



Painting Contractors and Social Media

How to strategically use social media to grow your brand

By Barbara Walsh

In the past few years, social media marketing has been embraced by all sizes and types of business. There are multiple platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.), but that doesn't mean that every platform is right for your business. Before you jump in, consider the goals you want to attain by using social media.

Here are few questions to ask yourself before starting a social media marketing program:

- *Which platforms are your customers, business contacts, and peers using?* It's not that difficult to figure out—just ask. Get on the platforms and look around. See who is there and what they are talking about.

- *How much time do I have to dedicate to social media?* Social media can take a huge chunk of your time if you don't schedule it into your day or if you get sidetracked while you are on a site.

- *Should I have another member of my team work*

“Avoid the ‘it’s all about me’ mentality as well as overselling.”

on social media, or should I outsource it? Social media can effectively be managed by your office staff, if you have one, or a marketing company, with some direction from you.

After you have determined which platforms you want to be on and who is going to do your posting and monitoring, think about your goals.

- The number 1 “golden rule” is to drive people to your website. Your website is where you want people to go to learn all about your business and why they should do business with you. Have the majority of your photo galleries, videos, and blog articles on your site.

- **Calls to action.** When you post, you are not only providing useful information and content but you want your community to do something (a call to action). If you want to grow your email marketing list, then ask them to subscribe and give a link for them to do so. If you want them to “like,” “share,” or

“comment”....ask.

- Since many platforms use #hashtags (like Facebook, Google+, Twitter and Instagram), you too will want to use them at the end of posts. This will help people searching for various terms find you and your content, further growing your community and increasing your brand awareness.

Think before you post!

- Think about the platform you are using before posting. What you post on Facebook might not be what you would post on LinkedIn. Also, try to vary your posts' content on your platforms so people who have joined you on several platforms don't see the same thing on the same day. One of the quickest ways to lose your following is to post the same information everywhere. Also, avoid the “it's all about me” mentality as well as overselling. Social media is about your community and providing useful content to inform, engage, and entertain.

- **Be social yourself.** If you want to grow your brand, you need to be actively engaging with your customers, business contacts, peers, and potential customers. Visit other business platforms and connect there. Be active in LinkedIn groups by answering questions, asking some yourself, and posting your unique content to further get your name out.

- Use analytics to monitor key performance indicators that are important to you such as how your community is growing or if people are subscribing to your email list, blog, YouTube Channel etc. If you employ Google Analytics on your website, you can track a lot of information: the number of website visitors, time spent on site, which pages/blog posts are getting the most hits. You can also setup monitoring of your social media and email marketing campaigns in your Google Analytics dashboard.

As a painting contractor, strategic use of social media marketing can quickly build awareness of your business across the Internet while increasing search engine optimization for your website. Social media marketing can be a great way to stay connected with

your past and current customers, generate leads and grow your brand.

For some, lead generation may be second to growing your brand, however, a painter that I market for has seen leads generated through multiple social media platforms as well as his website.

As a small business owner, social media is a way to build awareness of your company, build relationships, and grow your credibility (reputation) on the Internet. People want to do business with people they consider to be a friend. Many people also realize the commitment it takes to be on social media, have a great website, and post blog and/or video content. This speaks to your dedication and stability within the community.

Finally, be patient! For many, it takes time to see results on social media. Consistency is the key to carrying out a successful strategy. Analyze, change course if necessary, keep at it, and have fun!

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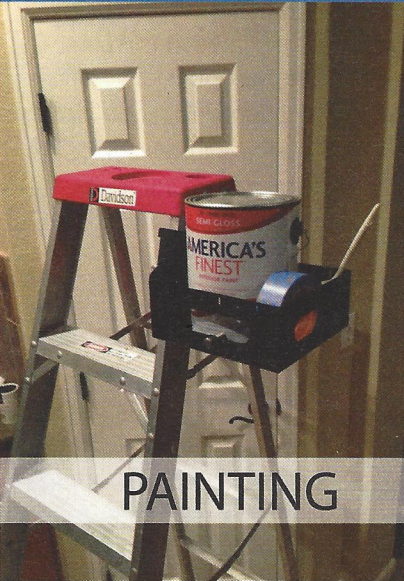
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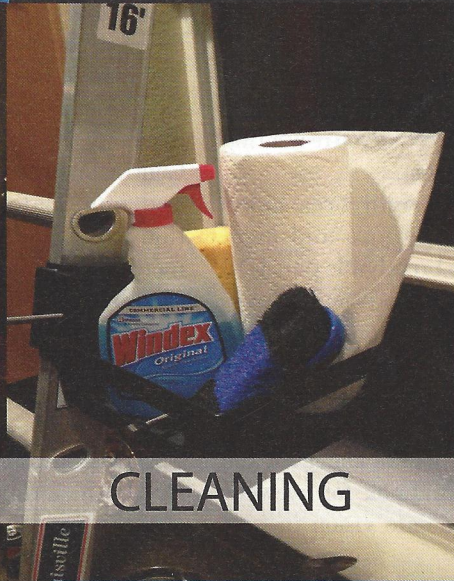


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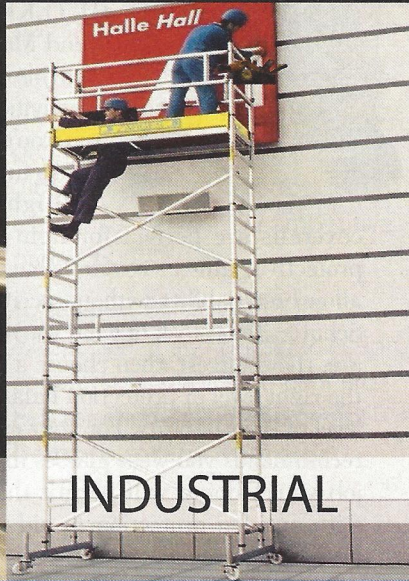
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