

Content Insider #442 - You're Good

## Social Media is Customer Relations ... *Not* Public Relations!

Jack Nicholson said it best in *A Few Good Men*... "You can't handle the truth!"



Source – "A Few Good Men," Warner Bros.

We agree because we're not one of the thousands of anointed social media PR experts who know social media – Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, G+, Twitter, you name it – was made for them to rule!

But of course *you* are.

After all, you have your company/personal Facebook pages.

You have your company/personal Twitter accounts.

You have a ton of other locations to visit, update and track your followers.

You update your pages and Tweet constantly.

The boss has to love you when you tell him/her Facebook just surpassed a couple of billion users and Twitter users are close behind.

***OMG, you're awesome!!!!***

Of course, some things are in disarray; but hey, they are so yesterday!

Yeah, your corporate press section has a form media folks can fill in for "pretty quick" publicity assistance/information. Hey, 3-4 days is quick!

Your press section has all the HTML releases and authorized images. A few real comprehensive website press rooms even have contact names and 9-5, M-F office numbers.

## **Look But Don't Touch**

If a customer has a problem or is really ticked and happens to reach you begging ... pleading ... crying ... screaming, you simply send them to customer service – in Bangladesh.

There ... another great customer contact!

A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* noted that everyone is promoting their social media marketing/communications expertise.

Or, as Forrester's Sean Corcoran said, "*You can't walk out your house without bumping into a social-media expert today.*"

An issue of *Business Week* had a great article on the hot new job ... social media director.

Reading all the noise surrounding social media, you'd think it was the second coming.

Man, it's the brave new world for individuals/agencies--especially since no one can quite measure what they/you do and your impact on the marketplace.



Source – New York Museum of Science

Finally, a real job you can sink your teeth into.

You have to admit the jobs discussed in the articles sound awesome ... all that viral outreach ... all those neat ideas for others to pick up and run with ... all of the great ideas just waiting to be spread across the market, across the globe.

## **We Missed the Class**

We always thought social media and sound relationships started with the customer... and ended with the customer.

Most seasoned professionals we know make the point that social CRM (customer relations management) and marketing/sales social media are difficult to get your arms around and difficult to integrate into your business operations.

If you don't understand your customers/your audience, it's tough to develop a social strategy that makes sense for your organization.

The templates the experts offer just don't work for everyone--or anyone, for that matter.

The problem with most smoke 'n mirror folks is they think they can control the conversation.

Hate to disillusion you, but the consumer owns the conversation about your company, your product/service, your support, you.

Try to control the conversation, steer/manipulate it and you lose the battle ... big time.

That's probably why in a recent social relations survey, 40 percent claimed to have a strategic policy/plan.

The rest are ... faking it!

Shooting from the hip.

Inventing as they go.

The truth is, social media isn't overly challenging, which may be why there are so many gurus.

All you have to do is know when and how to engage with other people on social media.

Of course, it would be neat if you were productive, efficient, sold folks on your products/services, turned a really negative person around or at least quieted him/her down.

Oh sure, you may be unlucky enough to write something on your personal or business Facebook page that your boss doesn't like, but hey ... you're the guru.

Or, you may Tweet something that irritates the C offices, HR or the client; but when you're working on the edge, it's part of the adrenaline rush.

### **Company Effort, Not Yours**

Management may not be certain why they need a social media expert, but they do know the social media arena is the place where they should have a presence ... of some type.

Experience has also shown them that satisfied, repeat customers keep their doors open.

They know that the best, most satisfied customers are the ones who talk up, support the company's products/services, even over the rough bumps.

If a question, problem or issue arises and people are writing all over your wall -- *not* liking your posts -- you can't simply pass the buck.



Source - Bluecast Digital

We know you're a social media specialist and interacting with customer issues is a dirty little no-nothing job for customer relations specialists.

But they came to you and service/support shouldn't have all the fun.

Who knows...they may even like your post!

Your social media plans/programs/efforts should be about stimulating and driving customer loyalty.

At the end of the day, that counts more than the number of your page readers, likes or Tweet followers.

It's working with them...talking with them...assisting them.



Source - InfoWorld

Yes, real 1:1 -- customer support/customer service.

Sometimes it just isn't very "social!"

Just ask the people who really work with, help and keep your company's customers!!!

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