



## High Seas or Smooth Sailing: Social Media for Smaller Businesses and Non-Profits

By Rebecca Hoffman

“I don’t get social media”

“We don’t really have anything to say on Facebook, Twitter or other social media outlets”

“Who has time to keep up with social media?”

“How do we turn our efforts with social media into profitable actions?”

Ahhh....social media...you have probably heard a nauseating amount about social media and how important it is to your business. Yet, you still wonder, “is it really that important”?

It is. Here’s why.

Not so long ago people read the daily paper for local news, insights and information about their world. They also read weekly news magazines and watched the nightly news. Most people under 40 don’t do much of this anymore. Your up-and-coming stakeholders, ie: the next generation of customers, donors and fans are not learning about you from traditional media outlets. They are, instead, creating their own news streams on facebook, twitter, and other social media sites which they very much use to keep up with organizations and businesses they care about.

I could go on *ad nauseum* about the information revolution but why waste time talking about it? Instead accept that meaningful information, once the content of newspapers and magazines and newscasts, is now in the hands of each individual to braid together into their own personal news stream/channel. You want to be part of this.

Some considerations for smaller businesses and non-profits:

1. Think of the new media as a free or low-cost opportunity to broadcast your value proposition or mission. Through these vehicles you get to tout why you are the best, why your products or services matter and how you are having impact on the world. Your audience then gets to know about all this directly and quickly and when you want them to do so. How nice!
2. If you fear social media I recommend you wade into the water, and no it is not stormy, but yes it is churning and select a social media outlet and start small and build your efforts as you become more familiar with it.
3. Create a presence for your business or organization. Begin talking to your audience by stating the obvious. Tell them about your depth and breadth. Offer them an incentive. Announce a discount or premium if people mention the post when interacting with you. Poll your fans as your audience grows. Give a professional tip if you are in the service industry. Point to an interesting article that supports or expands your space or position. Re-state your value proposition in bite-size pieces that resonate with your audience’s affinities. Do these things and you are off and running!

4. No time to post messages? No problem. You can do a few things to make this manageable. You can ask a staff member to create a schedule of when postings will go live or you can retain services like Good Egg Concepts to do this for a nominal charge. Either way you will know when your messages are launching and even what messages are launching.
5. Once you have postings out in the universe don't be afraid to graciously interact with your stakeholders and customers. You may glean insights from them you never knew were important and this can inform your business practices.
6. Consider the realm of social media choices and start small. Choose one. Develop that presence first and build your social media presence from that initial cornerstone.

Yes, things are changing and communications have never looked more fractured. Where once a simple press release was sufficient now many other seemingly redundant social media posts are needed to get your message across to the audience. But, people are listening to you, looking for you, waiting for you to tell your story in simple, engaging ways. There has never been a better time to toot your own horn and blast your message from the proverbial mountaintops. You can do it! And if you feel you can't or you need more help, call us....we love helping people communicate over the social media channels.



#### **About Good Egg Concepts**

**Based in Chicago, Good Egg Concepts is a communications consultancy focused on providing compelling communications, marketing strategies and creative services to businesses and organizations. Led by Rebecca Hoffman, Principal, we form creative teams as needed by specific projects. Everything we do, we do with a sense of humor and purpose and always with a watchful eye for your bottom line. Contact us to learn more about how Good Egg Concepts can help you.**

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