

Use Social Media And Smartphone- Tethered World To **Your Advantage**



By Matt Perosi

Social media has transformed the way many of us live. As a society, we've traded verbal conversations for terse text conversations and deluges of selfies. With a smartphone-tethered life, it's second nature to use social networks as a way to keep our friends and family informed. Simply share important moments in your life to social media and let them casually discover your latest personal news. This is the new way to stay connected.

Each social network has a unique culture and method to express our feelings. While I don't often recommend it, some social networks allow you to cross-post to another network at the same time. Last night, one of my friends posted a selfie to Instagram showing his visit to a lake. This morning I saw the same photo that he cross-posted from Instagram to Facebook and it reminded me that my interest was piqued last night. This morning my curiosity led me to his Facebook page where I discovered more photos of his trip to the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, which is on Lake Lemman.

It's important to realize that I didn't log into Facebook this morning with the intention of looking at lake and jazz festival photos, but I was drawn back into his life and commented on

several photos. In the early days of Facebook, it was common for people to log in once a day to rapidly post several status updates, photos, and shared links, then quickly log off believing they had just shared important stuff with their friends. Although Facebook now hides this type of bad behavior, I've noticed that most people have developed good social media skills in the recent years. There's a more discerning approach to what is appropriate for each network, and how often to post.

I find it interesting that, on a personal level, most people now seem to understand how to use social media to keep their friends connected. Yet, the same people are confused by how to use it for their business. Perhaps the mental barrier occurs because, as a business owner, you want to either sell something or pay for an ad to sell something. Instead of paying for an ad to appear, which is a "push strategy" to reach customers, new marketing techniques place interesting information and images where people can easily find them by following an online breadcrumb trail of discovery. This change to a "pull strategy" is confusing and creates that mental barrier.



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Naturally, the big difference between using social media for business and pleasure is that, as business owners, we need to eventually make money from our social activity. When using your business accounts, don't spend time commenting on your customer's personal activity; save that time for when you need to reply to comments they leave on your business posts.

I've seen successful sales that started with a 1-to-1 conversation on a Twitter and Facebook. While there will always be services offering e-commerce methods through social networks, most notably Facebook, I've not seen any retail jeweler have success when using them. For the last few years, the most popular Internet marketing buzz words have been "brand" and "engagement," yet no one bothers to explain what they really mean. A "brand" is simply your business. The old concept of branding or brand awareness has been shortened to refer to how you portray your business online through all methods of marketing, social media, and other visibility methods. The word "engagement" refers to the process of customers discovering what you post online, their comments about your posts, and how you reply to their comments. This engagement process is also referred to as a "conversation."

That "conversation" is how the "pull strategy" of marketing works. In practice, you have to put information on your website

to fully detail the service or product you are selling. That information needs to include photos, product descriptions, stories, reviews, and even videos. You will need a lot of photos shot on something more than a simple white background. Share different parts of the stories to different social networks, using different photos too. Those interested in your product will notice you and follow this breadcrumb trail to discover more. You never know where the path of social discovery will start, which is why you need to pay attention to any comments made on your social accounts. Your initial posts, their comments, and your replies back make up that social engagement process, which eventually leads all people back to your website, or in your store, where you can make a sale.

With the push strategy of marketing you allow your business to use social media in a similar, more natural way that reflects common personal usage centered on discovery and story telling.



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Matthew Perosi reports the latest Internet trends and methods that are most relevant to the jewelry industry in his 5-day per week newsletter, available through jwag.biz. Tap into the more than 1,100 free newsletters to guide you towards better usage of websites, social, and mobile. Matthew invites your feedback and questions at matt@jwag.biz or 973.413.8211. Many questions from TRJ readers have turned into great newsletter topics.

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