

25 Top Tips for Social Media Success



A two-part toolbox of expert tips, tactics and nuggets of wisdom for winning social media followers and keeping them engaged

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With Advice From:



Stratten



Singer



Jarboe



Schaffer



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A two-part toolbox of expert tips, tactics and nuggets of wisdom for winning social media followers and keeping them engaged.

Congratulations on winning your social media followers.

The bad news is that they're losing interest already.

Quick – keep them engaged! And win more!

Easier said than done? Yep – but this will make it easier. We've compiled 25 tips from five bona fide social media stars that'll give a new spring to your step and a new shine to your tactics.

Here's your first installment of how to win, connect with and keep more followers and fans than you thought possible.

With Advice From:



Scott Stratten Engagement

President of Un-Marketing, author of UnMarketing: Stop Marketing. Start Engaging



Adam Singer Facebook

Social Media Practice Director at LEWIS PR, creator of The Future Buzz blog



Greg Jarboe YouTube

President and co-founder of SEO-PR, author of YouTube and Video Marketing: An Hour a Day



Neal Schaffer Twitter

President of Windmills Marketing, author of Windmill Networking: Maximizing LinkedIn and the forthcoming Windmill Networking: Maximizing Twitter



David Brody Branding & Voice

Brand sensei and conceptual catalyst, North Social, formerly VP of Marketing at Virgin

Be More Credible

STRATTEN

Be present. If you're going to create an account in any space: Facebook, Twitter or any other, be there and spend time there. And pick your platform first. You can't start from scratch and be everywhere at once. Everybody wants 10,000 views on YouTube, 10,000 blog views, 10,000 followers and 10,000 fans on Facebook. That takes a lot of time. Pick a platform to start, and grow from there.

SCHAFFER

Don't let an intern do your social media. The people managing your social presence are managing the way that hundreds of millions of people could be looking at your brand. This is something you should give someone in your company who's very experienced. Let me tell you a true story that illustrates this point.

I once won a free ticket from Virgin America through social media to fly to Toronto as part of the #VXToronto Twitter campaign, but the login code didn't work. I struggled with their customer service over the phone for three days, didn't get a resolution, and finally messaged @virginamerica on Twitter: "nice of you to give me the free ticket but I can't claim it". Their community manager replied immediately. She then took it offline onto email, met internally with IT and marketing people, figured out and resolved the issue, and reported back to me. That's what a great community manager does. That's who should be in charge: someone who knows how to internally negotiate and who's very good at dealing with people and resolving issues. A community manager, in an ideal world, is a six figure job – it's not for interns.

BRODY

Develop a distinct personality to show who you are. Give people a true flavor of who you are and what you stand for, and a reason why they should trust you. If you're considering using a lot of automation to push out updates (so you can look busy, popular, and active), think again. You have a phenomenal opportunity to excite, educate, and motivate prospective consumers about your product, service, or cause. Be interesting using your own brand and content, and don't become that guy that sends those forwarded emails. I don't forward joke emails unless they're something I'd be excited to re-tell in person. Apply this same thinking to social media: it's a messenger of your voice, not just a medium for delivering shortened links.

SINGER

Be consistent with Facebook updates. Without updates, you're basically invisible, because Facebook is stream-based. You need to plan out what you're capable of doing, and then meet that expectation. That's how you nurture trust and authority: by being there consistently. When you set the expectation of posting once a day and then you stop doing it, it's noticeable. It's almost worse to start doing something and then stop, than not to do anything.



SCHAFFER SOCIAL SKILL

Become a content curator. Too few companies understand the value of sharing other people's content because it's counter-intuitive to traditional marketing folks. However, YouTube is video *sharing*. Flickr is photo *sharing*. There's an emphasis on sharing, and what do businesses have that they can share? They have a lot of information, but they also know their industry really well and they know who the authorities in their industry are. Take the industry news you read in the morning and share it with your followers. You play an invaluable role by doing so and filtering what your industry needs to know. Sounds trivial, but not everyone in your industry has time to do so. Do them a favor, and you will be rewarded.

Be More Popular

BRODY

Convert your base. If you already have an existing base of customers, the first thing you need to do is move your evangelists to get involved with you socially. They want to participate. They're just waiting for you to remind them (and it also helps to give them an incentive to follow you on Facebook or Twitter). But putting up a sign in your store that says "follow us on Facebook" is not strategic and it's not motivating. Offer them something they can't refuse; an experience, a piece of content, a special offer, or a chance at winning. Keep your base happy and it will be much easier to grow your fan count and following from there.

STRATTEN

Invest your social currency. What I mean by 'social currency' is the amount you give to a social network before trying to withdraw monetary currency from it. Build a conversation or relationship first. That's a huge thing that businesses don't understand.

SCHAFFER

Engage proactively with people. Twitter is a very social atmosphere and consumers feel empowered by it. When they have a complaint, companies that are Twitter-savvy actually respond to them. It feels good. But what people forget is that when companies reach out and directly contact a consumer who made a positive comment – that's extremely powerful. That's how you create a brand advocate from a customer. I see a lot of companies who pay a lot of money for social media monitoring reports, but I see very few companies using that report to engage. And I'm not talking about just engaging people with Klout scores over 75. Anybody can be an influencer: you never know who could be retweeting or looking at their tweets.

BRODY

Have Freakin' Manners: Too often, brands are in such a rush to get social that they forget the 'brilliant basics' when it comes to manners.

- Don't chew with your mouth open: edit before you post. Sloppy spelling can cheapen your brand and distract from your message.
- Say 'I'm sorry' when you screw up. Don't try to pin it on someone else. Own up to a mistake by confronting it head on or it could come back to haunt you.
- Don't litter. Your followers and fans receive everything you post. When you leave a trail of waste that has no redeeming value, people will turn you off.
- Write thank-you notes. If you're inspired by a blog post, status update or tweet, give credit where credit is due.



STRATTEN SOCIAL SKILL

Manage expectations. This applies to both the company side and the customer side. Make sure people know what they're going to get out of your Twitter and Facebook account, and when they sign up for your newsletter. If it's going to be a deal a day, let them know. If it's going to be an account that's only monitored 9.00 to 5.00 Eastern Standard Time, let them know. Internally, don't start promising 'Old Spice' videos that get 35 million views. You can't control word of mouth and you can't control spread, so be careful how you manage what people expect.

Get Noticed More

JARBOE

Do your keyword research. In YouTube, there are two ways to do this. One: start typing the phrase you're thinking of using into the search box. YouTube has an autocomplete feature, and if it starts guessing what you're typing, your phrase is probably a search term. Other people have looked for it. The other way is to use the keyword research tool that's tied to their promoted videos—you don't have to buy an ad to use it.

Either way, find out if the term you're planning to use is a term other people use when they search for videos online. And don't make the assumption that just because a term is a search term in Google, it's automatically a search term in YouTube. People search Google and YouTube for different things.

JARBOE

When you've done your keyword research, use it. I can't tell you how many people are shocked—shocked!—that having conducted their keyword research, they then have to use that key phrase in their video's title, description and tags. Yes; you do have to use them; it's the only way the YouTube algorithm will know that your video is relevant to the search term. It doesn't watch your video. If you want to use the title you want to use, but nobody's searching for it, that's fine – but good luck. What planet are you living on?



JARBOE SOCIAL SKILL

Help people to help you. Don't forget that YouTube is a video *sharing* site. When people are done watching your video, they don't just go home. They have several options. One is to email friends about it. Or they can tweet about it, or share it on their Facebook page. They can embed it into a blog post. These sharing mechanisms are part of what made the early viral videos successful and it's still a key component of video success today. Find ways to encourage people to share your video. YouTube offers things like an auto-share feature that will automatically tweet about your video when you upload it. Use it. Reach out to bloggers and let them know you put up a new video they might be interested in embedding. Share, share, share.



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

This March, everyone on this page spoke at the Vocus online conference Social Media. So What—an event dedicated to helping organizations re-engage with their social media followers.

The event generated so much social media coverage (including 2,000 tweets in four hours) that we made the whole thing available on-demand, at no charge, until September 15th. You can access the entire conference: recorded presentations, powerpoint slides, and speaker interviews.

<http://bit.ly/fuJwpR>

Coming Up in Part Two...

How to be more interesting, smarter, more forward-thinking... and unafraid. Don't forget to download our second installment of social media gold next month!

About Our Experts

Scott Stratten

Scott Stratten is the President of Un-Marketing. Formerly a national sales training manager and a professor at the Sheridan College School of Business, he has been running his "UnAgency" for eight years, during which time it has become the place companies like PepsiCo, Red Cross and Fidelity Investments go when they need help guiding their way through the social media and relationship marketing landscape. He now has over 76,000 Twitter followers and his book *UnMarketing: Stop Marketing. Start Engaging* became a national best-seller before it was released.

Follow Scott at www.unmarketing.com and www.twitter.com/unmarketing

Adam Singer

Adam Singer is Social Media Practice Director for LEWIS PR, a marketing industry speaker and blogger. He provides online marketing and social media PR strategy for top B2B and B2C brands in industries including marketing, health-care tech, consumer tech, manufacturing and web startups. Singer and his campaigns have been cited by outlets including PRWeek, Entrepreneur Magazine, Techdirt and Mashable for creative use of digital marketing and PR. He speaks at some of the world's largest industry events and blogs at The Future Buzz, his award winning blog which 50,000 readers visit every month.

Follow Adam at www.thefuturebuzz.com and www.twitter.com/adamsinger

Greg Jarboe

Greg Jarboe is the president and co-founder of SEO-PR and the author of *YouTube and Video Marketing: An Hour a Day*, published by Wiley in 2009. He is also one of the 25 online marketing gurus profiled in *Michael Miller's Online Marketing Heroes: Interviews with 25 Successful Online Marketing Gurus*, published by Wiley in 2008. Jarboe is also a member of the Rutgers faculty for the Mini-MBA: Digital Marketing program and a member of the Market Motive faculty.

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Neal Schaffer

Neal Schaffer is President of Windmills Marketing, a consulting practice that leads social media strategy creation and educational programs for companies ranging from Fortune 500 enterprises to Web 2.0 startups. He is also the award-winning author of *Windmill Networking: Maximizing LinkedIn* and the soon-to-be-published *Windmill Networking: Maximizing Twitter*. Neal blogs on social media strategy at Windmill Networking, a site included in AdAge's Power 150, and is a frequent speaker on social media at conferences and corporate events.

Follow Neal at www.windmillnetworking.com and www.twitter.com/NealSchaffer

David Brody

David Brody plays brand sensei and conceptual catalyst for North Social, which enables businesses of all sizes to easily build powerful custom Facebook pages. Exploring and developing new, innovative approaches to marketing is his passion. He was formerly a Vice President of Marketing at Virgin, where he spearheaded the launch of a groundbreaking digital campaign that brought home the Gold Lion at the Cannes International Advertising Festival and won the hearts of music fans worldwide.

Follow David and his team at www.northsocial.com