

Thought Leader Series Q&A with Mari Smith:

Q: Can you recommend a good book on the subject and advice on names?

A: *Social Media Marketing in an Hour a Day* by Dave Evans
Socialnomics by Erik Qualman
The Facebook Era by Clara Shih
Facebook marketing Bible eBook by Justin Smith

Q: Does Mari Smith provide consulting to sole entrepreneur businesses?

A: Yes, Mari Smith would be happy to chat regarding consulting and training. You can contact her directly at Mari@marismith.com

Q: I have a Facebook fan page and can't seem to find/access it... any suggestions?

A: Click on Applications at the bottom left; look for Pages and Ads and any pages you have should appear there. If your page is published and you're a fan of your own page, you should be able to begin typing the name in the master search bar at the top right

Q: My Twitter is automatically updating to my FB acct. and I've done everything to stop it from doing so (everything w/in help guidelines). Any out-of-the-box suggestions?

A: On Facebook, click Applications and then edit applications; look through all the various filters of types of apps and see if you can find the Twitter app... Uninstall the app.

Q: How do we create a fan page... by creating a group?

A: A Group is entirely different and I don't really recommend them. To create a Page, scroll to the very foot and click "Advertising" then look for the Pages button, then click Create a Page.

Q: Is there a Facebook for Dummies? I need some hot-to and don't find the index of help on Facebook user-friendly?

A: Yes, I believe there is; there's *Social Media Marketing for Dummies*. You're welcome to post questions on my fan page wall: <http://facebook.com/marismith> and I'll do my best to help out.

Q: How do you get the person from you Facebook page into your follow up email system?

A: Add an opt-in box using the Static FBML app; you just copy and paste the opt-in code into the app. You can add a tab too like "Free Download" or "Free Stuff" - I have several on my fan page you're welcome to take a look by way of example <http://facebook.com/marismith>.

Q: I noticed on your website that you have had several of these events. Where can we get downloads of the previous discussions?

A: Ah, great question - I will be overhauling my website shortly with all kinds of free downloads. Meantime, you can find slides of mine on slideshare.net and many of my radio interviews on <http://marismith.com/radio>. Thanks for asking!

Q: I have been noticing a HUGE number of posts lately on company's beginning to have formal "social media" policies. What is your take on the blatant waste of corporate time that employees are taking talking about what they are having for dinner?

A: A social media policy is crucial for all companies - they should stipulate what can and cannot be shared online, what activities online employees can engage in, who will be the voice/face of the company, managing negative publicity, what to say when asked about the company's presence on Facebook/Twitter etc. As for "blatant waste of corporate time" - I read a fascinating article recently that talked about how employees who fritter away time on social networks are likely the same ones who will goof off at the photocopier, coffee machine or water cooler and take longer lunch breaks, make personal phone calls on company time, etc. In other words, they are not responsible, motivated employees. Take Zappos for an example; they have a tremendous corporate culture arising from ten core values and is one of the most fun and desirable places to work - they're now a billion dollar company. So, bottom line, I think it's the companies' responsibility to properly train, motivate, inspire and empower their employees to integrate social media appropriately and certainly not fritter away company time.

Q: Twitter refers prospects to facebook...how do we get people to follow us on twitter in the first place (other than e-mail, our web page)?

A: I think it's easier to build your network on Twitter than on Facebook - you can certainly do both, but Facebook can take a bit longer. With Twitter - go to the directory at <http://twellow.com> and search for keywords that would be in the bios

of your ideal clients/target market. When you login at Twellow, you can just then click and follow your search results - a great task to delegate to an assistant. Other places to find targeted followers is the awesome new directory of lists: <http://listorious.com> and also a user created directory <http://wefollow.com>

Q: How concerned should we be that my competitors don't pick off my customers via my twitter or facebook connections? Are steps possible/needed to avoid this possibility?

A: Wow, great question regards competitors - this is an area I monitor very closely myself. As you can imagine, being in the business of social media training itself, I'm very "out there" and my fan page is really active and if someone tweets to me looking for social media help, anyone could easily intercept and entice them away. I find the most helpful thing to do is to develop an abundance mindset - insofar as there is far more business than any of us can possibly handle and that if a client prefers to do business with someone else, then that's their choice. But I do monitor my fan page comments closely and will find I have to delete posts/comments from time to time when people are just plain inappropriate in soliciting business right under my nose! (It's far easier to monitor on Facebook as it moves much slower; to monitor who's saying what on Twitter is nigh on impossible as I can't really track replies to people tweeting to me). It's important to stay on top of your game, do what you can promptly and as Gary Vaynerchuk says "hustle!!"

Q: Is there a web site for International Social Media Association?

A: <http://ismaconnects.org>

Q: Is TweetDeck important? How best can it be used?

A: I've tried to get into TweetDeck many times and just find it cumbersome and slow. I really like Twhirl.org made by Seesmic along with HootSuite.com. Seesmic Desktop and now for the web are supposed to be great. For the iPhone, Tweetie2 is the best. I recommend experimenting to see what you like best. There's no one size fits all.

Q: Despite the excitement around social media, those of us who have been in this field for more than two years still struggle to present the effectiveness of this new marketing channel. It is apparent now more than ever before, that to allocate budget and demonstrate ROI is key to having an effective marketing mix. When defining how to track and act on the analytics data from the social media initiatives it is apparent we must attach an analytics tag to the social media asset, creating or deploying a

third-party cookie on the user's machine. Are you aware of other best practices to analyze performance results, optimize performance and compare performances?

A: Wow, great question - I would recommend doing research on this topic on sites like mashable.com, rww.com, marketingprofs.com, altimetergroup.com, briansolis.com, socialmediaexaminer.com, socialmediaexplorer.com -- these are all companies/agencies that have case studies, stats, graphs for the corporate market.

Q: In converting buzz into an impactful part of marketing it is becoming obvious that there are fewer producers and users of content in relation to those who simply look to build their connections. Having useful and meaningful connections some would argue is more important than having 10,000 fans/followers, etc. Are you aware of any methods or means to separate these leeches and trolls from your social network or business groups?

A: I say the 80:20 rule applies always -- focus your efforts on engaging with the 20% of individuals who are your biggest fans and brand/company evangelists and pretty much ignore the rest. I find this 20% is somewhat "floating" insofar as sometimes I won't hear from someone for awhile, so they are in the 80% I'm not really engaged with, then they spring up and help me with a big promotion for example and they have a large loyal following so it makes a difference. It's a matter of using your best judgment; I'm just nice to everyone but careful about where I invest my precious time! :)

Q: We're a Staffing Company - should our tweets be geared more towards our clients or our applicants (temps)? Right now - We have a "hodge-podge" of both and even a "fun facts Friday" with random thoughts. Is this too scattered or confusing?

A: Oh I think this is great - as a staffing agency it's clear you have two separate audiences and I think it could be odd to have two separate twitter accounts geared to each audience. I'm thinking the clients can learn from the temps and vice versa. :) I would also recommend occasionally doing a poll to find out what your followers most want to hear from you.

Q: What do you mean by "opt in" box? To sign up as a fan of the page? Or to be on a mailing list?

A: Opt-in box is to sign up to be on your mailing list!

Q: I'm looking at Mari's FB fan page - how did she create the "Welcome" tab?

A: The Welcome tab and a few others are all created using the Static FBML app - it allows you to paste in your own HTML. FBML is Facebook Markup Language - Facebook's own version of HTML. They are similar. You can use a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor like Dreamweaver or Windows Livewriter to create the content then drop in the raw code into the Static FBML app.

Q: What is a popular portal that allows you to communicate to all online social networks? I want to put the message out there one time and then have the message filter to all other sites.

A: Sure - you can either use ping.fm or hellotxt.com. I like to also use hootsuite.com which syncs with ping.fm (or socialoomph.com does too) and then you can actually *preschedule* content to update all your social networks. I do recommend going onto the sites live every day though to respond personally, interact, engage, and reach out.

Q: Can you explain True Twit?

A: True Twit is similar to Spam Arrest or any other confirmation type email process except it's for Twitter. I'm not a fan of it at all and just ignore any requests that come in to validate me. :)

Q: What's Dreamweaver?

A: Dreamweaver is a website building software made by Macromedia. You could try Windows LiveWriter instead - it's free to download (for PCs only) and is also a WYSIWYG editor allowing you to create content then view the source (raw html) and paste into the Static FBML app on Facebook.

Q: How do you get more fans for your fan page?

A: There a wide number of ways ranging from emailing your list periodically, talking about your fan page on Twitter, posting your fan page on your personal profile, mentioning your fan page in your status updates periodically on your personal profile, blogging, doing a big launch, including a badge/widget on your blog, including in your email/ezine signature file, and on your business cards. Essentially talking up a storm about being on Facebook and motivating people to join you!

Q: How do you make a short url for Facebook?

A: the best link shortening service to use is <http://bit.ly> ... oh, but if you mean the Vanity URL's that is <http://facebook.com/username> - you'll need 25 fans then you can register a name for your fan page, you can also get one for your personal profile.

Q: How do you post your FB and tweet addresses on websites, blogs etc?

A: just take the URL and add... also look for various widgets that Facebook and Twitter offer. <http://www.facebook.com/facebook-widgets/> & <http://twitter.com/goodies/widgets>

Q: How many tweets? Suggestions for tweets?

A: the "optimal" number some folks say is 23 tweets a day. it's far too many for most people though. I suggest 3-8 good content tweets and as much @ tweets as you're comfortable with (replying to/engaging with your followers). It's best to focus on quality over quantity and be the voice that is remembered at the end of each day, not just heard.

Q: Where can you look to see how effective (e.g. sales due to FB or Twitter) social media is for specific companies?

A: You could Google social media case studies. See <http://socialmediaexaminer.com> for case studies along with mashable.com

Visit Mari's blogs and Facebook fan page for free e-courses and tips:

<http://marismith.com> | <http://www.whyfacebook.com> | <http://facebook.com/marismith>

Find Swiftpage on Twitter and Facebook or visit our blog.

<http://www.twitter.com/swiftpage> | [Facebook](#) | <http://swiftpage.wordpress.com>