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Social Networking Has Everyone A-Twitter

These Two Social Media Experts Share Their Insights on Getting Connected Through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and the Rest to Take You to the Next Level of Communication: **Dave Meyer** of BizzyWeb and **Tara Jacobsen** of Marketing Artfully.

Social Networking Has Everyone A-Twitter

These Two Social Media Experts Share Their Insights on Getting Connected Through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and the Rest to Take You to the Next Level of Communication.

From the Publisher: In the past year all of us have experienced how fast a new e-trend can arrive. We went from “What’s Twitter?” to “Yes, I Tweet” at lightning speed. Introductions are over. It’s now time to move from dabbling to full implementation. To examine this topic for our readers, New Business Denver approached these two experts to write about the latest trends and strategies: Tara Jacobsen of Marketing Artfully and Dave Meyer of BizzyWeb.

They will share more information in a free interactive workshop from 3 to 5 p.m. in March. New Business Denver will hold its monthly Startup Meetup networking event immediately following the workshop.

For more information and to register and RSVP go to: www.brandnewstartups.com.



Integrated Social Media

What Next? Getting the Most Out of Your Online Marketing.

By Dave Meyer

*Special to New Business
Denver*

Social media is an amazing tool for marketing a new business. Tools like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn allow cash-strapped startups a way to generate buzz and engage their prospects and customers on a more personal level.

But even with free tools, there’s always a cost. It takes time to connect with your fans, share ideas about your products, listen to what your customers are saying, or network with prospects and referral sources.

Here’s the good news. There is a trick to consolidating your social media efforts. When it’s done right, updating your social networking accounts can be done through a single tool – your website.

Just as it doesn’t make sense to force your customers to connect with you only one way – you probably wouldn’t limit customers to just connecting over the phone for example, or just through a contact form on your website – effective communication in today’s world requires you to be where people are.

The companies who are best able to reach out and connect are the ones

who are seeing real results.

Social media tools each serve a slightly different purpose. Twitter is great for keeping up with experts in any given field and marketing ideas. LinkedIn is the go-to spot to find talent and network with professionals. Facebook is where 250 million people go to connect with old friends.

Couple the confusion of which network does what with the tools your company already uses – emails, your website, traditional advertising and even in-person networking or sales calls – and it’s easy to see why so many are overwhelmed by it all.

However, a well-designed website using a tool like WordPress can do much of your social media connecting for you.

WordPress is an open-source content management system that allows users to logon to their own website from any browser and publish news articles (or posts), manage pages and add multimedia content with ease.

Since it was originally created as a “blogging” platform, the community of developers that created it built in the capability to interact with visitors in a personal way. Articles you post to your website can automatically publish to each social site using simple plugins, and search engine optimization is handled seamlessly.

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Word Of Mouth Marketing Is Back!

How to Get Started with Social Networking for Your Small Business.

By Tara Jacobsen

Special to New Business Denver

Most small business owners are great at something, which in turn fuels the courage needed to start a business. And most are weak at something as well, which is usually marketing and selling their product or service aggressively enough to make sales right off the bat.

Traditionally, many new businesses have relied on word-of-mouth marketing to get their message to potential clients. The upside: it's effective and affordable. The downside: in the past it was a slow and arduous process that could take months or years to build a solid clientele. The upshot: its value as a marketing tool has faded some over time.

Luckily for business owners starting word of mouth marketing is back with a vengeance thanks to a host of free tools that can produce results much faster, from years down to months, days or even minutes.

Here's a great example of how it can work. Imagine you are a fabulous hairdresser who just opened a shop and you want to get the word out about how you are the best at making women look and feel great with the perfect haircut.

You have signage on the front of your shop, take out an ad in the local newspaper and print business cards so your customers can share the word about your store. Then you sit and wait.

What if, instead of waiting, you set up a Facebook business page that talked about great haircuts, reviewed which stars' hair looked good or bad at the golden globes, AND offered discount coupons for getting your hair cut at the hot new salon that just opened down the street?

Then imagine that you could talk to hundreds of people at once about hair. People in your community who were also excited about looking their best and who had the opportunity to "share" your enthusiasm with their "friends" just by clicking a button?

Social networking using Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter have given small business owners the tools they need to do old-fashioned word-of-mouth marketing on a large scale in a short time.

How To Get Started – 5 Easy Steps

Many clients who come to me for help with social media and social networking are stymied. What to use? What steps to take? How to do it? And just plain where to start? Based on my experience helping them along, here is my list of five easy steps you can take to get the ball rolling:

Step One – Sign up for Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Make sure you fill out all the fields that you can as this is how people are able to find you.

Step Two – Search for all of your "real" friends and customers on Facebook. Limit adding people to 10 a day so that you do not make Facebook unhappy. Do this for 30 days and you should have about 300 "friends."

Step Three – Use the free tool Twellow.com to find people in

your surrounding communities who use Twitter. You can "follow" between 50 to 100 people a day on Twitter without being labeled a spammer. When you follow people, they will generally follow you back, so within 30 days you should have about 1,000 followers.

Step Four – Set up a free account at Hootsuite.com. This service allows you update Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter all at once from one place. It also allows you to schedule your updates in advance so you can pop in a couple of times a week and talk to your community all week long.

Step Five – Be active! Have you ever been to an in-person networking event where "the new guy" runs up to everyone and tries to sell them his product or service? He



comes to the group one time and then gives up because "networking doesn't work." Many small business owners do the same thing online. They do not realize that they have to get involved and "talk" with people, getting to know them before trying to sell them.

Bonus

Step – Some of you who are learning about

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Word Of Mouth Marketing Is Back!

networking online for business many be saying to yourself, “But you never even mentioned having a Business Page on Facebook.”

Do not get me wrong, a Business Page is the best way for you to market your business on Facebook (in fact according to the terms of service it is really the ONLY way you should market your business on Facebook).

However, putting up a business page without doing any of the other steps first will guarantee that you are like the new guy networker – you will show up, yell “buy something,” and then disappear.

Online Networking is not going to replace traditional marketing. As a small busi-

ness owner you still need to have a blog or website, business cards and a logo. You still need to have a great product to sell that is competitively priced and provide fabulous customer service. You still need to attend in-person networking events and talk about your business.

The difference is, now you will take all those business cards you have collected and add those people as “friends” on Facebook, see if they are “tweeting” on Twitter and “connect” with them on LinkedIn. This will allow you to continue the conversation long after the event is over and most other people have lost touch.

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Tara Jacobsen of Marketing Artfully works with entrepreneurs and small business owners, helping startups get off the ground and established businesses reach the next level using traditional marketing services as well Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and more. She can be reached at: 720-334-8088

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Become a fan at:

www.facebook.com/marketingartfully.

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Integrated Social Media

With every post you’re getting the word out effectively, and engaging your prospects at every step.

Advantages of using a tool like WordPress to integrate your social media efforts include:

- Automatically publish your news to LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook fan pages.
- Search Engine Optimization – more links to your site equal higher rankings.
- Your site’s visitors will be able to easily share your content with others.
- Multimedia integration – video and audio are a snap to setup and share.
- You own your own data (if LinkedIn or Facebook go down or decide to close your page, your data is gone).
- Allow your visitors to comment on your articles (subject to your approval of course).

Another advantage of WordPress is that it puts you in the driver’s seat of your site. You don’t need to call your web developer to make changes. You just sign in from your browser and with a few clicks you can introduce your latest product or announce a new special.

Customers, clients and prospects expect to be part of a conversation with businesses

– posting a press release and calling it a day doesn’t cut it anymore. Your customers want to ask questions and provide feedback. They want be the first to know when something new is coming. And they want to do it on whatever network they prefer.

Spend the time to setup a system to communicate automatically to your social media networks, and you’ll slash the amount of time you spend cross-posting to each network individually. A professionally designed website that is built to leverage social media and integrate your efforts will make generating buzz a lot easier.

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Dave Meyer is the president and owner of BizzyWeb, a company that creates WordPress-powered websites designed to integrate with social media. BizzyWeb also offers social media training webinars and consulting services. He is a frequent speaker on social media topics He can be reached at bizzyweb.com, or follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/dave1meyer>.

Use social media to add buzz

LinkedIn

- Publish your updates via LinkedIn apps
- Add your website to your profile
- Add to discussions in groups, post news articles to your updates

Facebook

- Link to your articles in your profile updates
- Add to discussions
- Offer special deals to your fans

Twitter

- Cross-post articles to your time line
- Offer special offers to your followers
- Immediate, unfiltered feedback and market research