

Using Social Media to Gain Exposure

From Just the FAQs www.JustTheFAQs.net

Social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook are experiencing explosive growth in popularity. Besides being helpful in connecting people of similar interests, recent surveys show they are good for business.

There are several schools of thought on the best ways to use social media sites to promote your product. The system that works best for you will depend mainly on several factors, including: the product or service you are selling, what appeals to your target audience, and your personality. Following are a few themes that outline the basics of different systems.

Theme 1 – Promoting a general audience book or music CD

Social media is a great way for you to connect with others who are interested in your genre. You have a wide variety of posting options that will be appealing to your target audience. Following are a few examples.

Post a little inside scoop or behind-the-scenes tidbit about your book or CD. Folks enjoy knowing about something related to your product that others don't know. Post dates for upcoming interviews, book signings, or gigs. You can post variations on this theme for a month prior to the event, which will keep the date fresh in your follower's mind and give time for them to help spread the word for you.

Post topical comments. If a big star in your genre has just published a new product or made the news, post about it. Even better, write something on your blog about it too. Your name and blog will get associated in the search engines with the big-name star. Another way to make use of this connection is to periodically write reviews of books or CDs that appeal to your target audience.

Tell your audience what inspires you. Folks enjoy hearing about where the book or music originated or what compelled you to tell that story. You can also post about your past influences and how they flavor your work.

In general, you can find a lot of things to post on social media sites that relate to your product but don't reference it directly. This makes you appealing to more followers who share interest in the genre without overly promoting yourself.

Keep in mind that you are talking to your fan base. Be careful about becoming too personal or voicing opinions that could potentially alienate them. Recall what happened to the Dixie Chicks when they made a political statement from the stage. Social media sites are very much a public stage.

Theme 2 – Promoting a service oriented book

One of the best ways to increase your social media network and draw more clients is to constantly offer helpful content that is directly related to the services you provide. For instance, if you offer book publicity services, writing articles with tips on using the internet for promotion are helpful to your potential clients. You can then post on social media sites to alert folks that you are freely offering this information or advice.

Constantly posting the availability of content-rich articles helps you in two important ways. It establishes you as an expert in your field. And, it builds your reputation of being helpful and interested in the success of your clients.

This can also help you create valuable networking connections with experts in related fields. For instance, if you are a book publicity expert, building a network of referrals from editors and book

publishers is in your best interest. Using social media in this manor can establish you as the go-to-person among your network. You can also use your network connections to help your potential clients find services you don't offer. If you're in publicity, refer someone to an editor in your network. It's likely she will return the favor in the future.

If you are using social media to promote a service, keep your posts focused mainly on your service and not your personal life. Finding the proper balance of business and personal posts is tricky. Remember that the point of these sites is to be social. If you only squawk about your business offerings, you're likely to loose followers. But, if you get too personal, you're likely to loose even more followers.

The proper separation of business and personal life is especially troublesome to those who work from a home office. Here's a good example. During the 2008 presidential campaign, several service providers chose to publically voice their political views, comments, and outrages on their business social media sites. Remember, you are talking to clients and your network peers, not your best buddies. On these sites, you are a representative of your service business. Keep your personal posts appropriate to that status.