

Insight

May 2009

Do Twitter, Facebook, and all of the other "social media" mechanisms have a place in the professional world?

Do you know how to get your message out in 140 characters?

Absolutely...

strategic counsel and planning • media relations • media training • lobbying and government relations • crisis communications • grassroots and grasstops organizing • community relations • reputation management • internal communications • event planning • writing and editing • design and production

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What is social media?

And why should you care?

Do you have a camera on your mobile phone? Are you a Facebook member? Have you ever written on an online message board? Have you shared a story with a friend via e-mail or Facebook? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, your phone and Internet have enabled you to become a participant in the new social media world.

Nearly half of smart phone users are business people, and 72% are between the ages of 25 and 54.

(Source: Nielsen Mobile Research)



Social media lets the user shift between the roles of audience, author and distributor. It replaces the one-way print and broadcast models with interactive conversations that can include creating and sharing text, video, audio and photos. Oftentimes these basic conversations and information-sharing are only among friends and “Facebook friends,” but businesses, organizations, governments, and traditional media outlets are embracing the power of social media.

The idea that anyone with a computer, smart phone (i.e., a phone with Internet and e-mail capabilities), or digital camera or video recorder can do the work

More than 18 million Facebook users post a status update at least daily.



of a reporter is precisely why we should care about social media.

This ever-changing world is also why clients look to Goff & Howard to create an effective strategy that combines social and traditional media to reach their audiences.

CASE IN POINT

A disgruntled U-Haul customer last year aired his grievances to his 1,500 Twitter followers, some of whom contributed their own criticisms of U-Haul to thousands more people via Twitter in a matter of a few hours — all before U-Haul had any knowledge of the spreading stories.

How has social media changed your life?

Local media and business people illustrate variety of benefits

“It provides a low-cost way to build a grassroots platform on an issue. It allows the Chamber of Commerce to do more with less...a lot less.”

Jennifer Anderson Gale, president, River Heights Chamber of Commerce

“Social media = bigger source network & feedback loop, new marketing channel, virtual newsroom banter, & stronger, humanized relationships.”

David Brauer, *MinnPost*

“It helped me find a job.”

Andrea Hoppman, Twin Cities professional blogger

“Social media has given me a great way to stay connected to my customers and gain trust with prospective customers.”

Bud Kleppe, realtor

“I don’t feel so isolated working from my home office.”

Amy Lewis, Renown Marketing

“I follow local newsies, PR types, and so many others. Better informed now.”

Bob Moffitt, American Lung Association of Minnesota

“It has opened up a whole new way to reconnect and network with people who may be able to help me in my job search.”

Laura Oakes, freelance producer and on-air talent

“Its provided me with incredibly fast updates on news.”

Michael Skillrud, sr. regional account executive, CarSoup.com



Four-fifths of the world population will carry mobile Internet devices within 5-10 years.

(Source: VentureBeat.com, 14 May 2008)

Guide to social media



Active Twitter users increased by 900% in one year from 2008 to 2009.

(Source: FinancialPost.com, 13 February 2009)

Goff & Howard's clients frequently ask which social media option – or combination of options – to use in a given situation.

Web site: A Web site is the ideal place for both general and timely background information about your organization.

Blog: A blog is updated more frequently than a Web site and is more conversational. For instance, Goff & Howard's blog – the GH Spin – is where our employees provide timely media and political updates, tips on printing, and more.

facebook

This social networking site has become an effective personal and professional tool for keeping friends and colleagues up to date. The only way for an organization to know what is being said is to become a member (for free) — just like many of your employees and customers already are. Facebook offers personal pages and pages for organizations, which can help a workplace show what it is like to work there.

LinkedIn

The Internet's first major professional networking site, LinkedIn is widely used to recommend people you've worked with and research prospective employees or employers. This is a free, members-only site.

twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read other users' updates known as "tweets," which are posts of up to 140 characters. It is one of the best and most cost-effective ways to reach today's changing media with compact information that can be viewed as a text message on a phone, smart phone, or through other applications.

After sending just one tweet, Goff & Howard client *A Taste of Minnesota* gained more than 100 followers to its Twitter messages.

YouTube

From TV show snippets and music videos to home and how-to videos, the variety of video on YouTube is endless. YouTube was the first site to make video sharing a mainstream technology. It has since been bought by Google.

Online comments: Online newspapers and many other Web sites invite visitors to comment. But that doesn't necessarily mean that you should... If you have a point of view not meant for the rest of the world to know, it is probably unwise to comment, even if you are going by an alias. If a site or story has made a factual error, this is a good spot to politely make a correction.

Since the early 1990s, the proportion of Americans saying they read a newspaper on a typical day has declined by about 40%; the proportion that regularly watches nightly network news has fallen by 50%.

(Source: 2008 biennial news consumption survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press)



What's new at

G&H



Facebook



Twitter



LinkedIn



Blogspot

Facebook has more than 175 million active users. Its fastest growing demographic is people 30+.



Media training: how to make the media less intimidating



If a reporter shows up unannounced at your business, how would your office manager handle it? If the editor of the local newspaper wants to interview you, what should you say? Or if a blogger posts negative comments about your organization, how would you know?

Having a process for media-related situations is crucial to your organization's success. One of the best ways to help your organization prepare is through media and

spokesperson training tailored to your needs. Goff & Howard's training sessions are designed to reflect the constant evolution in the media, and to fit the situations your organization could encounter on any day. From a two-hour training session with 1-3 people to a full-day session for a group of 20, we personalize our trainings and focus on real-world scenarios so that your spokesperson(s) and key staff can face the media with confidence.