

Leveraging Best Practices For Social Media

Contributed by eMarketer
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Achieving social media marketing goals, whatever your level of participation

Brands and marketers have different levels of participation in the social media space, but many have similar goals and strategies.

The 2010 Social Media Benchmarking Study from Ketchum and FedEx found when looking at 62 study participants from a variety of industries that 100% had some degree of social media presence.

But they demonstrated different engagement levels, including observers who are determining how to best use social media and leaders who push boundaries and innovate.

Yet objectives for social media were uniform across the industries and engagement levels. Some common goals were to generate word-of-mouth advocacy, develop brand loyalty and close relationships with customers, manage customer service issues, and educate the media and public about company-related issues.

This supports data from SmartBrief and Summus, which found that 94% of brands hoped to increase awareness and interaction with consumers by using social media.

The Ketchum-FedEx study discussed how companies could still achieve their social media objectives, whatever their engagement levels, noting that it was not necessary to always be a leader in the social media space.

Companies should look at their goals and figure out if being a close follower or even an observer for a bit would be better suited to help its business.

One element that helps achieve social media goals discussed by both studies is integration of social media strategy into an overall communications and marketing plan.

Thanks to the transparency, interactivity and informality of social media, collaboration between communications, IT, legal and marketing is a necessity to make a holistic plan work and bear fruit.

For more information about social media's place at the marketing table, stay tuned for the forthcoming eMarketer report, "Social Media in the Marketing Mix."

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