



## SOCIAL MEDIA - THE FUTURE OF MARKETING

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### Abstract

*In the cut throat competitive era, every business firm wants to have an edge over the other. All of them are looking for better ways to have maximum presence in the mind of customers and they find different ways to promote and sell their products, services & ideas. A new trend in the desired segment is Social media marketing by which companies increase the online visibility of their business and establish the brand. The more visible the business is, the more likely it is that people looking for their product or service will find you. The more familiar people are with the brand, the more likely it is they will purchase from them.*

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Search Engines.

### Introduction

Traditional advertising techniques include print and television advertising. The Internet has already overtaken television as the largest advertising market. The new way i.e. Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages sellers, buyers & information seekers to share it with their social networks. The resulting electronic word of mouth (eWoM) refers to any statement consumers share via the Internet (e.g., web sites, social networks, instant messages, news feeds) about an event, product, service, brand or company. When the underlying message spreads from seller to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself, this form of marketing results in ‘earned media’ rather than ‘paid media’. Social Media sites like Face book, Twitter, Delicious Foursquare, Google+, YouTube; Social Search Engines and Word Of Mouth & Buzz Search Engines are playing a vital role in this upcoming new era of marketing.

Social media marketing refers to the process of gaining traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media itself is a catch-all term for sites that may provide radically different, in contrast is a full-blown social networking site that allows for sharing updates, photos, joining events and a variety of other activities. Why would a search marketer — or a site about search engines — care about social media? The two are very closely related.

Social media often feeds into the discovery of new content such as news stories, and “discovery” is a search activity. Social media can also help build links that in turn support into SEO efforts. Many people also perform searches at social media sites to find social media content.

### Social Media Tips at Marketing Land

Marketing Land is the sister site to Search Engine Land that covers all facets of internet marketing, including social media marketing. At Marketing Land, you’ll find regular news coverage about social media marketing. It also offers three dedicated columns on the topic:

- Social Media Marketing
- Face book Marketing
- Twitter Marketing.

### New Social Media Marketing Trends In 2014

It is impressive how social media trends have dramatically progressed over the past few years. Social media marketing is becoming a powerful means of advertising products and services without having to sound like a salesman. What started out as a friendly or casual communication innovation has progressively grown to



professional communication involving businesses and enterprises? Now, being an essential element of Internet marketing, social media trends and their notable upcoming changes are something to look forward to in 2014. We will look at some of the most expected social media changes for 2014.

### **Google+**

Google+ will become a major factor and will dominate the social media market. Google+ now has the second highest number of monthly users, next to Face book. However, Google+ is not just another social network. Backed by a giant search engine, is an integral part of Google's grand scheme in terms of search engine optimization (SEO). It is not only good for social networking, but it is also vital to improve a business' online presence.

### **Images Will Have More Impact**

We have seen the massive increase of image sharing online and how it is proven to be more appealing to viewers than text based content. Visual content will continuously dominate the world of social media and become an important part of any strong content strategy. The rise of social media trends has been significantly affected by visual content (images and video).Contents with images is more likely to be shared and spread out faster than content that's stuffed with text only.

### **There Will Be More Investments In Social Media**

As a matter of fact, rising businesses are not complete without an online presence. This is their connection to the bigger population, which gives them freedom to reach out to a wider audience. Face book and Twitter have proven to be successful tools in spreading news and information to a global community much faster than word of mouth, literally. Therefore, there is no doubt that social media changes for 2014 will definitely show the change of attitude towards social media marketing. Businesses will find social media not as a luxury anymore, but a necessity to keep the business alive. Facebook and Twitter don't show any sign of declining; in fact, Twitter will gain more popularity because of its simplicity and user friendliness in addition to celebrities constantly promoting it. Change is constant; as they say. It is essential that we are aware of these social media changes for 2014 so we can put on the right mindset and create strategies to better handle them and succeed in online marketing.

### **2014 Social Media Marketing Trends**

It was a busy year for the social media industry. In 2013, we saw the teen demographic leave Facebook for other networks that better capture their attention and don't yet have the entire family engaged. Twitter added video to its repertoire by purchasing Vine, the mobile video app, on top of the announcement that it's going public. In response, Instagram added video, and more recently launched sponsored images in users' newsfeeds. Finally, as a fellow coworker pointed out, 2013 is arguably the year when GIFs hit it mainstream, bringing humor and creativity to social activity.

With all of the changes, announcements, acquisitions; what can we expect next year in the digital world? Below are my three key trends to keep an eye on in the social media space for 2014.

### **Google+ Emerges as a Serious Player**

The platform is still not taken as seriously as it should be, but 2014 will be a year of substantial growth for this underrated platform. Aside from the SEO benefits, Google+ offers a lot of functions that other networks don't have, such as Communities, Hangouts and the ability to share specific content with targeted groups – not to mention its obvious connection to the world's number one search engine. There is an enormous increase in interaction on Google+. Engagement has risen, and with it, so has the ability to build circles as more people join the network. The speed at which you can gain followers on G+ still doesn't compare to Twitter, but steady growth seen throughout the past year should only go up as people continue to incorporate Google+ in their daily dose of social.



### **+Communities**

2013 was also the year when G+ introduced us to Communities. These are very similar to the Groups feature that LinkedIn offers, but I have personally seen greater success participating within G+ communities than LinkedIn Groups. Before Communities began, it was hard to promote interaction on the platform, but engagement and follower growth has consistently increased since they were introduced.

### **+New features for Google+ Hangouts**

Google rolled out a number of updates that will make the social network more user-friendly for 2014, including improved local sharing, a better way to share visual content and other new features to improve curtain. If your business has not yet dived into the platform, the turn of the New Year is the perfect time!

### **The Evolution of SoLoMo & Rise of New Networks**

A combination of the words social, location and mobile, SoLoMo explains where the digital world is heading and how to best share content with audiences in the future.

Obviously, social is a key part of sharing and distributing content, but moving forward, location and mobility are going to be key to the formula. We always talk about how “Content is King,” but the newer concept is that context actually trumps content. The digital space is evolving rapidly, and to be successful, content must be proximate, relevant and in the right location.

Mobile is becoming an increasingly important platform for marketers, with over 133 million registered smart phones in the U.S. This statement might be met with some pushback, but watch for Snap chat to be the breakthrough social platform of 2014. I’m not saying that it’s worth \$3 billion, but it does offer many possibilities and it could be a source of untapped consumers for your company.

Some brands have already seen this and are moving forward. The online food ordering company, Grub Hub, has been extremely creative with Snap chat. The campaign has given the brand a personality on social, helped it to stand out and encouraged follower engagement.

Grub Hub uses Snap chat to drive people back to other social platforms, display discounts and revealed what goes on behind the scenes at the company. I have received holiday-themed snaps for Halloween and Thanksgiving, as well as general promotional snaps. These are all great examples of how Grub Hub is using the channel to relate to consumers and produce relevant content.

As a sports fan, I also recommend following the New Orleans Saints on Snap Chat. The team offers an exclusive look into what goes on in the locker room, and it also sends fans messages from individual players.

### **Visual Content will be a MUST in your Content Strategy**

Image-based updates have 600 times higher engagement rates than posts that contain only text and video content is close behind. This gap is only going to get smaller moving into 2014. Whether its info graphics, GIFs, still images or video, visual content is driving more interaction throughout social. This is not to say that text or other content types aren’t worth sharing, but visually appealing posts are likely to become the bread and butter of content strategies.

Plain text can be downright boring at times, hence why adding visual content to online strategies, posts or blogs is extremely important. This captures reader attention and keeps visitors engaged. Eighty-nine percent of people between the ages of 18 and 34 watch online video content once a week and in 2014, this number will easily surpass the ninety-percent mark. Not only will visual content be vital to successful strategies, but so will personalization. Businesses that go the extra step to tailor content will better resonate with consumers.

### **Social revolutions: Here this year, Revamped the next**

The social space is constantly changing, and what might be a hot topic today could be old news tomorrow. These three trends are just some of many that will be important for marketers moving into the New Year. There



will certainly be new topics, networks, apps and ideas in 2014 that marketers haven't even thought of yet, and that is what makes this industry so exciting.

### **11 Web Marketing and Social Media Trends That Will Shape 2014**

2014 is going to be a killer year for Social Media and Small Business. Social Media allows small businesses to leverage technology to even the playing field with bigger brands and companies. In 2014, some of the trends we saw in 2013 will continue to rise while others will fall. But it all comes down to how you communicate with your customers, how you leverage relationships, and of course how you share GREAT content. Content is what businesses are built on today. It always has been and always will be.

1. **Mobile Is About To Go Mainstream:** Every website needs to be optimized for mobile. This means having responsive design and thinking about how people interact with your business via mobile devices should be one of your top priorities. As a small business it's time to make the switch to a mobile site if you haven't yet, and think about ways that you can get in front of your customers through their phone. Yes, this includes Mobile Apps, SMS, and emails that are designed to be viewed on your cellular phone.
2. **Niche Sites Will Make An Impact:** As Facebook, Twitter, and Google Plus make it harder to get found organically, niche sites are going to prove to be more valuable than ever to get in front of your customers. Not only are niche sites highly targeted, they can also provide a much more affordable solution for advertising.
3. **Blogging Will Remain The #1 Way to Generate New Business:** Creating great content on a regular basis and driving traffic back to your site is going to remain the number #1 way to generate new leads. This means as a small business, if you don't have a blog yet, it's time to start one.
4. **Spammy Content Will Be Eliminated Everywhere:** We've seen it happen on Google and now it's happening on Face book. Spammy content is not going to get you anywhere, and the big sites are cracking down. Think about creating valuable content that resonates with your customers.
5. **Google Plus Will Grow Faster Than Ever:** G+ is my new favorite social network. With the search benefits from Google and the increased user base, it's likely that your audience will be making the move from Face book to G+. Being a step ahead of the game is a good idea. Plus, they are about to launch promoted posts (+Post ads) that will get your content to a larger audience than ever before.
6. **Triggered Emails Will Increase Sales:** Consumers are looking to connect with brands and by providing custom content for them based on their behavior is going to help you increase your sales.
7. **Ambassadors And Influencers Will Hold The Power:** Influencer marketing and word-of-mouth marketing is going to be one of the most powerful ways to get in front of customers in a new way. By empowering your best customers to spread the word for you, you can gain trust in a new audience and hopefully turn them into new customers.
8. **Image-Centric Sites Will Continue to Rise:** Instagram, Interest and probably many more sites will come about in 2014 that are based around images. While text is not dead, you need to think of ways to incorporate images into your strategy that compliment your written context.
9. **Video Consumption Will Increase:** Whether it's an educational video or an ad, consumers will look to video content to learn about businesses. Video will continue to create meaningful relationships between business and consumer. Think video customer service here. Oh, and many times they will be watching video on their mobile phone.
10. **Sharing Will Be More Important Than Ever:** Social media sharing will be get ramped up and everyone and their mother will be doing it. While this is a good thing for getting your content shared, it also presents challenges to get found. The key here is to communicate to your customer directly and relevantly and you'll be found. Plus, it's going to help your search rankings.
11. **Marketing Will Be About Adding Value:** It's no longer about pushing yourself out there, it's about how you provide value to your customer that matters. Whether this is through blogging, video, or email marketing, in order for people to stay engaged, they have to perceive value.



### **Conclusion**

Marketing tools are changing as the market is changing. Internet & the new social media concept are taking the challenge to tap the global market with minimum efforts. So to get maximum footfall for one's product, marketer is using as much as they can the "Social Media Weapon".

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