

Try this on for size

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Have you ever gone into a store to buy something you spotted in a window, or online only to discovered that it didn't fit or it looked bad on you. Then a store employee walks up to you and asks if they can help you. You then relate your disappointment concerning their product and they tell you that a competitor has what you're looking for. You thank them and as your walking out of the store you see an amazing hat and you buy it. Chances are you'll go back to that store because of the employee's honesty, the connection they made with you and of course that great hat.

What's Changed?

Nothing, except how we connect. I was talking to a fellow in a social gathering the other evening that's a "fund raiser" for the non-profit sector. He was convinced that people would eventually move away from social media to re-connect on a personal level through social gatherings ect…

I thought about what he said and came to the conclusion that social media hasn't taken the place of physical interaction in-fact it's facilitated it. People use social sites to communicate with a wider range of people and in turn become involved in more diverse live associations. Here are some online resources that organize people and set up meeting places for groups.

What do I think?

Social media is just what it says, with an emphasis on social.

Media is everything from Video, audio to written media like blogging.

I am a businessperson, artist and consumer so I understand the power of social media. Social media has become this thing that keeps growing incrementally while indulging every creative whim a person can throw at it. It's a sort of equalizer when it comes to marketing and communicating. We all have an opportunity to reach huge numbers of people as long as we keep our message compelling.

Have we lost the personal touch?

No! In fact social media has helped us discover more about more people, which helps us make informed choices about

whom and what we get involved in.

People are becoming more creative with how they communicate and that is spurring on large projects where 100's of people can participate real time.

This is a global opportunity for every-ones 15 minutes of fame.

How did it happen to me?

I'm one of those people that just didn't get what all the hype was about. Twitter and the universe forbid, Facebook; were the furthest thing from my mind until one day when I was side swiped by a truck with a logo on it that said "if your not on Twitter you're an idiot."

What would you do?

Well! I went straight home and registered on Twitter.

The same thing happened with Facebook except it had something to do with an old lady, watermelon and a cop. I don't exactly remember how it happened but it turned out to be pretty cool. The interesting thing was in spite of my lack of enthusiasm about Facebook; I started getting emails from all sorts of people, artists, business owners and musicians and that got my attention.

Have we come full circle?

Here's a bit of a stretch but I think the only thing that separates us from cave people is technology and mouthwash.

Back in the day people would communicate by drawing pictographs on stone or in the dirt to communicate.

Fred and Barney would be out all day looking for food trying not to BE food them selves and would come back to the cave needing some way to represent their journey; hence, they would draw some pictures in the dirt while jumping around and grunting about how a T/Rex just about got them.

Today we are communicating essentially the same things

(Our journeys in life) with a platform that just happens to be technologically based. The funny thing is we now have the challenge of getting our message across this huge network called the Internet.

So who cares?

No matter how you look at it this whole thing is still about people and how we communicate our thoughts and feelings. So isn't it fair to say that the more people we connect with the more interesting our lives will be? Doesn't it

also apply to our online experience?

The wave has just begun

As much as I hesitate to use the term online marketing it has found a major place in social media.

Branding has become the new buzzword even though it's been around forever.

Companies and people alike have jumped on board to promote their products and them selves.

Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, Youtube and thousands of other sites are using Social Media as conduits for millions of potential fans, followers and patrons.

The masses are falling in line to become part of this phenomenon and anyone can move from obscurity to fame literally over night.

There's someone in their basement right now building the ultimate miniature city with hopes of being on Oprah.

Blogging is the epicenter of this new Social culture.

The Blogivist

I know what your thinking but if you have ever read or wrote a word online, chances are you're a Blogivist. If you love writing blogs you're a Pro-Blogivist and if you hate Bloggers you're an Anti-Blogivist. Wherever your loyalties fall one thing is for certain, we can't ignore that Blogging has become this huge self-perpetuating culture.

Feeling like you're missing out

I know the feeling! It's Saturday night and all your friends are out doing something and all you can think of is you're missing the participatory social function of the year. Well! Don't worry! Social networking to the rescue!

No time?Go online!

Social media has helped me develop my skills as a promoter, artist and even though it maybe to early to tell, a writer. The bottom line: If you're an artist, writer, musician, actor, businessperson, craft-person, engineer, inventor or just someone with time on your hands, social media is where you can share your expertise. Blogging is a great way to hone your skills as a writer while networking with common minded people. There's one thing I've learned, every person has an opinion, and some people have several. Some people are direct and some beat around the bush while others hold nothing back and slam you every chance they get.

It all comes with the territory

I personally like to here people's take on things good or bad because it means they're paying attention. Madonna is an expert at getting peoples attention, she knows that all press is good press.

So you think you can be a star

It's a funny thing but those people that become big stars generally don't set out to be big stars. Making a comfortable living doing what you love is more than enough for most of us. The best way to reach your goals in my opinion is to do something you love or love something you do. Learning new things may spark new passions, which in turn will expand. I don't know if you've noticed but if you enthusiastically promote a concept it will get proportionately larger with every person you share it with.

People have an insatiable appetite for quality content, which encompasses all sorts of stuff, but you have to keep putting it in front of them. Powerful bylines to spur interest are based on a concept that if you say something long enough and to enough people in the right way you will create a trend.

Credibility

Proving myself to my audience not once but over and over again is a part of being an artist/business-person that has taken time getting use to. I can't afford to get lazy and rest on my laurels. Expecting people to just jump on board and be excited about my work isn't a real expectation. Once a following is developed you have to keep up the momentum and stay connected to your audience. My struggle was with the concept of social media and energy it took to stay on top of peoples requests and questions. I'm getting better at it but it's a long arduous road. Being involved in a community requires consistency of communication, like answering emails which takes time and energy. Your credibility depends on consistent high quality content which you get better at as time goes on.

I was thrust into social media by accident. I started communicating with a person via Facebook that purchased a painting from me. It turns out they knew someone with a company that just moved into a new office and needed some art. I ended up selling and renting several pieces to this company while establishing a friendly relationship with them online. O.K. you're thinking you lucky B*%&\$^ but the truth is, the friendships that developed from that one person, spread incrementally and transformed into a whole network of people. There are connections with people in walks of life I could never have made normally. It wasn't immediately apparent but by being myself and pursuing a friendly relationship I gained credibility with these people. Even the briefest of encounters can turn into something much bigger. Don't you think it's worth going a few extra steps? You'll never know whose door it will bring you to.

Everything seems to follow, as you become part of a community. Sites like Redbubble or Fineartamerica are great sites for artists, writers, photographers or any creative endeavor for that matter. Comments are generated and sent directly to you when a new image is uploaded or article written or creative journal entry is published. There are many sites like these that combine a hobby or skill set with social media like question and answer forums. Sites for motorcycle riders and builders, guitar, banjo builders, cabinetmakers, all recognize the importance of interaction within their specific community.

Here are the top 100 social media sites according to onlinecribb.

So if you feel so inclined start clicking and joining now.

1 <http://360.yahoo.com/> (1/7)

2 <http://www.orkut.com/> (2/9)

- 3 <http://spaces.live.com/> (4/
- 4 <http://www.myspace.com/> (6/
- 5 <http://www.facebook.com/> (7/
- 6 <http://www.hi5.com/> (8/6)
- 7 <http://www.friendster.com/> (14/7)
- 8 <http://www.fotolog.com/> (15/7)
- 9 <http://www.livejournal.com/> (60/8)
- 10 <http://www.xanga.com/> (99/7)
- 11 <http://www.bebo.com/> (104/7)
- 12 <http://www.multiply.com/> (108/6)
- 13 <http://www.linkedin.com/> (205/7)
- 14 <http://www.stumbleupon.com/> (298/8)
- 15 <http://www.gaiaonline.com/> (300/6)
- 16 <http://www.last.fm/> (304/7)
- 17 <http://www.piczo.com/> (351/6)
- 18 <http://my.opera.com/community> (495/8)
- 19 <http://www.buzznet.com/> (593/6)
- 20 <http://www.imvu.com/> (607/6)
- 21 <http://www.twitter.com/> (639/8)
- 22 <http://www.squidoo.com/> (728/7)
- 23 <http://www.mybloglog.com/> (769/7)
- 24 <http://www.wayn.com/> (816/5)
- 25 <http://www.slashdot.org/> (1,094/9)
- 26 <http://www.blackplanet.com/> (1,136/5)
- 27 <http://www.ning.com/> (1,286/7)
- 28 <http://www.myyearbook.com/> (1,403/5)
- 29 <http://www.meetup.com/> (1,664/8)
- 30 <http://www.classmates.com/> (1,692/7)
- 31 <http://www.unyk.com/> (1,865/4)
- 32 <http://www.vox.com/> (1,897/7)
- 33 <http://www.faceparty.com/> (2,058/5)
- 34 <http://www.yuwie.com/> (2,124/5)
- 35 <http://www.yelp.com/> (2,177/6)

- 36 <http://www.hubpages.com/> (2,632/6)
- 37 <http://www.secondlife.com/> (2,771/8)
- 38 <http://www.nexopia.com/> (3,378/4)
- 39 <http://www.mobango.com/> (4,085/4)
- 40 <http://www.43things.com/> (4,204/7)
- 41 <http://www.tribe.net/> (4,211/6)
- 42 <http://www.fanpop.com/> (4,839/5)
- 43 <http://www.reunion.com/> (4,968/5)
- 44 <http://www.greatestjournal.com/> (5,150/5)
- 45 <http://www.care2.com/> (5,176/6)
- 46 <http://www.migente.com/> (5,272/5)
- 47 <http://uk.tribe.net/> (5,635/1)
- 48 <http://community.adlandpro.com/> (6,207/1)
- 49 <http://www.broadcaster.com/> (6,246/5)
- 50 <http://www.ecademy.com/> (6,710/7)
- 51 <http://www.couchsurfing.com/> (7,058/6)
- 52 <http://www.downelink.com/> (7,490/5)
- 53 <http://www.mog.com/> (10,312/6)
- 54 <http://www.gazzag.com/> (10,458/1)
- 55 <http://www.ryze.com/> (13,792/6)
- 56 <http://www.gather.com/> (14,294/6)
- 57 <http://www.zaadz.com/> (15,909/5)
- 58 <http://www.librarything.com/> (17,191/7)
- 59 <http://www.xuqa.com/> (18,810/5)
- 60 <http://www.directmatches.com/> (19,811/3)
- 61 <http://www.profileheaven.com/> (20,430/5)
- 62 <http://www.dogster.com/> (22,382/6)
- 63 <http://www.eons.com/> (23,951/7)
- 64 <http://start.aimpages.com/> (26,586/6)
- 65 <http://www.passado.com/> (29,966/5)
- 66 <http://www.ruckus.com/> (31,343/6)
- 67 <http://www.travbuddy.com/> (31,852/5)

- 68 <http://www.student.com/> (32,949/5)
- 69 <http://www.sosyalan.com/> (39,410/3)
- 70 <http://www.graduates.com/> (56,012/5)
- 71 <http://www.tagworld.com/> (56,274/6)
- 72 <http://www.takingitglobal.org/> (58,663/6)
- 73 <http://www.blurty.com/> (72,692/5)
- 74 <http://www.bizpreneur.com/> (88,278/3)
- 75 <http://www.deadjournal.com/> (106,356/6)
- 76 <http://www.mygamma.com/> (108,786/1)
- 77 <http://www.trade-pals.com/> (119,086/4)
- 78 <http://www.musicforte.com/> (123,719/6)
- 79 <http://www.consumating.com/> (124,922/7)
- 80 <http://www.meetin.org/> (132,335/4)
- 81 <http://www.wallop.com/> (150,190/6)
- 82 <http://www.mugshot.org/> (181,098/7)
- 83 <http://www.dandelife.com/> (188,889/6)
- 84 <http://www.dodgeball.com/> (189,116/6)
- 85 <http://www.groovenet.ph/> (204,372/3)
- 86 <http://www.itsjustcoffee.com/> (242,134/4)
- 87 <http://www.oyaye.com/> (243,763/3)
- 88 <http://www.socialgrid.com/> (285,886/5)
- 89 <http://www.tripconnect.com/> (327,071/6)
- 90 <http://www.decayenne.com/> (349,546/4)
- 91 <http://www.listography.com/> (436,905/4)
- 92 <http://www.flingr.com/> (458,075/4)
- 93 <http://www.kontakan.com/> (641,254/3)
- 94 <http://www.katropa.com/> (932,484/4)
- 95 <http://www.intellectconnect.com/> (940,414/3)
- 96 <http://www.bizfriendz.com/> (975,651/3)
- 97 <http://www.sitespaces.net/> (1,040,719/3)
- 98 <http://www.refer-online.com/> (1,433,365/3)
- 99 <http://www.yapperz.com/> (1,741,210/3)
- 100 <http://www.babbello.com/> (1,994,389/4)

~ by liquidcribb on December 11, 2009.

Some Stats!

96% of Generation Y have joined a social network while 19% of internet users enjoy social network daily. If Facebook was a country it would be the 4th largest with over 350 Million active users. The average user spends 55 minutes a day on Facebook with 20% of users access via mobile phone. The fastest growing group is 35-54 year olds which 55% are female. Flickr enjoys 90 million uploads a month while Twitter has 60 million users.

Here are few a few more reasons to get involved in social Media

- You can interact with people and build a community.
- 71% percent of shoppers read reviews
- 82% of shoppers are influence by reviews
- Reviews are the largest part of Social Media
- Social Media is a good tool for providing and improving customer service.
- By integrating Social Media into how you communicate will encourage guests and potential customers to interact with you.
- Search Engines rate Google local, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, flickr, Youtube, Tripadvisor, Wikipedia and Yahoo optimal when searching for key words.

If it were me I would try it on for size then buy the damn hat.