



Increase your online presence using social networking sites

By: Fevi Yu

In the early days of the Internet, social networking websites such as Geocities (1994) and Tripod (1995) focused on bringing people together to interact and share personal information.

Some sites went a little further by having users link to each other via email – i.e. Classmates.com (1995) and sixdegrees.com (1997). But most of these sites weren't profitable and eventually shut down. It wasn't until 2002 through 2004 that three sites emerged, which caused online social networking to become part of mainstream users globally. These three sites were Friendster.com, myspace.com and bebo.com. In 2006 Facebook.com opened to communities outside US colleges and became the fastest growing site in the world.

Social networking flourished and became a component of business internet strategy. Various social networking sites have sprung up to cater to every demographic. It is estimated that there are over 200 social networking sites using existing and emerging social networking models. Twitter.com (2009) eclipsed many other social networking services. Despite lacking some essential aspects of SNS Twitter has allowed add-on services, which distinguish it from the rest.


Why your business needs a social media presence:

- It is a free online tool that has the potential to directly target clients
- It is a way to instantly target clients
- It allows you to interact with clients on the same level
- Social networking creates brand awareness of your product/service
- Social Media can act as an online reputation management tool
- It is an effective tool for recruiting new college graduates
- It is an easy way to learn about new technologies and competitors
- It can be used to generate leads for prospective customers, and
- Companies can drive traffic to their websites while encouraging consumers to have discussions on how to improve or change products or services.

In late 2008, Reuters.com published a report that Facebook, Bebo and MySpace are actually good for business and that bosses should not stop their staff from using social networking sites. The study found that such sites can actually benefit firms. The report by Demos said encouraging employees to use networking technologies to build relationships and closer links with colleagues and customers can help businesses rather than damage them.

Robert Ainger, director of Orange Business which co-produced the report said that it would be wrong of businesses to ignore the importance of networking in the current economic climate. He said: "The report points out that the value of networking within an economic downturn is perhaps more important than ever and I believe it could mean the difference between a business collapsing or capitalising on the tricky conditions."










For any questions or clarifications regarding this article please email fevi@easywebsites.ky or visit Fevi's blog <http://caymanseo.blogspot.com>



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