

Social Media or Web 2.0

Enterprise Community Partners

Basic Background on Social Media

Web 2.0 refers to the spectrum of interactive and collaborative sharing environments now available on the Web.

- Social Networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, and Linked In, allow people (and sometimes organizations) to post a profile of themselves. These sites connect people who share interests or other connections (school, work at a company, etc.). Primarily for reaching consumers, not business. Used by about 20% of B-to-C marketers according to a recent survey.
- YouTube is, currently, the primary place for posting and sharing videos. Video aggregator services can disseminate videos much like PR Newswire disseminates news releases. This is also called “viral video,” in contrast to “video on demand,” or VOD. Viral video is used more for marketing to consumers (35%) than to businesses (18%); whereas VOD is used more equally by both (33%).
- Blogs are personal websites authored by a person or organization to share thoughts, information and ideas. They allow the users to add comments, which are then posted in chronological order, creating a dialog string. They include text, images and links to other blogs, web pages, and media. Buzzlogic rates blogs’ influence. Technorati allows you to search the 66 million blogs they index. About 1/3 of marketers surveyed are using blogs currently.
- Wikis and groups are public or private mini-websites that open the editing process to all users. They do a good job of collecting disparate knowledge. There are myriad providers. Google Groups is a good example of a powerful wiki. Scribd is an other option for groups. Only about 18% of marketers are using wikis today.
- Syndication Feeds (a.k.a. RSS, or really simple syndication) allow interested people to “follow” new information on a blog, website or podcast. FeedBurner.com can “push” this information out to emails as well. In use by about 20% of marketers. Currently in use by about 1/3 of marketers surveyed.
- Twitter (restricted to 140 characters or less) is a text message send to cell phones that is used to stay in close touch with more intimate followers.
- Folksonomies, Tagging and Tag Clouds use the behavior of the audience to help sort and classify the content. Users “tag” an article with a descriptive word; taken together those tags build a user-created taxonomy (table of contents), a.k.a. folksonomy. Done through Digg (Digg this), del.ici.ous, ping.fm (Ping this, still in beta), Share this, Yahoo Buzz
- Podcasting is an ongoing series of audio downloads that can live on a website. It is often reliably periodic, such as once a week or month, etc., or serves a special news function, as podcasts from a conference. It is tied to a subscription component, so people can get regular updates. Audio files (edited and scripted, vs. the “broadcast” nature of podcasts), can be used online for disseminating testimony, training or expertise. Currently used by about 1/3 of marketers.
- Widgets are tiny applications that allow users to interact with your site in a variety of ways. A simple widget allows users to socially bookmark an article or webpage into Digg or del.ic.ious, a public collection of bookmarks that has created a folksonomy. Widgets also allow you to virally share your interests. ASPCA allows

you to send a friend a virtual pet on Facebook. Clearspring is a creation tool for cheap widgets.

- Google Maps allow us to overlay a map with pushpins that lead readers into our neighborhoods for photos and tours and more information.
- Badges are graphic images that promote an idea or organization that others can post on their sites or blogs.
- Squidoo, created by Seth Goldin (who also created permission marketing), is an online site that allows “lensmasters” to create a lens in their area of expertise. A lens provides detail on a topic and points to other content such as blogs, favorite links, RSS feeds, Flickr photos, Google maps or Amazon books. These lenses, when accessed by others, can become a top referral point to your blog or website. (Usually only search engines and your website will out-refer your lens(es). (See www.squidoo.com/GlobalAction/hq for an example of how a nonprofit uses this to encourage contributions.)
- Virtual Worlds, such as Second Life, allow people to create a 3-D representation of themselves and interact with others. Commerce takes place with the creation and selling of clothing and other goods, including land. Used by young, creative people with libertarian views.
- Search Engine Optimization is a complex combination of using the most effective URLs, metadata and keywords, along with regularly updated content in a variety of locales (not limited to the public site, but inclusive of Web 2.0 technologies). Used by 74% of marketers.

What Web 2.0 Does Well

1. Collaboration
2. Networking
3. Inviting the end-user into the development conversation
4. Outreach

Opportunities

1. Some of these tools can be used to position us as a leader in our field
2. Many of these tools can be used to reach out to, inform, motivate and hear from various stakeholders:
3. Some can be used to move our content into the social web, expanding our reach.

Forms of Thought Leadership Content

- Whitepapers use a PDF portrait format to introduce innovations and products. They can be syndicated through services such as TechTarget and Knowledge Storm. Can be downloaded for free, usually in exchange for name, org and email information. These are serious, usually research-based publications, often somewhat academic in tone.
- Ebooks identify a market problem and supply an answer, using PDF landscape format rather than portrait. Can be downloaded for free, only rarely in exchange for name, org and email information. These are more must-read, fun-to-read ways to share ideas openly. Can be playful and fun, but must be valuable as well. (See <http://solutions.dowjones.com/taxonomyebook/> for an example.) Scribd is an online publishing storehouse.
- Blogs and Podcasts position their authors as experts in their niche if they incorporate meaningful, current content, updated regularly.

Getting Started in Social Media

This is an abbreviated road map of how Enterprise planned out and launched its social media efforts.

Tenets of social media: To succeed, you must:

1. Go where your audience is already
2. Engage with them in ways they are already engaged
3. Invite them to the next step of engagement on your behalf
4. Track your progress toward measurable goals

Questions to Answer Before You Build a Social Media Site

These are the questions we asked and the answers we provided. All questions were in the context of social media only. (For example, a key audience for us is corporate foundations; however they are not a key audience for our social media outreach.)

Who is our audience? Individual donors and supporters; former employees; community developers. We developed personas for each of these, explaining who they are and what they are looking to do.

Where are they online? This takes keyword searching on the various sites. This is what our research showed us:

- LinkedIn: Nearly 700 community developers; more than 2,000 results for “low-income housing;” and 556 current or former employees.
- Facebook: 400+ results for “community developer” and 350+ for “low-income housing.” In beta, without promotion, our Affordable Housing Cause page has 449 members.
- Blogs: More than 2 dozen blogs discuss our strategic topics.
- Twitter: Pages of “tweets” on affordable housing. With no promotion, we have 127 followers.
- YouTube: 2,110 search results for “affordable housing”

What do they want to do; what are they currently doing there? Connect; learn; explore; share

What do we want them to do? Connect; learn; explore and share about Enterprise. Travel up our Ladder of Engagement.

How will we measure success? We set two sets of goals: one for increasing the number of participants with us on our social media sites (for example: # of followers on Twitter; # of members of our cause page; etc.); the second for moving people along our ladder of engagement (for example: # of people who reply to us on Twitter; # of people who sign our pledge; increase visits to the website, etc.)

Ten Critical Steps

1. Research social media. Read the blogs; read the books: sign up for Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter; locate your audience on these sites.
2. Identify your audience and build personas.
3. Craft your ladder of engagement and identify measurable goals for each rung.
4. Plan before you create anything. Pick the sites you want to start with (not too many) and get comfortable with those in some kind of “beta” launch, so that you can work out the kinks.
5. Do Not Blog! That’s not the place to start. Start by reading others’ blogs; commenting on them; “guest” blogging for others. Get to know the blogosphere well before you launch a blog.
6. Create a policy. Be sure your employees know what is expected of them. Look at other examples. Ours is included in these handouts.
7. Identifying internal moderators. Somebody has to be devoting 1 hour or more each day to this effort.
8. “Beta” launch. Since there is no real beta in social media, this just means put up your sites and work with them before you make a concerted effort to promote them. Be sure you can sustain the manpower required to create content updates and respond to those joining in.
9. Create procedures based on your beta launch. For example, how will you “steward” the donations you get from Facebook?
10. Go public. Announce your sites; create a fundraising goal; invite all employees and current donors to join in; be sure you link to your social media presence from your website and from your email signatures. Also mention your social media sites in written materials, just like you do your website.

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