
| | Worldwide network for making connections between travelers and the local communities they visit. | | Open |
| <u>CouchSurfing</u> | | 1,560,459 | Open |
| | General. Popular in South Korea. | | Open |
| <u>Cyworld</u> | | 24,000,000 | Open |
| | People with disabilities | | |
| <u>Disaboom</u> | (Amputee, cerebral palsy, MS, and other disabilities) | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|-------------|--|
| <u>DailyBooth</u> | Photo-blogging site where users upload a photo every day | | Open |
| <u>delicious</u> | Social bookmarking allowing users to locate and save websites that match their own interests | 8,822,921 | Open |
| <u>deviantART</u> | Art community | 9,040,962 | Open |
| <u>Elftown</u> | Community and wiki around Fantasy and sci-fi. | 185,000 | Open, approval needed |
| <u>Epernicus</u> | For research scientists | | Open |
| <u>Eons.com</u> | For baby boomers | | Open to people 13 and older |
| <u>Experience Project</u> | Life experiences | | Open |
| <u>Facebook</u> | General. | 500,000,000 | Open to people 13 Years and up |
| <u>FilmAffinity</u> | Movies and TV Series | 250,000 | Open |
| <u>FledgeWing</u> | Entrepreneurial community targeted towards worldwide university students | | Open to university students |
| <u>Flixster</u> | Movies | 63,000,000 | Open to people 13 and older |
| <u>Flickr</u> | Photo sharing, commenting, photography related networking, worldwide | 32,000,000 | Open to people 13 and older (Yahoo! Login) |
| <u>Foursquare</u> | Location based mobile social network | 2,000,000 | Open |
| <u>Friendster</u> | General. Popular in Southeast Asia. No longer popular in the western world | 90,000,000 | Open to people 16 and older. No children allowed |
| <u>Geni.com</u> | Families, genealogy | 15,000,000 | Open |

| | | | |
|---|---|------------|--|
| <u>Goodreads</u> | Library cataloging, book lovers | | Open |
| <u>GovLoop</u> | for people in and around government | | |
| <u>hi5</u> | General. Popular in India, Mongolia, Thailand, Romania, Jamaica, Central Africa and Latin America. | 80,000,000 | Open to people 13 and older. No children allowed |
| <u>Hospitality Club</u> | Hospitality | 328,629 | Open |
| <u>Hub Culture</u> | Global influencers focused on worth creation | 20,000 | Invite-only |
| <u>Ibibo</u> | Talent based social networking site that allows to promote one's self and also discover new talent. | 3,500,000 | Open |
| <u>italki.com</u> | Most popular in India. Language learning social network. 100+ languages. | 500,000 | Open. Global. |
| <u>InterNations</u> | International community | | Invite-only |
| <u>Itsmys</u> | Mobile community worldwide, blogging, friends, personal TV-shows | 2,500,000 | |
| <u>Kaixin001</u> | General. In Simplified Chinese; caters for mainland China users | | Open to the General Public |
| <u>Kiwibox</u> | General. For the users, by the users, a social network that is more than a community. | 2,400,000 | Open to people 13 and older |
| <u>LinkedIn</u> | Business and professional networking | 75,000,000 | Open to people 18 and older |
| <u>LinkExpats</u> | Social networking website for expatriates. 100+ countries. | | Open. Global. |
| <u>Listography</u> | Lists. Autobiography | | Open |
| <u>Meettheboss</u> | Business and Finance community, worldwide. | | Open |
| <u>Mixi</u> | Japan | 24,323,160 | Invite-only |

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|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| <u>MocoSpace</u> | mobile community, worldwide | 3,000,000 | Open to people 14 and older |
| <u>MouthShut.com</u> | Social Network, social media, consumer reviews | | Open |
| <u>Multiply</u> | "Real world" relationships. Popular in Asia. Not popular in the western world | 10,000,000 | Open to people 13 and older. No children allowed |
| <u>MySpace</u> | General | 130,000,000 | Open to ages 13 and up. |
| <u>myYearbook</u> | General, Charity | 20,000,000 | Open to age 13 and up & Grades 9 and up |
| <u>Ning</u> | Users create their own social websites and social networks | | Open to people 13 and older |
| <u>Orkut</u> | General. Owned by Google Inc. Popular in India and Brazil. | 100,000,000 | Open to people 18 and older, (Google login) |
| <u>PartnerUp</u> | Social networking site for entrepreneurs and small business owners | 150,000 | Open and Free |
| <u>Pingsta</u> | Collaborative platform for the world's Internet Experts | | Invite-only, only Internet Experts |
| <u>Qapacity</u> | A a business-oriented social networking site and a business directory | | Open to people 16 and older |
| <u>Ravelry</u> | Knitting and crochet | 743,930 | Open |
| <u>ResearchGate</u> | Social network for scientific researchers | 400,000 | Open |
| <u>Ryze</u> | Business | 500,000 | Open |
| <u>Scispace.net</u> | Collaborative network site for scientists | | By invitation, but can request an |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|-----------------------------|
| Shelfari | Books | | invitation Open |
| StudiVZ | University students, mostly in the German-speaking countries. School students and those out of education sign up via its partner sites schülerVZ and meinVZ. General. Subject to quite some controversy about its e-mail marketing and privacy policy | 17,000,000 | Open |
| Tagged | Online Talent Network | 70,000,000 | Open |
| TalentTrove | Business networking | | Open |
| Talkbiznow | Online artistic community | | Open |
| Taltopia | Education / Learning / | | Open |
| TeachStreet | Teaching - More than 400 subjects | | Open |
| TravBuddy.com | Travel | 1,588,000 | Open to people 18 and older |
| Twitter | General. Micro-blogging, RSS, updates Social network that focuses heavily on artists, including musicians and photographers | 75,000,000 | Open |
| Virb | Blogging | | Open |
| Vox | For computer fans that want to discover new software and games | 100,000 | Open |
| Wakoopa | For readers and authors to interact & e-book sharing | | Open |
| Wattpad | Travel and lifestyle | 10,000,000 | Open to people 18 and older |
| WAYN | Books | 4,000,000 | Open |
| weRead | Blogs and "metro" areas | 27,000,000 | Open |
| Xanga | Social networking for office colleagues | | Must have company |
| Yammer | | | |

[Yelp, Inc.](#)

Local Business Review and
Talk

email

Open

18. **Infrastructure: The Prerequisite**

The emergence of social media and communication channels for marketing purposes depends on a set of underlying infrastructures which make or mark the adoption of the emerging social media to the organizations' marketing tactics.

Technological Infrastructure

Technological infrastructure makes the Internet work, so it is considered core of the service. It refers to the interconnected computers, servers, switches, routers and cables. The online networking system is exploited either to gain access to sensitive internal information or to disrupt an organization's marketing efforts. Attacks done through system probes and scans, root and account compromise, packet sniffing, and malicious programs are aimed at online communications with a focus on the technological infrastructure.

Economical Infrastructure

The next important infrastructural component is the economical infrastructure. It is commercial in nature as it involves competing for a limited pool of resources that creates "artificial" demand for "scarce" resources. It includes domain names, pay-per-click keywords, click frauds that drain the budget intended for funding legitimate advertising click-throughs, attacks on Servers etc.

The fast diffusion of social networking sites like MySpace, LinkedIn and Facebook indicates to marketers the importance of building a presence on these places before the competition/detractors usurp them.

If individuals or organizations fail to maintain their profile on such sites, they not only risk squatting but also risk being spoofed through additional profiles that mock or misquote them.

Regulatory Infrastructure

The lack of regulation inhibits "legitimate" users while encouraging mischief makers to pioneer new ways to bring in trouble! Regulation mitigates these vulnerabilities to attack individuals and

organizations. But the biggest lacuna is that there is no legislation that deals with the creation of fake profiles and the damage that it could cause. To ensure the maintenance of a fair play for all competitors on the other infrastructures and provide control over the usage of scarce resources it is crucial to have a firm regulatory infrastructure.

Since the technological infrastructure of the Internet is nascent, it is difficult to maintain appropriate industry self-regulation and government regulation, especially at the global level.

Community Infrastructure

For an e-marketer, the Internet holds promise only when consumers started using it as a mode of communication. The other three infrastructures hold good only when consumers accept and use the product or idea.

Until the Internet has enabled multi-mode communication through social networking in recent years, the promotional communication was primarily through traditional advertising – a company website or brand names and product information via banner advertising. But with social network marketing, marketers have taken to “buzz marketing,” “viral marketing,” “guerrilla marketing,” and other forms of “word of mouth” marketing that are based on social networking. The idea behind these kinds of campaigns is to reach those consumer segments that are distrustful of the conventional paid advertising.

Every marketer needs to understand the dynamics on these infrastructures in order full utilize the potential offered by social networking sites.

Viral marketing is to “let the behaviors of the target community carry the message.”

19. Key Points for Internet Marketers

Analysis of some of the influencing factors has brought out both the strengths and weaknesses. These influencers are discussed in detail, especially in terms of ‘pages’ and ‘groups’, as they would play a major role in the e-marketers strategy.

Administration

A group administrator can easily send messages to members of the group, making communication about the business easier and convenient. But the company pages on the sites do not offer much scope for mass invitations as in groups.

Familiarity

Most of the pages and features are relatively new for the users as they have taken shape recently. But since groups have existed from the beginning, users are very familiar with them. This familiarity, though not a critical factor, certainly influences the numbers to a page (relatively few) or a group.

Accessibility

Some of the features would be limited to only members. This would be a huge constraint when someone is searching for the business information/page on the social networking site may not find it until they join it as a member and get logged in. This is very true in the case of groups unlike pages which are widely accessible by all over the internet and hence give much wider exposures.

Application Library

An extensive application library largely stimulates the ROI by providing the flexibility of personalization and improved interactions. These could range from basic administrative features to discussion boards, photo galleries and walls or message boards.

Regularity

It is a huge plus to facilitate an active flow of conversations and interactions between the supporters. This requires multiple and regular visits by the e-marketer to moderate the discussions to the organization's benefit.

Visibility

An appropriate image or logo helps in creating better visibility on members' profiles. This holds significance in cases where the member is part of many groups making it difficult to stand out among all the others. So the logo design should not only be eye-catching but also consistent over both social network marketing sites as well as the organization's market communication.

Info Import

All applications that are used on the social network site must have the ability to import the RSS feed from the corresponding blogs in order to display all the new posts soon after it gets posted. This saves time and also limits the chances of missing important posts.

Tracking

Some of the social network sites provide page administrators with a tool that gives regular updates of how many visitors they are getting per day. Administrators also have the flexibility to define the time lines. This helps measure the effectiveness of the messages or campaigns undertaken.

Action Tracking

Actions if clearly documented give a detailed picture of how the supporters act on the contents of page – whether any action is taken, be it writing on the wall or posting a video. These actions get further documented on the news feeds of the member's personal pages and are open to be seen by their friends / connections. All the contacts / connections that are curious about the update may check the page. It is this additional network that the e-marketer can aim to tap.

Updates

Most of the social network sites are inadvertently limiting the potential of the messages sent by the page administrator by displaying them only on the side of the user's home page. According to study of the eye-movement of a web browser, this is considered as a weak zone and hence gets less attention. This limitation, wherever present, must be overcome with power-packed and catch messages that have very less probability of getting missed out.

To summarize, since there are some inherent variations in the sites, e-marketers should come up with alternative plans in their social network marketing strategies in order to make it effective all over. There are also some clear differences between features offered by the same site (eg: Facebook fan pages are definitely better suited for establishing long-term relationships with fans, readers, or customers, while Facebook groups are more suitable for hosting a quick, active discussion or for gaining quick attention). Specific plans to each of the social network sites can also be made based on the organizations line of business and the characteristic features of the site. This makes the strategy very sound and highly successful.

20. Cutting Through The Noise

Every e-marketer having realized the importance of social networks is joining the bandwagon, sometimes without much thought. This is diluting the marketing efforts and providing no actual benefits apart from presence on the social network site.

Here are the chief tenets that an e-marketer needs to follow to cut through this noise and brand the company and its products in a forceful manner:

Support Staff For Administration

Social Network Marketing completely relies on holding sway over the members through active interactions. This would get affected if there is any lapse in the administrative function. So if one of the Administration staff quits, it is always safe to have back-up support staff.

Page Settings

While configuring the 'page settings', the prime objective needs to be the participants' convenience. This factor greatly influences the number of participants on the page. A design with scope for more wall posts and discussions leads to meaningful activity by the members rather than limiting it to reading the updates or become a supporter / fan.

To have a substantial return on your investment (ROI), the focus should be on building a strong social network community that allows active participation of the fans.

Eg: Facebook Page launched in March 2009 is a successful tool that inspires online conversations around your organization's mission and programs.

Usage of Corporate Logo

It is very important to use the corporate logo as 'Page picture' to either brand the company / offerings or bring out the brand value. This technique builds more mileage and recognition to the organization's logo that may even supersede the recall value of the profile name. Hence there should be consistency in the logo usage on all social networking sites.

Updates

All website URLs that are listed in 'Update' (email functionality) must be suffixed with "http://" as this would enable visitors to go to the website with just one click by the automatic hyperlink.

Choice For Fans

For all the new entrants to the group, there needs to be an option to choose if they are interested to receive status Updates. Most of the social networking sites that did not have this option earlier have introduced it recently as this is a key feature that every e-marketer looks for.

Utilization of News Feeds

The application that would add and link up the organization to show up in the news feeds has to be added to the company page. This will ensure the ability to add/post links (to the company blog, web site, MySpace Page, Twitter profile etc) whenever any communication is sent.

Question To Activate Users

It is important to pose queries that would spark conversation and increase activity of the members on the page making the page community-friendly and dynamic.

Blog / Notes

It is necessary for organizations to have a blog. But in cases where it is not available, usage of an appropriate application ('Notes App' as in the case of Facebook) is imperative as it allows a blog to be run on the social network site. Notes are very similar to postings on a blog, as they are chronological with provision for supporters to comment and appreciate (thumbs up).

If the organization has a blog, the "RSS App" needs to be added and featured as a Tab. This allows automatic posting of blog articles on the respective social network page – on the wall and home pages of supporters.

Basic HTML

Use basic HTML extensively to jazz up the page with new boxes that include text, links and related images. Facebook provides "static FBML" for this purpose. This has been the most highly used application by the e-marketers.

Vanity URL

Most of the social network sites give a choice of picking URLs without any prerequisites. So pick a URL that is equivalent to the organizations website, that is choose one which is closest to the company's website address or other URLs that have been picked up in other social network sites. Social Network Marketing is all about maximizing the presence on the Internet while achieving a deep impact on users and their preferences through social network site participation.

Widgets

Select the code for the widget and embed it on the organization's website and blog. This will give status updates on corresponding pages of social network sites for all the supporters / fans. The widget feature has an important feature that allows members to join as supporters.

Build Partnerships

This feature is all about building internal associations within the social networking site. This is very close to 'add to favourites' feature and helps in extending the network exponentially.

21. The Future of Social Network Marketing

A rapidly increasing number of e-marketers are gaining the exposure to advance as competent practitioners from unsure novices with an urgency to achieve the marketing objectives at an improved ROI.

So far, marketers have approached the new medium of social networking sites thinking tactically. The sole objective seems to center on just gaining an additional channel to the marketing mix. The counter-intuitive results have shaken up the e-marketer to start thinking strategically about the objectives that were to be achieved.

The growth in social network marketing is very rapid putting the majority of businesses in the transition mode i.e., between the trial to strategic phases of the learning curve.

The key success factors for social network marketing are:

- A thorough research into social networking and its best practices
- Understanding the user-base to set up pragmatic objectives, tactics and tools
- Best practices for different industries, markets and demographics
- A meticulous social networking strategy

22. Conclusion

For e-marketers, social network marketing can be considered as equivalent to gold rush. The progress in this channel has been so rapid and stupendous that no company can ignore this in its marketing plan. Besides, with very low entry costs, most marketing departments are more than willing to adopt this while some are going a step ahead by establishing committed managers for their dedicated Social Network Marketing departments.