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**Growing Your Business Via Social Media Contact Networks**

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**Article:**

The primary social media contact networks to grow your business are LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and FBI Consultancy which is the new kid on the block specifically set up to help you grow your business.

They all deliver distinctly different results and an effective social media strategy combines all four.

The principles to apply in social media are nothing new. You already have the skills developed with your business contacts...

- Meeting people

- Building relationships
- Asking questions
- Answering questions
- Building trust
- Building a reputation

### **Creating content**

Building a contact network means starting with a search for keywords. These are the words that your target business contacts will be typing into a search to find you.

- Writing for your persona does not mean writing about the products and services you sell them
- Write about the things they want to learn about

### **Publishing Content**

You need to be prepared to create and share content with your contact network for free i.e. updates, photos, video. This builds trust and confidence. Don't be afraid to simply listen to online conversations online. Then contribute when you feel comfortable.

The type of content depends on your personality and the type of message you're giving to business contacts.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Videos
- Photos
- Presentations
- eBook Guides
- News Releases

Content can be distributed through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube, Flickr or Slideshare. Plus, many other channels.

### **What is being said about you?**

Listening to what is being said by your target contact network has a major bearing on what you say.

Places to monitor what is being said are:

- Google
- Google Alerts
- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Blogs

### **Follow conversations**

Follow trending topics on Twitter or join groups on LinkedIn to follow what's being said.

### **Participate in Questions and Answers**

- Yahoo! Answers
- Facebook Discussions
- LinkedIn Q&A and Discussions

### **LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)**

LinkedIn is a business-focused social network with over 500 million users that enables you to make better use of your professional contact network and in return, help the people you trust. One in 10 users are recruiters which gives you an idea of its focus.

LinkedIn is a great place to do business social networking in a professional way, to post and find jobs, and to answer questions and participate in groups and build thought leadership. It is probably the most obvious way to identify influential individuals at specific organizations.

A search for your target business or title on LinkedIn will identify people you may already be connected with, either directly or through your business contacts.

LinkedIn is a great tool to leverage your existing business contacts to connect with people and find potential customers online.

**Twitter** [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

Twitter is a tool for "micro-blogging" or posting very short updates, comments or thoughts.

In fact, since Twitter was designed to be very compatible with mobile phones through text messages, each update is limited to 280 characters. Truly, a micro-blog.

The way you talk to your contact network in Twitter is similar to the way you would talk to colleagues in a pub. Informal, chatty, but not in your face selling.

What you say can be read by all your followers so it's important to control your messages.

Of the hundreds or thousands of followers you may get in Twitter, only a tiny fraction will be of interest. It is important to use tools such as [Hootsuite](#) to filter the nuggets of gold out from all the silt.

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Facebook is a social utility for connecting people with those around them – friends, family, co-workers, or simply others with similar interests.

At the time of this writing, Facebook has over 2 billion active users and that number continues to grow steadily.

People in general go onto Facebook with a social mindset, which is different to Twitter where they have an "in the pub" mindset.

Think your customers aren't on Facebook? There are tens of thousands of regional, work-related, college, and high school networks. More than two thirds of Facebook users are outside of college and the fastest growing demographic is those 35 years and older. While Facebook started off as a community for college students, it

has expanded far beyond that and you will be hard-pressed to find a demographic not yet represented among Facebook's 2 billion users.

**FBI Consultancy** [www.fbiconsultancy.com](http://www.fbiconsultancy.com)

FBI Consultancy is a professional business growth consultancy, which specialises in business social media, primarily LinkedIn. With a number of professional services, such as business troubleshooting, interim director, LinkedIn consultancy, and consultant partnerships, the company looks at building strong, powerful networks of like-minded professionals.

### **Summary**

To grow your business via social media, first understand how to create content and where to publish it. It is also crucial that you keep your ear to the ground and keep listening.

LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook are three important networks, each with their own strengths and a smart social media strategy would combine all three, coupled with the use of other networks such as YouTube, Slideshare and Flickr.

However, if you want to cut to the chase and find lots of added value benefits from a social media networking group then find out more at [www.fbiconsultancy.com](http://www.fbiconsultancy.com).

**END:**

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