UNIT II COMMUNITY BUILDING AND MANAGEMENT

Science of Social Media - Keys to Community Building - Promoting Social Media Pages-Linking Social Media Accounts-The Viral Impact of Social Media-Digital PR-Encourage Positive Chatter in Social Media - Identity in social media: formation of identities, communities, activist movements, and consumer markets - Social Media as business.

SCIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There's a lot of advice out there about making social media and internet marketing work for businesses in general. But you want to know what works for your specific business. How do you do that? By applying the scientific method. Scientists start with a theory or a hypothesis, then develop an experiment to test it. Next, they observe the experiment and analyze the results. We can use the same process to hone the online marketing strategy.

Step   One: Hypothesis

Let's say the goal is to drive traffic from your Facebook and Twitter pages to the website. We've read that posts asking questions and posts offering coupons or discounts both generate a lot of engagement, but youwe want to find out which one actually brings more customers to your website.

Step   Two: Experiment

Start by creating two posts promoting your product or offering: one that asks a question, and one that offers a discount. Include the link to the web page you want them to visit. We can also use Social Media Manager to schedule your posts on a specific time and day of the week.

Step   Three: Observation   and   Analysis

As each post goes up, sign into Google Analytics and Social Media Metrics to measure and track post engagement. How many people liked the post? How many shared it? Most importantly, how many clicked the link and came to the website, and how long did their visit last? By tracking the performance of each post, we can easily connect the dots between the social media posts, engagement level, and website traffic to get actionable insights.

Step   Four: Take   Action

Now that we have measured, post by post, the effectiveness of each technique, we know which one best met your business goals, and we can continue using the same technique. What's more, you can use the same scientific method to further improve the social marketing performance by finding the most effective keywords, or identifying visuals that trigger emotion, engagement, and action.

Role of Social Media in Science and communication

Social media has grown in importance in the realm of science, with several advantages for researchers and the scientific community.

One of the primary benefits of social media is that it allows academics to communicate with one another, develop professional networks, and share their findings. Scientists may utilize social media to communicate their research results, assisting to increase the exposure and effect of scientific research by reaching a wider audience outside of the community.

Social media may also ease the exchange of data and resources, which can lead to more efficient and collaborative research, hence speeding up scientific discovery and reducing effort duplication.

Furthermore, social media may be utilized to engage academics from other disciplines who would not have had the opportunity to work otherwise. This might result in new research ideas and subjects as well as multidisciplinary approaches to scientific challenges.

Lastly, social media may serve to engage the public with science and develop scientific understanding, thereby increasing public trust and support for scientific research.

The traditional nature of scientific communication is unidirectional (think about conferences or articles in peer-reviewed journals), but this long-form narrative contrasts with the current evolution of communicative preferences across the globe. Nowadays, two-way interactive exchanges find in social media. Social media platforms are the ideal space for conversations between people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

KEYS TO COMMUNITY BUILDING

Authenticity is key to good brand building. In the age of the ad blocker, consumers increasingly trust what other shoppers are saying over corporate brand messages. That's why brands need to leverage the power of community. Today, your brand story is told by your diverse community members, who have honest opinions to share and unique perspectives around your brand.

Building a strong community is important for a few reasons. It can help your brand gain valuable insights from customers about how to improve your product and services. It can also boost customer loyalty, as they continuously engage with your brand. But perhaps most importantly, building a strong community means spreading advocacy, as customers start singing your brand's praises outside of virtual walls.

We'll discuss six ways to effectively build a strong community of advocates.

1. Leverage social media

We all love to engage with people who are relatable, and social media's reach and accessibility has allowed us to find our tribes across the nation and around the world. And when you resonate with someone, you feel excited to engage with their content.

For instance, parents follow each other for their whimsical stories and parenting tips. Fitness enthusiasts exchange their workout routines and favorite activewear brands. Foodies share their delicious recipes and restaurant recommendations with their fellow food lovers. And the list goes on.

People are already engaging with these subcultures on social media, making it the perfect channel for building a strong community. So, meet your audience where they are. Instead of your brand doing all the talking, tap your community members to post about your brand on social media, whether it's paid or unpaid. Real customers can lead more authentic conversations with their audiences than your corporate account can. This will not only build advocacy in an organic way, but also substantially increase brand awareness.

You can even increase the reach of your community members' content by repurposing it in paid ads. Whether they are your customers, influencers, or employees, people are typically excited to get special recognition from a brand they love.

2. Pay Attention to Product reviews

Today's consumers want brands to be very responsive. In fact, 52% of consumers expect to hear back from brands within 7 days of giving an online review. So, engage with your customers by responding to reviews, regardless of if they are negative or positive.

Reviews are priceless when it comes to brand building. Because they come from real customers, positive reviews give your brand more credibility and provide social proof, ultimately increasing conversion rates. According to one study on product reviews, 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations and 72% of consumers will take action after reading a positive review!

In contrast, negative reviews can damage your brand reputation. Instead of ignoring or deleting the comment, it's extremely important to quickly address and fix the issue at hand. And although negative reviews are not favorable, they are immensely helpful in terms of collecting valuable feedback.

Keeping track of what your community members are saying not only helps to improve your brand, but also shows consumers that your brand cares about what they have to say.

3. Incorporate customer feedback into your products

Instead of just selling to customers, include them in the process of designing and developing your products and services. As consumers, they have the ability to provide important feedback from their personal experiences with your brand. So, don't just serve your customers — make them a part of your service.

One brand that loves to incorporate community feedback is Nutrabolt. The brand partnered with professional athlete Mat Fraser to launch a supplement called Fraserade XTEND Elite, and asked Mat to pick out the formula, the flavor, and even the name. His authentic love of the brand paired with his fitness expertise lead to the company's highest-grossing sales day.

In another instance, Nutrabolt heard from customers that they were using its XTEND recovery product as both a mixer and a hangover cure. While the brand was taken off guard, it leveraged what its customers loved about the product and launched an XTEND mixology campaign and crafted the tagline "work, play, recover" to ensure people could have a fun night out and still make it to the gym in the morning. The campaign generated 4 million impressions, 100k engagements, and an earned media value triple what Nutrabolt spent.

4. Co-create Content

Content is still king. But it's difficult to create custom content that looks and feels native to each marketing channel. The good news is, you can reduce the time and resources needed to produce large amounts of content by tapping your community members. Co-creating will be faster and more scalable, and allow your brand to source authentic, relatable content that consumers can resonate with better.

Community members like influencers and creatives can produce high-quality, high-performing content for your brand. Because they typically have a deep understanding of high-tech cameras, lighting tools, and editing software, they are experienced content creators and reliable brand partners. Find influencers and creatives that are true fans of your brand, and ask them for a variety of content — social media posts, flatlays, product-only shots, videos, and so on. That way, their content can be repurposed across various marketing channels and your brand gets a bang for your buck!

In addition, take advantage of the user-generated content (UGC) that individuals like customers and employees produce. While UGC is unpredictable in terms of quality and reach, it is an equally important part of a brand story. After all, UGC is free content that brands can also repurpose or use to collect feedback.

5. Host in-person events

In-person activations are a great way to bring communities together. Although interactions online are convenient and accessible, oftentimes they are less personal. To truly build your community, you need to take your conversations offline and engage in person.

Through events like masterclasses, meetups, and pop-up shops, you can give your community members a reason to come together. Events are not only a great way for your brand to engage with your customers, but also for your customers to network with each other and foster your community.

So, think about what you're offering to your community and create an event around it. Many products naturally have reasons to get people talking or doing things. For instance, activewear brand Fabletics hosted pop-ups at eight cheerleading competitions to grow their community. Because the brand's trendy activewear fits well with the cheerleading crowd, Fabletics was able to earn more than $500,000 in revenue and sign on more than 5,000 new members.

6. Build a network of affiliates

Your community members are your best brand advocates. Because they talk about your brand in a positive and authentic way, turning them into affiliates will take your marketing to the next level.

Affiliate marketing helps brands capitalize on customer conversion by paying affiliates a commission on the sales they make. The sales from their promotion can easily be tracked via affiliate links or codes. It is extremely cost-effective, which is why 81% of brands use this performance-based marketing strategy.

Turning your community members into affiliates will give them financial motivation to promote your brand to their audiences. Whether they are influencers, brand ambassadors, or experts, they are the voices that consumers trust. With their help, your brand will be able to expand its reach and boost online sales in an authentic way.

A strong community will lead to improved products, brand loyalty, increased awareness, and overall success. So, tap existing members to scale your community. From content creation to in-person events, there are many ways to build an engaged community.