

Social Media for Sales

Be Where Your Prospects Want You to Be

While social media may just seem like a bunch of hype, it can be a very useful tool for sales people to connect with prospects. Even if you don't want to take time to participate in social media, it is your responsibility to be where your prospects are and to interact with them where and when they want to engage with you.

Social media can be very important for B2B sales reps as it may help strengthen a relationship with a prospect during a long sales cycle. It is also important if your company is trying to appear as a leader in the industry, as those not participating in social media may appear dated. It can also be a great way to get referrals from connections you already have, which are often the best types of leads.

In addition, participation may help strengthen the reputation of your company's brand and help broaden the reach of the corporate social media strategy.

How to Get Started in Social Media

This beginner's guide will help get you started on the top social media sites by showing you the best ways to interact to grow your pipeline in the shortest amount of time.

Even if you are convinced you should be using social media you may not know how and where to focus your energy, causing you to spend too much time on leads that are not ready for sales interaction. To ensure this doesn't happen do some research to find out which social networks your prospects are using. You can do this simply by asking some of your current contacts where they spend their time online. For many it is LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, but some industries also have well developed forums or online workspaces that your prospects may visit regularly. Make sure you are only doing the activities in social media that will enhance the relationships with your prospects, avoiding time wasters like viral videos and online games that frequently are passed along on these sites.

Twitter for Sales Finding Prospects



When you first create your account make sure to include a picture, links to your company site or personal blog, and a description of what you will be tweeting about in your profile. Often accounts that do not include this information appear 'spammy'. Also, consider changing your background to include contact information so



The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter profile for Patricia Broderick. The profile includes a profile picture, a bio, and a recent tweet. Callouts point to various elements: 'Picture' points to the profile picture, 'Completed Profile' points to the bio, 'Contact Info' points to the website and blog links, and 'Engaging with Others' points to the tweet. The tweet text reads: 'Marketo's DG2LN Webinar was awesome! Archived recording and slides available tomorrow or Friday at the link below'.

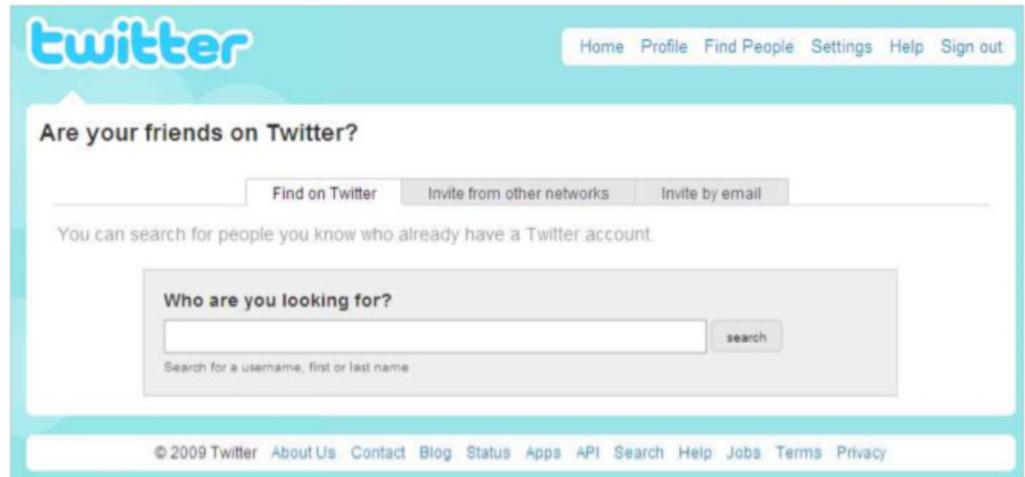
Sample Twitter
Profile Suggested
for Sales

contacts know how to reach you.

Then, find your prospects on Twitter by using the Find People tab on the site. Try to find everyone on your prospect list. Then, broaden this by following those that your followers are following. Often people will follow people in the same industry who

Interacting with Prospects and Followers

Simultaneously while building your Twitter followers you will want to share real-time news about what you are doing/reading/learning that may be interesting to your prospects. Try to Tweet a few times a day, and never about things that no one cares to know, like what you had for breakfast or who you just had a



may also be potential prospects. Also follow people that your competitors are following.

Next, do a search for experts in the field who are tweeting. Follow them and their followers to connect with more people in your industry. (Find these by Googling phrases like CEOs that Tweet, CIOs that Tweet) You can also find people to follow on sites like Wefollow.com or Twibes.com.

It is okay to follow people you don't know. This is normal on this social network. Also, don't be surprised that people you don't know will be following you. Make sure to follow back everyone that is following you. It's likely that for every 3 or 4 people you follow that one will follow back, though sometimes more. Just remember that Twitter has a 2000 follower limit that only increases as your follower count increases.

Monitor what people are saying by reading the Tweets of those you follow and searching for tweets on keywords relevant to your product. Look for tweets that indicate dissatisfaction with current competitor solutions or that mention a problem your product may solve. Follow everyone who turns up in these searches.

meeting with. For sales reps too much information can be detrimental as it can give away information to competitors that may be following you.

Here are some sample generic tweets:

- The new guide on lead nurturing answered all my customers' questions! A whole checklist covered in one paper- Yes! <http://bit.ly/15xXZL>
- I really liked the new MarketingSherpa paper- has great stats about the benefits of Lead Nurturing <http://bit.ly/15xXZL>
- Check out the new Marketo paper on Lead Nurturing. <http://bit.ly/15xXZL> Please retweet.

Research has shown that asking for a retweet actually increases its chance to be retweeted. Just don't do it with every tweet. Save it for ones for ones that are most important or relevant.

You will notice that the links in these sample tweets don't look like regular URLs. This is because they were shortened for Twitter. You can find these shorteners on sites like [Tiny URL](http://TinyURL.com) or Bit.ly and they are built into Twitter tools like [Tweet Deck](http://TweetDeck.com) and [Twhirl](http://Twhirl.com).

Reply to what your prospects are saying by including your thoughts or comments on the subject they

Sales motivation - people and groups to connect with now

Connecting with Marketo:

<http://www.twitter.com/marketo>
<http://www.facebook.com/marketo>

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Marketo/21071685024>

Jeffery Gitomer:

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/jeffreygitomer>

<http://twitter.com/gitomer>

Sandler Sales:

<http://twitter.com/SandlerSelling>

Dale Carnegie:

<http://twitter.com/DaleCarnegie>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dale-Carnegie/41894476330>

Miller Heiman:

<http://twitter.com/MillerHeiman>
<http://www.linkedin.com/groupinvitation?groupId=3083>

The Tas Group

<http://twitter.com/thetasgroup>

Sales Lead Management Association:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groupinvitation?gid=53355>

have just talked about. Do this even if the prospect is not following you, as often after you interact with them they will then follow you. Reply to people by putting an @ before their Twitter username when responding. Example:

@Marketo I liked the ROI section on your paper about lead nurturing

Most importantly try to promote things that your prospects are saying so they know you value their thoughts and opinions. Do this with a retweet, meaning you repeat what they said and share it with your followers. Example:

RT @Marketo Salesforce.com Best Practices with David Taber, Author of Salesforce.com Secrets of Success <http://bit.ly/2RThA>

The Pound Symbol (#) on Twitter is known as a Hashtag. These tags are used to affiliate a tweet with a certain topic. Example:

Just learned about lead nurturing from @jonmiller2 – a great speaker #mprofsb2b

In this case the hashtag indicated an event that the Twitterer was attending.

Avoid the temptation to use tools that send automatic direct messages. This is often seen as spam messages and may cause people to unfollow you.

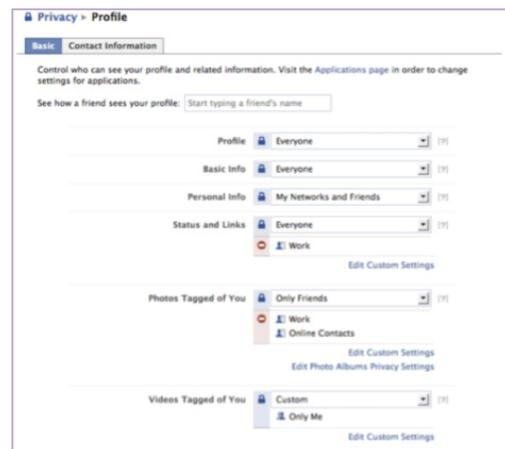


Facebook for Sales Creating Connections

Unlike Twitter, it is inappropriate for you to friend people that you do not know. On this social media site you should only try to connect with those that you have spoken with in the past. When speaking to them in person or on the phone you may also want to mention that you will be initiating a connection with them on Facebook. When sending a friend request be sure to mention how you know them and why you'd like to connect. The benefit to the limited connections is that once connected you have a better chance of your prospect paying attention to what you say (compared to sites like Twitter).

Since users typically have personal content on Facebook (like family photos) the site has developed the ability to create privacy profiles. This allows you

Facebook Privacy Settings



to limit the content that groups of people can see, but will allow others full access to your content. This means you can share personal content with close friends while staying connected with acquaintances or business contacts.

If you are using this site for business, try to promote thought leadership occurring at your organization through status updates and links on your page. Also, when you have something that may be interesting to a Facebook friend consider sending an email through the site. These emails can be sent to multiple people and may have a better chance of being read than traditional email.

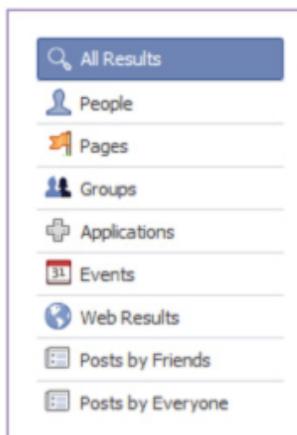
Also, just because you can't connect with someone you don't know doesn't mean you can't use their profile to help you prospect. Look at the friends of a prospect to see if you can identify new prospects from their list of friends or find people you know who may be able to make introductions or referrals to the prospect.

Connections through Conversations

On Facebook you can do more than just friend people and post status and picture updates. You can also connect with people through Fan Pages and Groups. The best way for sales people to do this is to join groups that are relevant to their prospect and then participate in any conversations that are happening in that group. And you can find these groups, plus events, applications and more using Facebook's search.

10 Great Social Selling Resources:

- Marketo Lead Management Blog
<http://Blog.marketo.com>
- The Sales 2.0 Network
<http://sales20network.com/blog>
- B2B Lead Generation
<http://blog.startwithalead.com/weblog>
- Sales Lead Insights
<http://www.sales-lead-insights.com>
- Smashmouth Marketing
<http://www.damphousse.org>
- Selling to Big Companies
<http://sellingtobigcompanies.blogs.com/selling>
- Build a Sales Machine
<http://www.buildasalesmachine.com>
- The Sales 2.0 Advocate
<http://www.sales20book.com/wp/blog>
- Sales Lead Management Association Blog
<http://blog.salesleadmgmtassn.com>
- The Funnelholic
<http://www.funnelholic.com>



Facebook Search Options

but instead join conversations that are happening or post information about thought leadership from your company that may be relevant. If you find you are 'talking' with a person repeatedly in these groups it is acceptable to send a friend request to this contact.

Also, event organizers will post tradeshows in the events section of a group. Consider reaching out to the people who have joined these groups or signed up as attending these events asking for a meeting or for them to stop by your booth. This is a great way to find out which of your prospects may be attending an event. Getting the edge on who is attending a tradeshow allows you to be better prepared than your competitors.



LinkedIn for Sales Creating Connections

Like Facebook, it is inappropriate to connect with people who you do not know, but it is okay to connect with people who you have done some work with but don't have a strong personal connection. On LinkedIn you can be banned from the site if you try to connect to people you don't actually know. Because of this, you should try to send an invitation to connect with everyone you speak with as soon as possible after the conversation so they remember your interaction. The more connections you have the better it is for you because it means you have a higher number of 2nd degree connections (indicat-

For example, you may want to join a MarketingProfs or MarketingSherpa group if you are trying to sell to Marketers. Even better, you may want to join a local chapter of the group if you are assigned a specific territory. Be sure not to post 'salesy' topics,

ing a larger network).

On this site, like on Twitter, you want to make sure your profile is as complete as possible. Make sure to fill out all the relevant information about what you do and why you have joined the site. It is optional to add a picture, but is recommended to appear more personal. Try to get recommendations that include positive comments about the product you are selling. These positive comments may seem like great third party references without the extra worked involved in setting up a reference call. Before connecting with prospects be sure to connect with old co-workers and other friends to build your connections.

You can use these connections to ask for online referrals. You can do this either through the introduc-



Example LinkedIn profile

tions tool or by asking people in your network to introduce you to others in their network outside of the site. When you find a prospect on the site it will tell you if you have any contacts that are connected to this person, allowing you to find the best way to a referral.

You should also pay attention to the network updates you receive on this site. This will clue you in if your prospects are connecting with competitors or someone has changed job (which may indicate they are going to need your services at their new company).

Finally, you may want to look into LinkedIn's paid services, which will provide more communication features, communication access, and more powerful search options.

About Marketo

Marketo is the fastest growing provider of marketing automation and best practices. Marketo's uncompromising on-demand solutions enable marketing and sales teams to collaborate throughout the revenue cycle, from the earliest stages of demand generation and lead management to the pursuit of revenue and customer loyalty.

Marketo Lead Management gives Marketers the power and flexibility to automate demand generation campaigns and deliver high quality sales leads with less effort, while Marketo Sales Insight helps Sales understand, prioritize and interact with the hottest leads and opportunities to close business faster. Known for providing the most innovative user experience and the fastest time to value, Marketo was voted 'Best Marketing Automation Application' by Salesforce customers on the Force.com AppExchange. As of June 2009, more than 200 mid-market and enterprise companies in nine countries have selected Marketo.



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Connections through Conversations



Besides connections and referrals you can connect with people through Groups, Q&A, and events. Join groups that your prospects will be participating in. For sales people selling to marketers this may be groups like Marketers, Marketing Executives Group and Marketing Communications. If you are a sales rep with a specific territory you may be more successful in groups like AMA Boston Marketers, Austin Marketing Association, etc. You can identify these groups through the group search or by viewing what groups prospects and customers have joined, which is visible on their page. Once you join these groups you will want to comment on conversations others are having. You will know what is happening because you will receive daily or weekly updates about the group from LinkedIn.



The Question and Answer section of LinkedIn can be used by sales people in two ways. First, you can answer questions posted by prospects requesting information about your product or industry. Try to stay active by choosing one day a week to look for questions that may be relevant. Send a message through the site to the owner of the question asking them to keep you up to date on the answer and follow-up by sending them an invitation to connect. You can also search old questions that may indicate people in the industry that may be interested in your product.

Second, you can post questions that may help indicate someone is looking for your service.

A good example of this is:

I had a customer ask for a way to solve X problem. We recommend X. Can you think of any other creative ideas to solve this problem?

A bad use of the Q&A section is this:

I don't like ABC competitor. I hear XYZ (my company) is better. What do you think?

Reply personally to everyone who responds to your question and then send them an invitation to connect on the site.

The events section of LinkedIn allows event organizers to post events and encourages those attending to RSVP for the event. Look at who is attending to identify prospects or set up meetings at the event. By knowing who is attending you will be able to do pre-work, preparing for discussions at the event.

Continuing the Connection

After you make connections in social media it is important to stay in touch with prospects so they know they are more than just a name or resource to you. Make sure you are using lead nurturing to keep these prospects interested, and make sure you receive alerts when these social media prospects visit your website, since it's a sign that they might be ready to buy. Also use social selling, taking advantage of web 2.0 technologies merged with traditional sale strategies, enabling you to reach prospects at the perfect time in their decision process.

Learn More about Marketo Sales Insight

Marketo Sales Insight helps reps prioritize, understand and interact with the hottest sales leads and opportunities to close more business faster. It gives reps a "sixth sense" so they know who is ready for, and most likely to appreciate, a call or email from them. And it lets reps send smart campaigns and get instant updates when leads and opportunities open their emails, visit the website, or show other "Interesting Moments" and buying signs.

Watch a demo of Marketo Sales Insight today:
<http://www.marketo.com/demo>