

18 Reasons to Use Social Media

By Lisa Barone on Wednesday, September 7th, 2011 in [Social Media](#)

Social media is not the end-all, be-all of your business. It's not the magic bullet that will allow you to take a struggling business to the height of success simply by claiming your Twitter account. But what social media **can** do is make you a better company by allowing you to listen, react and build faster and more efficiently than ever before. Below you'll find 18 quick reasons that your SMB may want to get involved in social media. These are the benefits you can achieve faster in social media than most other mediums.

Is this a complete list? Not by a long shot. But perhaps it will demonstrate the power of these channels and why social media is far more than simply "playing on your computer."



What can your business achieve through social media?

- 1. Visibility:** Engaging in social media and blogging on a steady basis helps me achieve constant visibility with my audience. By participating in conversations, sharing daily food for thought, and making myself and my brand part of their day, I stay top of mind when someone is looking for a social media agency or an SEO consulting company. Don't discount the power of that - of creating a visible brand.
- 2. Brand yourself as a resource:** All that being visible and sharing content? It's a waste of time! Why bother doing it? Well, because by doing it you establish yourself as a resource. You become the "go-to" person for that topic and the voice that people trust in your industry. That's how you brand yourself as an expert in your niche and make your company the one that others seek out and turn to. We trust those we know and those we see others trusting.
- 3. Easily get speaking gigs:** Who do conference organizers, reporters or your local chamber of commerce seek out when looking for speakers or sources? The people in the industry who are both trusted and visible. Thanks to social media, your SMB can quickly become both.
- 4. Build a community:** By making yourself available, reaching out to customers and sharing information, you strengthen your community. You form new connections, allow community members to meet one another, and create a deeper dialogue by increasing the number of voices.
- 5. Decrease time to conversion:** Do you know what happens when someone from social media lands on your site to make

a purchase? They do it faster. They need less convincing, less hand-holding and less actual talking to you. They feel that way because they already know you. They read your blog, follow you on Twitter, get your deals via Facebook. You're not a stranger. You're their friend -- someone they trust and feel comfortable doing business with.

6. Highlight your product: Social media offers an additional avenue to show off and talk about your product in a friendly and informal way. You get to highlight what you offer and what makes you awesome in normal conversation without coming across "salesy" or too promotional. You also have the opportunity to answer questions, show features and offer "how-to's" to help people get to know you a little better.

7. Find new projects & clients: Every week my company, Outspoken Media, receives new client referrals and leads as a result of our social media presence. People contact us for services or to partner on something because they like what we're doing on Twitter or because they read one of our blog posts and it resonated with them. When you make yourself part of the conversation, you make your brand part of the story...and people notice.

8. Hang with other influencers: They say we are the company we keep, right? Well, social media lets you be friends with the people your customers most look up to, helping to increase your own authoritativeness by association. You look smarter when you talk to smart people.

9. Tell your company's story: What has social media shown us? That people like to conduct business with companies they know. We like being introduced to the voices behind the logo because it helps us to feel a part of the company and invested in their success. By telling your company's story and sharing that with users, you create a personal feeling and make people invested in your success.

10. Be a mentor: You're not the only one using social media to network and meet people. So are others. And sometimes, you're the person they're trying to meet and the person they're learning from.

11. Improve your writing skills: I'm not joking. Want to be a better writer? Enter the world of social media. You'll be forced to be inform, entertain and provide a call to action in just a hundred or so characters. It will be the best writing class you've ever had.

12. Develop better ideas: Armed with blogs, forums and social discussions you'll be able to try and get feedback on ideas before you spend any time developing them. You'll see what works, what people hate and what they want more of, so you can produce more of what interests them and less of what puts them to sleep.

13. Network faster: Through Twitter, I can have a conversation with [Chris Brogan](#), [Anita Campbell](#), [Erika Napoletano](#) and [Jonathan Fields](#) all before lunch. You can't buy that type of access. Luckily, through social media, you don't have to.

14. Find partners: An offshoot of that "networking faster" thing is being able to find future partners, mentors or just really cool people to share resources with. Through social media and the world of blogging, I was able to meet someone I eventually started a business with and countless others I've collaborated with on other projects. I've also met mentors and friends who have shaped my career and my business.

15. Get answers faster: Need help figuring out the best tool to help you manage your finances as a small business owner? Curious how to set up a custom Facebook landing page? Need advice for how to hire better employees? When you get involved in social media, you build up a network of people who can help you answer these questions and point you to resources faster than you can find them yourself. Social media lets you do more, faster.

16. Create a resource depositary: Every time someone tweets an article that I find extraordinarily useful, I save it. It goes into a document and gets filed there for future use. The next time I'm looking for a tutorial, some inspiration or a guide, I pull it out and give it another look. Or I share it with someone who I think could benefit from it. This resource depositary, again, lets me work faster and better.

17. Develop your company culture: A funny thing happens when your brand has to be social and talk to customers in real time. You're forced to really pin down who you are and what you want your brand to be. Are you corporate? Are you super friendly? Are you funny? Are you helpful? Are you all about customer service? What makes you you? Who **are** you? You don't know until you take the time to figure it out.

18. Better hires: Using social media can help your company **hire smarter and faster** by not only introducing you to more qualified candidates but also helping you to establish your referral network, Where you once used to spend your time digging through a pile of resumes, social media helps you cut through the clutter and find the most talented gems.

Those are just a handful of ways that social media can help your business. Are there other ways to achieve some of these goals? Absolutely. But I think social media helps us all to tackle them both more effectively and faster.

How do you use social media?

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