

Ten Tenets of Social Media

Let's Get Engaged!

Most of us have heard or said those words at some time in our lives...some of us, more than once!

However, what I am speaking of today is engaging with our customers.

Many retailers have social media programs, typically Facebook, and perhaps some Twitter or Instagram. But what is the purpose? Is it simply to convey promotional items, or do we have a strong, thoughtful plan to drive engagement with our fans?

Social media allows us to tell a story...about our company...our culture...our products and promotions...and, at the same time have a conversation with our customers.

What is engagement and why it is important?

Engagement is typically any instance in which someone reacts. This could be a like, share, or actual comment. If you think to your own personal life, occasionally we may become disengaged with another person, or have a spat. Sitting down and having a conversation typically brings us together...closer...and creates a connection.

So, engaging with someone through social media, creates, or further deepens, a connection. The stronger the connection, the higher chance that person will frequent your store.

But how do I do that?

These are my ten basic tenets.

1. Set a strong goal for likes per store (I like 1,000/store), the next step is to develop an engagement goal. This is as important, perhaps more, than the actual number of likes.
2. Have a well thought out and developed plan that supports your company's goals.
3. Develop posts that cause fans to react. Ask questions...offer prizes...
Incorporate local and national holidays and events.
Have fun! How often does a friend or family member share a funny post or meme with you?
4. Tell stories!
People are interested in your company!
They want to know your history, what is important to you, what are your values?
Talk about how you are supporting the communities in which you operate?
Talk about your team! Brag about your uber-achievers!
5. We sell stuff. Tell stories about your products too!
What is the back story on that great new coffee blend you launched?

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New Pizza or sub? There is a story there. Talk about it!

Hand breaded or antibiotic free chicken? Yes! Let's hear about it.

6. Use video. It doesn't have to be expensive. That smartphone in your pocket will help you create a great 15 second post.
7. Speak with your vendor partners. Many have funds directed for social media, and will help support promotions, specific to social, to drive sales, traffic, and profits.
8. Monitor posting at different times, and determine, for your stores, what times drives the most views and engagements.
9. Read. Listen. React...or not...

Social media must be monitored. A post is quite different from a comment that you might receive through email, app, website, phone call, or old-fashioned snail mail. Everyone sees a post, and it spreads quickly. Very quickly.

Develop a thoughtful plan detailing which types of comments to respond to, how to respond, and which comments you will NOT react to.

10. Be consistent. Post Daily, or on a frequency that works best for your customers.

Don't overdo it. Multiple posts per day may annoy fans, and cause them to unfollow you.

Remember...like a long marriage between two people in love...nurturing a relationship with your customers will help keep them happy, delighted, and coming home for a long time.