

INTRODUCTION

Social media networks may come and go like trendy fashion, but the strategy for success remains consistent and universal. Small business owners are compelled to participate in social media like never before. No longer can a company push out a one-way message, to a mass audience without much thought. Social media is about authenticity, engagement, micro-targeting and above all else, consistency.

ESSENTIAL ADVICE

- **Participate natively** in each social network. Don't auto-publish, or connect two or more social networks together. You will get the best return on investment if you use each network authentically and individually.



- **Be consistent.** Have a posting schedule and don't skip days! This advice extends to your email newsletter and your website blog. Consistency benefits not only your audience, but also your ability to experiment with strategies that work through repetition.
- **Use an image** with every post. Each social network has proven results that show images help post engagement.
- **Use keywords and hashtags** if they apply to your post. Don't overdue it, instead find the hashtags that overlap with your target audience and are most popular giving you the best exposure.
- **Engage in conversation.** Comment, like and reply to posts to engage not only your audience, but other content creators and brands.
- **Be transparent.** No social media user wants to follow a brand that only sells, sells, sells. Mix in informal, personal and behind the scenes content to better connect with your audience.