

Social media – no longer an optional piece of your internet marketing puzzle

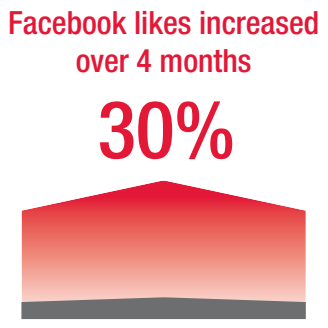
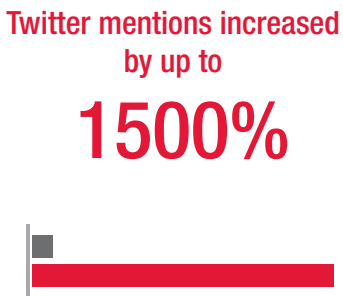
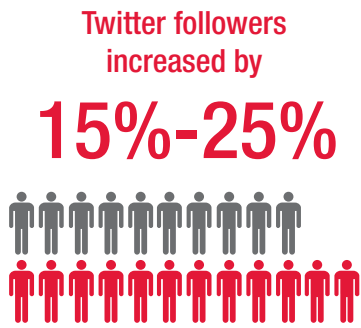
Let eBridge step into the equation

Companies left, right and center are jumping on the social media bandwagon and for good reason. Social media networks have exploded and show no signs of slowing down. Social media has become a huge part of how individuals around the world consume content and interact on the internet.

- More than 1 billion people – or roughly 70 percent of the online population – use social networks.
- 600 million use a social network daily; 58% (more than 400 million) of Facebook users login in daily.
- 50% of social network users are connected to brands

(Source: Research from InSites Consulting courtesy of TechCrunch, 2011)

eBridge has achieved the following improvements for our clients



The numbers are impressive and point to the great potential of social media networks. Pair this with the fact that 90 percent of consumers trust peer recommendations (Nielsen, 2009) and it's not hard to understand how businesses are waking up to the potential of social networks for promotion and brand awareness.

A well-maintained social media presence also contributes to your search engine marketing efforts. Social networks carry significant weight in search results and Google has been emphasizing the socialization of search - your social media influence can directly affect what content a user sees when performing a search query. Social media is now a standard part of any good SEO strategy (SEOMOZ, 2011).

However, many businesses underestimate what a well-managed, effective social media presence involves. It's not as simple as posting your latest blog post or press release whenever you get the chance. Many are disappointed when their social media dreams don't materialize...



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Common mistakes that companies make with social media

Not keeping social media accounts regularly updated.

Consistency is important, not just to extend your reach and exposure but to communicate credibility. More and more people use social media accounts as part of their research into a company. They may not like your page or follow you, but they might use what they see on your profile as part of their decision making process. What does a poorly maintained account communicate to a potential customer?

Not being present. Social media is a completely different way to market your business. It's not a one-way street. It's about two-way communication – starting conversations, being friendly and likeable, behaving as you would with a real life person in front of you. Many businesses think that it's enough to spend a bit of time posting updates, but are no where to be seen when questions, comments or mentions come through. Not a great way to build new relationships.

Obsession with the numbers. This is probably one of the most common mistakes businesses make with social media - all they care about is the number of followers or likes they get. They think that this translates to social media success. So they do anything they can to boost those numbers, maybe even buying into questionable social media tactics that promise thousands of followers overnight. The size of your audience is not what's most important on social media - the engagement and the relationships are. Having 100 people that are truly engaged with your business is more valuable than 1,000 people that couldn't care less about what you do.

Success by the numbers

We've steadily helped out clients grow their followings and boost their numbers. Our social media efforts have helped to...

- Grow Twitter followers by 15-25% over 6 months
- Pump up Twitter mentions by up to 1500%
- Boost Twitter Klout scores by 10-15 points.
- Increase Facebook likes by 30% over 4 months. One client enjoyed a 2700% increase in fans with a contest.
- Increase traffic to your website from social channels by up to 920%.

Too much self-promotion. Many business owners rub their hands together in anticipation of all the promotion they can do, for free, on social media. And off they go to blast out as many self-promotional messages as possible. Read my newest blog post. Use my discount. Visit my website. Me, me, me! Straight self-promotion is a sure-fire way to be ignored on social media. Users aren't interested in a barrage of marketing messages; they get enough of them day in and day out. Of course some self-promotion is fine, but it can't be the be-all, end-all reason for the existence of your account.

Not having fun with it. Many businesses try at each and every juncture to communicate professionalism and credibility with their communications. This often bleeds through to social media and businesses take the same serious approach to their profiles. But social media is about having fun and not being afraid to share some personality, be interesting and talk to users in conversational language.

Not monitoring efforts. The world of social media is constantly changing and evolving. What worked one month may not have the same impact the next and without careful monitoring, you'll be none the wiser.



Let eBridge take your social profiles from mediocre to a mainstay of your marketing mix

Get the right mix of self-promotion. Take your profile from a barrage of self-promotional messaging to a hub full of useful information and educational resources, demonstrating a genuine desire to help and be a valuable source of content. When people like and trust you, your self-promotional messages have the greatest impact.

Demonstrate a well-managed account. Potential customers won't feel like they have arrived at a ghost town. They will find a presence that is clearly and carefully cared for and has a real person behind the scenes, responding to questions, posting useful resources and ready to engage in conversations.

Genuine, steady growth. At eBridge, we're all about consistent growth and effective tactics. We will never recommend that you buy followers or take on other questionable tactics just to give you the short-lived satisfaction of a jump in numbers. Organic, genuine growth that stems from organic, genuine account management is what we're about. We don't promise to explode your traffic. We promise to keep your accounts well-maintained and poised to attract the right customer that is actually interested in your business and what you have to offer.

Keep abreast of the latest developments. The world of social media is constantly changing. A new Twitter design. A tweak to the Facebook algorithm. We've got our ears to the ground so that you don't have to. We'll keep you updated with what's going on and make recommendations for how to handle the changes.

Full monthly reporting. We provide numbers each and every month so that progress can be tracked and gauged. This is important not just to monitor progress, but to also address any issues that may come up. With the ever-evolving world of social media it's important to be at the ready to shift strategy and experiment with new tactics to keep your profiles fresh and relevant.

Many businesses simply don't have the in-house resources to manage social media. Either employees already have their plates full or they lack the skills and knowledge needed, or both. By taking advantage of eBridge's social media management services, you will have social profiles you can be proud of and that keep your customers coming back for more. Contact us today to get your social success story started.

eBridge's social media services include:

- Account set up including design and search engine optimization
- Social media strategy plans and research
- Twitter, Facebook and G+ maintenance
- Creation of social media strategy including promotions
- Ongoing off-site interaction through forums/blogs/social media/etc
- Find groups to join and subscribe to for interaction and commenting
- Friend finding and network building using various social media networks and platforms