

<b>Chamber Name:</b> Carmen Morgan	<b>Number of members:</b>
<b>Telephone number:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
<b>Contributor:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.chamberplan.ca/business-tips">www.chamberplan.ca/business-tips</a>	

## What is a social media campaign, and do I need one?

It creeps up every once in a while. Then, I forget about it, until it taps me on the shoulder again. Tweet. Tweet, tweet. Social media is both my nemesis and friend. Somewhere I can go to connect and, equally, waste time. The same questions come up every time when I consider using Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, or writing a blog to build my business brand: Do I have the time, and what is the return? But, let's start at the beginning. What is a social media campaign, and do I need one?

Before you join in, or create conversation using social media tools, there are some important questions to answer.

"The first question should be, 'Is my audience online?'" says Pamela Heikel, of EllaSaid Communications and Style, Twitter @pamellalee. Ms. Heikel helps companies to engage in social media as part of their business marketing strategy.

"Ask, 'Are my consumers engaging in an online marketplace, such as Facebook and Twitter?' My social media philosophy comes from Scott Stratten's book, *UnMarketing*. His approach is not to expect to see hard numbers. Social media should be part of your organization's long-term initiative, and has to be ongoing to see results. Building a social media campaign is no different than building a face-to-face relationship with someone. A lot of research and thought goes into a social media strategy, and it can't unfold overnight. I usually tell my clients don't expect to see any results within the first six-months-to-a-year of participating."

"Social media strategy differs from traditional marketing or advertising campaigns: Talking about your product or service is a very small piece of your presence on social media. It is never just a one-off event, the same way you might hope to get attention with a billboard campaign. Its focus is sharing and communicating your organization's brand on a regular basis."

There are many reasons businesses are committing to "Tweets" and "Likes." One of them being if there is a conversation happening online about their product or service, they can be part of that conversation.

Other reasons why organizations choose social media:

- They want to offer a different channel of communication for their customers.
- They want to make their customers part of how they do business. Some companies will use social media to collect feedback and do informal market research.
- To grow their trust and loyalty with customers.
- To give their company transparency. Also, social media takes the corporation out of the equation and gives your brand a human side.

