

Social Media in Business

What is Social Media?

Essentially Social Media is any source of virtual media that allows people to interact with each other.

Why is Social Media important?

The world is changing, and the way we do business is changing with it. More and more people interface with online social mediums every day. The internet is becoming a way of life. Every day business giants jump on the social media bandwagon and create new social media campaigns. Consumers have begun to expect companies to be social media friendly.

Smart-phones, iPads, and netbooks are just some of the technology that's making social media more prevalent. That's important because more and more people are using the technology. Grandparents are Facebooking, parents are uploading videos to YouTube, more and more people are Tweeting. Your market is expanding their horizons, will you be a part of it?

Social Media Mainstays

The 3 big players in social media today are Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. More people are using them than you may imagine.

Facebook for example, has recently claimed 25% of webpage visits. That means 1 out of 4 web pages that people are looking at when they're online today, is on Facebook. That's Huge. There are billions of websites, and this One site accounts for a quarter of the traffic.

YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world. How are you a part of that?

Twitter has just been purchased by Facebook, which we've already established, is huge in the online world.

How can you get started in Social Media?

There are 3 steps to establishing a social media plan for your business.

1. **Research** – Gather information on your target audience. Determine their social media use. And discover the competition you've got on that platform.
2. **Objectives** – Define the objectives you want to accomplish, your overall goal for your target audience. And establish the appropriate metrics to gauge when those objectives are accomplished.
3. **Actions** – Create your social media based marketing strategy with the specific tactics you plan to employ to accomplish your goals.

But What Does That Mean?

Basically you want to figure out what your prospective tours are doing online, figure out your end game, then work backwards to figure out how to get there.

I'll tell you right now that your prospective tours are at the very least exposed to Facebook. Most of them are already using it.

We ran a test at The Club Resort on Lake Gaston in Virginia. We created a Facebook page for the resort. We were hesitant at first because we didn't think many members would even have Facebook accounts. But in just a few short weeks we had over a hundred members on our Facebook page...without any promotion.

How Can You Use Social Media With Your Resort?

Toyota has recently launched a campaign that's genius. They run commercials on television, radio ads, and multiple online ads talking about every Toyotas' story. They say "Every Toyota has a story, log on to Facebook.com/Toyota and tell us yours."

What do you think that does? Toyota has gotten thousands of testimonials (3rd party stories) from members for the world to see, and for Toyota to use in whatever way they please. It's great press, and it instills solidarity in their customers. It's a great way to build brand loyalty.

Would you like to have your members never even consider going to another resort? Would you like them to brag to their friends about your resort? Would you like to harvest hundreds of member testimonials for your Sales Reps to use on the table? Then run that campaign on Facebook for your resort. If you've been keeping up at all with the Quick-Tip videos (or know a thing or two about sales) on the RDA Support site

you've learned that 3rd party stories are one of the most powerful sales tools in the world.

Here are a few to try:

- "Every RV has a story, tell us yours"
- "Every family has a favorite [your resort here] story, tell us yours"
- "Every family has a holiday RV story, tell us yours"

7 More Ideas To Incorporate Social Media With Your Resort

We're going to work towards a Social Media series for the Vault and the RDA Support site, and this is an introductory report, so we won't go into great detail here. Here is a list of possibilities for you to consider. As we get deeper into Social Media we'll explore each of these in detail, and may even provide step-by-step instructions so that you can follow along.

Here's the list:

1. Promote upcoming events on your Facebook page
2. Tweet promotions for the weekend to your members
3. Tweet restaurant specials to your members
4. Have members submit family videos at your resort for your YouTube channel
5. Have members submit resort/event photos to your Facebook page
6. Gather member testimonial videos for your YouTube channel
7. Have members submit direct testimonials to your Facebook page

In Summary

Social Media is not a fad. It is real it's here, and it's not going anywhere. Run towards the new technologies and embrace them. Social Media is an extremely cost effective, easy to manage, marketing medium.