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Social Media Strategies Are Different For Every Business



Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, southeast Michigan's leading small business computer support company.

“One size fits all” doesn't work as a strategy for managing your company's social media presence.

Social media - the

big three, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn - has become an increasingly more complex space the last few years.

Constant change

There's a lot of activity and change across all three sites. Keeping up with the changes in policies and process, while at the same time updating your site and status, can be overwhelming.

The right way to use social media for your business depends on a number of variables, including the size of your company, the type of business you're in, your target audience, and whether you're a B2B (business to business) or B2C (business to consumer) company.

Many business owners don't understand this. They think that you need

to use every possible social media tactic and tool that's available, but usually that leads to confusion and distraction with little measureable result.

Choose carefully

Not every social media promotion method works for every company.

Some businesses are successful using social media to hold contests and encourage check-ins by fans and followers.

It's a great way to raise awareness and engage prospects and clients for a local B2C business, but probably doesn't make sense for a B2B professional services firm.

Just because other businesses are doing it and finding success, it doesn't mean that the tactic will work for your company.

Have a plan

Many business owners make the mistake of jumping into social media without a solid strategy, figuring it out as they go.

Just as you need a business plan, you also need a social media plan. Failure to strategize leads to poor decisions, wasted time, and confused clients and prospects.

The plan doesn't need to be complex - one page that outlines your goals and the steps you need to take to get there will work. Once your plan is outlined, it's time to execute!

Who's responsible

The most important decision you'll make when it comes to your company's social media strategy is who will be responsible for managing it.

For smaller companies, this usually will be the owner. But for even the smallest business, a well thought out plan can be delegated to a staff member. Make sure you hold them accountable, and that you measure your results.

Not just for sales

Strategic posts on your company's social media sites can help with customer service and public relations, too. Don't narrow your social media focus just to sales and marketing.

Your end goal with social media should be to get clients and prospects to take an action: Visit your website or blog, ask for more information, or promote your company and brand to their friends and followers. Tracking the results of your social media strategy is the only way you'll know what's working, and what needs changed.

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Diagnosing And Resolving Strange Network Issues

*by Frank Wright,
Service Manager*

Everyone's had them, you know those weird issues where one of your computers can get online or to your server but your workstation can't. Or, when one building can get to the Internet or other network resources and your other building can't.

Networking issues can be a real headache as they can be very difficult to track down. Without the proper equipment and knowledge, they

can plague you forever. Fortunately we have solutions to those network gremlins that we see all too often.

This month we are going to touch on the common network issues we see and how we go about getting them corrected for you so that your network runs as it should.

Starting from your workstation and heading out to your Internet Service Providers (ISP) modem, we'll work our way through some of the commonly seen issues.

Can't reach the Internet.

This one we see frequently. When your workstation can't get to the Internet (and other workstations on your network can), there are actually numerous issues that can cause this problem.

Some of the items your tech would (or should) be checking are:

Does the computer have a virus?

Viruses can cause all kinds of havoc when it comes to how your com-

puter functions. Viruses can change the way that Windows networking acts and what it does.

If some of the aspects of your computer's operating system (OS)

While a tech could go through all of the cables on your network when you have a connection problem, doing so can take a lot of time.

This isn't normally the first course of action unless they specifically see symptoms that indicate this type of issue.

Some of the other issues that can cause a workstation to lose connectivity are faulty routers, switches or modems.

In the case of any

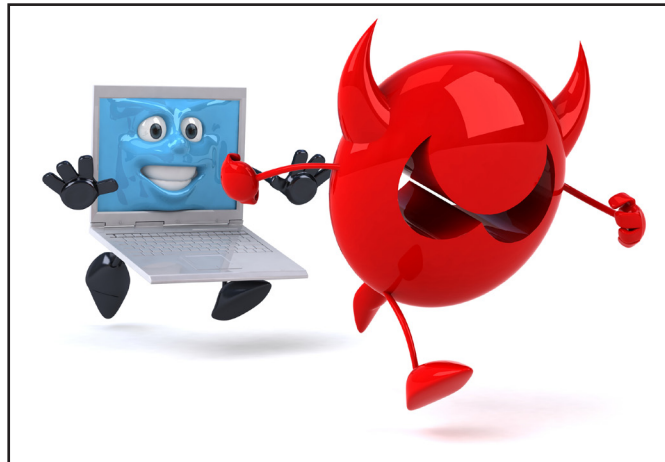
of these pieces of network equipment, if the ports on them begin to fail users may have a lot of issues, from dropped packets resulting in slow Internet performance, to no Internet connection at all and everywhere in between.

The last possible place for connection issues is your ISP's modem. Generally a tech can roughly troubleshoot this piece of equipment, but because your ISP manages it, there is only so much a tech can do to correct problems on this type of equipment. We can usually isolate the trouble to the modem, but after that, the ISP takes over.

If a tech finds an issue with your modem you would need to have your ISP's techs come out and look into the issues with their modem.

No matter what issues your workstation is having we can trace them back to the root of their cause.

Give us a call and we'll get you back up and running ASAP.



are changed by a virus, it's possible you may not be able to get online.

Is the connection from the computer to the router in good working order? Sometimes people think that the answer to this question is as simple as "is the Ethernet cable plugged in tight," and in most cases it is.

Sometimes the cables you may have been using for years might begin to cause connectivity problems. Cables that are constantly moved can have the wires within the cable ends worked loose. Ethernet cables used with notebooks and laptops are especially prone to this.

Once the right cables work themselves loose you are likely to either see sporadic connection problems or you may not have any connection at all.

These types of issues while not as common as virus or operating system issues tend to be more difficult to track down.

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<http://www.TechSupportRequest.com>



Taking Your Business Online Can Increase Profits

by *Jeremy Miller, Technician*

Most if not all businesses can benefit from having an online-presence. Going on-line for a business can be a low-cost marketing solution.

Your online presence can help give customer's quick access to information about you and your business, all the way to having automated inventory alerts that let clients know about new products and stock levels.

When getting started online, you'll want to get a domain that represents your business. You'll want to pick something that's easy to remember, and easy to spell and type.

You don't want a domain name that you have to spell out for clients - that makes it very hard to use in advertising.

There are many domain registrars to choose from, including Tech Experts.

After you have your domain name, you'll need website hosting services. Most web hosts, including Tech Experts, include company email with the service.

Most hosting plans are very affordable. Our basic hosting plan starts at \$9.99 per month.

If you want to take it a step further, you can set up an online store. There are a lot of options, depending on how involved you want the store to be.

Accepting credit cards online can

be a hassle, especially with the new security and compliance regulations. If you expect to do a large volume of business in your store, it makes sense to set up a secure site and contract for the credit card processing services.

For smaller web stores, PayPal offers a checkout service that is fully PCI DSS compliant. Their basic service is free (less the processing costs).



business drastically improve. You have to find a way to get customers to your website.

There are many ways to do this. An inexpensive and effective way to get your website noticed is to start a blog.

Blogs will show a human side to the business and search engines crawl blogs easily. Easy places to do this are popular websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google Plus.

This helps improve your ranking in a search on search engines. There are other ways to improve your ranking as well. In fact there is a periodic table guide to Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

By looking at the periodic table, you can see exactly on a point scale what increases and decreases your SEO ranking.

There are companies that specialize in SEO Optimization. The fees range from very reasonable to exorbitant. SEO is as much black art as science, and it pays to have professional help.

There are tools that track how users are using your website. Google Analytics tracks how much time is spent on your website, and where visitors are going.

This can be useful for you to optimize your site for ease-of-use. You want to make it easy for your users to find what they are looking for and browse easily as well.

Another tool that can be useful is Google AdSense, which places targeted ads on your site - and everytime someone clicks on ad, Google will pay you a small amount.

The last thing to think about is the mobile version of your site. More users browse the Internet than ever before with their smart phones and tablets, so you'll want to have a mobile site for these visitors.

This can be a little more tedious due to the fact that this technology is still emerging.

A lot of web sites require a mouse for them to function; an example of this would be a site with a menu bar at the top with a "mouse over" function to see the drop-down menu.

So having a site that detects the type of device and browser that the user is using and directs them to the correct site is important.

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Can Employers Ask For Your Facebook Login Info?

A current case that is attempting to define privacy in the era of social media deals with the question of whether your social media account should be visible to current and prospective employers.

The next time you're asked the typical "name your greatest weakness" interview question, remember it could be much worse: Job seekers applying to Maryland's Department of Corrections were asked for their Facebook logins and passwords.

Savvy employers already check an applicant's "digital footprint." Some companies, like the Maryland Department of Corrections, have gone even further, requesting or even demanding individuals' social media passwords to look at data not open to the public. Whether this practice is legal remains unclear.

The ACLU filed a written protest in the Maryland case, and the corrections department stopped asking for the information. They then had job candidates log in to their Facebook

accounts while the hiring manager looked over their shoulder at the Facebook content hidden behind privacy filters.

The officials at the Maryland Department of Corrections said that they did this to make sure job candidates didn't have any gang affiliations.

The agency told the ACLU it had reviewed the social media accounts of 2,689 applicants and denied employment to seven because of items found on their pages.

One state is banning the practice, and at least 10 other states have bills that have been introduced. A few courts have ruled that such requests violate the federal Stored Communications Act, but the US Supreme Court has not addressed this issue. This legal uncertainty leaves many workers on shaky legal ground.

It's always good advice to carefully manage the public information

posted to your social media sites. For anyone looking to change careers, a review of your privacy settings and friends list is also good advice.

Ensure any sensitive things are limited to your friends (or even a group of just very close friends). It might make sense to have only your basic contact information available to non-friends.

Employers will undoubtedly rely more and more on Internet searches and social networking sites to screen job seekers.

Senators Charles Schumer (New York) and Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut), are planning to ask the Department of Justice to investigate whether employers demanding access to Facebook accounts are violating the law.

In the meantime, review your privacy settings, update so that only the things you want to be available can be seen by the general public.

PC Too Noisy?

No one enjoys having a loud computer, but cooling fans to keep components operating at safe temperatures can make the whole system as loud as a blow-dryer. In the workplace, noise from computers may not be an issue, but in the home a quiet computer can be essential in order to avoid interfering with the enjoyment of movies or music.

The good news is that there are ways to make the computer be a little less noisy. One method is to use noise/vibration isolators, which can be applied to a computer system to reduce the overall noise quite dramatically. For example, rubber feet for the bottom of the computer are available to replace the usual hard plastic versions.

Another good example is silicon gaskets, which can be installed between a fan or power supply and the computer case to lower vibration as well as cut down on noise.

