

How to Effectively and Efficiently use Social Media for VO Marketing

Introduction:

- I. “Why use Social Media? Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make, but about the stories you tell.” - Seth Godin
- II. The key to social media, is having a presence, posting relevant information while adding your own personal touch and engaging with your followers.
- III. How many of you are on social media? How many of you are actively using social media to promote your business? Who here wants to learn how to be effective with what you’re doing on there and efficient with your time? I’m going to show you how!
- IV. We’re going to discuss how to build relationships and create a business persona that people want to follow (and hire!)
 - How to find the right people and businesses
 - How to figure out what to post
 - How to tag & hashtag correctly
 - How to get them to follow you
 - How to turn that online relationship into a paying client
- V. Social media sites are a great tool and should be an addition to your website presence. Your voiceover website (and I don’t just mean the Pay-to-Play sites) should have links to all of your social media pages. Social media sites should not be instead of a website.

Body:

- VI. Here are some different types of social media. You want to select which ones are right for you. Pick 2-3 that are your main focus:
 1. Twitter - my personal favorite for marketing
 2. Facebook - more social and relationship building than marketing
 3. LinkedIn - also great for marketing
 4. Google+
 5. Pinterest
 6. Blogs
 7. Instagram
 8. Stage32 - I was recently was introduced to this
 9. Other sites?
- A. Twitter
 1. Some definitions:
 - What is a tweet – a message that you post on twitter in 140 characters or less
 - A retweet is when someone shares your tweet and gives you credit for it. (Or you retweet someone else’s post).
 - A hashtag is this symbol # it’s a way to identify certain key words in your tweets. This is how people search for content on twitter.

- Someone's twitter handle is the name that they use on twitter. It will always start with the @ symbol. For example, mine is @HeatherCostaVO
 - Tagging someone means that you're putting their twitter handle in your post.
2. Twitter is always a moving tool, so if you only post once in 2 mths, it's not really beneficial to you.
 3. With Twitter you can successfully self promote (and the more followers you have, the better chance of having that info retweeted), but it's more about sharing relevant content from colleagues, industry resources and potential clients you want!

B. Facebook

- For business purposes it's most popular with posting content that people can comment on & "like".
- Posting links are good here too, but they don't appear to receive as much traffic as they do on Twitter.
- Facebook is a great tool for self-promoting & posting pictures, but as with all social media tools, you should engage with your followers & not just "me, me, me" is key!

C. LinkedIn

- This site is great for the professional community and definitely a place you want to have a presence.
- People can endorse you & give you recommendations. Recommendations are something I try to do for someone & ask someone to do for me, once a month.
- There are also groups to join.
- I have gotten work on LinkedIn just because I was connected to the "right people" - an agency was looking for new talent to add to their roster, so they looked at the connections of the people they currently worked with and found me!

D. Google+

- This site provides you with an opportunity to post content, links, videos, have group & one-on-one chats, share & like content.
- It's more of a visual platform (and very pretty & well laid out).

E. Pinterest

- This site is all about visual social media.
- You can download a "Pin It" button for your bookmarks bar and then when you find something you want to share, you click on the "Pin It" button and as long as there's a picture on that page (and not on Facebook- you can't pin directly from there), then you can do it.
- You can create a public "voiceover" board that you put all VO related pins, make sure to label it correctly so it comes up when people search for voiceover.
- You can also create private boards (I do this!) for voiceover marketing, so when you find someone you want to contact, you can quickly pin their website, their video, one of their pins, etc. it's another place to gather marketing info before putting it into your database. With a private board, you can invite people to pin with you, so for example, if you have an intern or someone who helps you with marketing, you can pin as you find things and then they have access to it.

F. Blogs

- These are a great tool for many reasons:
 - You can write about industry related topics (which builds your credibility)
 - You can use it for press releases and
 - You can FIND valuable voiceover information on other blogs.
- You can comment directly on someone's blog as well as posting links to their articles.
- You can have a blog roll on your blog which links to other industry related blogs and people will in turn add you to theirs (therefore increasing your visibility in the online market place!)
- If you're doing a blog, the key is to keep it updated. If you're only posting an article once every few months, you're not going to have as many followers as you would if you did it weekly, however, you don't want to just post to post, it has to be something people want to read.

G. Instagram

- I personally am not too familiar with Instagram, but I do know, that like Pinterest, it is a visual tool. Any images you take while in your studio, or on-site at another studio, or at a voiceover conference, etc. you can post on Instagram and hashtag accordingly so people searching for voiceover will find your images.

So how do you connect social media with your clients & businesses that you want to market to?

VII. Making the social media connection

A. Keeping track of which businesses have and use social media

1. I track the social media pages of my clients & businesses I'm marketing to.
 - a) In my database I do this and then I'm able to pull up a report of all businesses with blogs, which I check often for content to share.
2. On Facebook under the "like" button, you can select "get notifications" and their posts will show up in your newsfeed & your notifications stream. This is good so you don't miss anything!
3. On Twitter I have a private list of "businesses who hire" so I can easily see all posts & retweets that those businesses make.
4. You want to subscribe to these businesses blogs, so you'll get notification when they post something new.
5. Follow all of their social media pages, in hopes that eventually, if not immediately, they'll follow you back.

What is the goal?

- You want to post credible, engaging info – the goal is to get the attention of your target audiences, get your posts liked, favorited, shared & retweeted and gain new followers! All of this will help build your social media presence and in turn build your business persona and help turn followers into clients.

VIII. Where do you find relevant content to post & what should you post?

- A. I like to use Google alerts – it's a free tool to receive notifications of key words you want to focus on.
- B. Post articles from industry related blogs that you follow.
- C. Do a google search of key words that you want to focus on – anything from marketing, advertising, voiceover, to specific businesses you want to target – auto companies, hospitals, etc. You need to be creative. You want to find blogs & businesses that write articles ABOUT those topics that you want to focus on. Then when you find something relevant you post it!
- D. Share information & retweet from people that you follow, on information they're posting that you want to share. Programs like Hootsuite allow you to schedule Twitter posts in advance and monitor posts that come in so you can easily decide what you want to retweet.
- E. Part of your marketing plan should include hitting different target audiences. You can work on a particular social media campaign for a day, a week or a mth!
 - Let's say for example, you want to focus on agents that day. Comprise a list of your most interested agencies (keep in mind this isn't how to LAND an agent, this is how to get on an agent's radar, so that when you DO reach out with a proper submission, they may already recognize who you are!) Then find articles written by that agency, or agents FROM that agency, or comments about the agency & link to their site and tag them. If you want to focus on hospitals or car dealerships that day- do the same thing!

IX. How often do I post?

- A. The key with successfully using social media, is to get in & get out and make the most of your time while you're there.
- B. I will plan no more than an hour a day to schedule my posts on Twitter – sometimes I only give 15 minutes, other times an hour+ to schedule & then check back a few times throughout the day, it all depends on my availability. OR I can be even more efficient (which is what I do most of the time), and take a couple of hours over the weekend or first thing Monday morning and write & schedule tweets for the entire week! I will still hop on Twitter throughout the week to engage with people I follow as well as engaging with people posting & retweeting my information.
- C. Depending on my availability that day/week for scheduling & the content I want to share, I'll schedule tweets every 1.5-2 hrs, or every hour, or sometimes just a few times throughout the day or week!
- D. The key is to not schedule them exactly at the same time (or it'll look scheduled) So for example, I may schedule one for 9:05 AM, next one for 10:20 AM, next one for 10:55 AM, next one for 11:35 AM, etc.

E. The beauty of social media, is once you have a presence for yourself, if you are too busy and can only plug out a couple tweets that week (or even nothing at all!) you can pick it up again the next week and most likely no one even noticed you were missing! That's the beauty of it- it's a moving thing, like a train, you jump on & off when you can, once you're established, you've always got a seat there.

X. How do I get the attention of those I'm posting about?

A. It's important to use the correct hashtags in your tweets.

- For example, if you're writing about the voiceover industry, make sure you're using #voiceover or #VO or #VoiceActing etc. Ideally you want to do 1-3 hashtags at most, more than that & it's overkill. Also, make sure you don't have any spaces in your hashtag or it will only hashtag what immediately follows the # sign.

B. Keep in mind WHY you're posting, what you are.

- For example, if you want to get the attention of a health food store because you want to be the voice of their business, you have to hashtag accordingly. Make sure you use hashtags such as #healthfood or #healthyeating don't just put #voiceover or #hireme or they won't get it.
- That's why it's REALLY important that your social media bios are a professional representation of you. The second they click on your bio, they should know that you're a voiceover actor so they can make the connection- "ohhh wow! I need HER to be the voice of our business!"
- Have fun with your social media bios, but it should definitely be obvious that you're a voice talent when they click on it. If they have no clue who you are, then there's no point in posting or tweeting about them! Also, when you use the right hashtags, you're also hoping to get the attention of not just that particular health food store but other health food stores and people who buy health food.

C. Make sure you're linking to the right information (you can shorten links using Hootsuite or other programs like ow.ly to fit within the 140 characters).

D. Make sure you're tagging the right people. When I post about an article, I make sure to tag everyone I can- the source of the article, the author, who the article is about, etc. THAT'S key in getting them to know that you've posted it. Otherwise, again, what's the point? This goes for all social media.

E. The best way to get someone to follow you, however, is to follow them & post & tweet about them!

XI. Let's talk a little more about Twitter.

A. For Twitter, I like to use a program called Hootsuite. This gives me the ability to create lists of people I want to follow, see when I've been mentioned in a tweet, when I've been retweeted & most importantly having the ability to schedule tweets, among other things.

- B. When I am scheduling tweets, I have Hootsuite AND Twitter open. I look up Twitter handles on Twitter, while scheduling them on Hootsuite. If it's someone I want to follow, I do. If it's just someone I want to tag (b/c they're mentioned in something, but I don't really have an interest in following their tweets regularly, then I don't follow them).
- C. Twitter is not just about posting tweets, it's about engaging too!
- D. Retweeting is a great way to show interest in someone's tweet because you genuinely like it & want to share it and to get their attention, to put YOU on their radar!
- E. When you retweet, you can just retweet it as is, it'll show up in your feed as their handle with a "retweeted by (your handle)" underneath OR you can retweet & "edit" it to add your own comments. Keep in mind the 140 characters though, if it goes into the red it's too long and it'll be cut off.
- F. In addition to Hootsuite, I also use a program called scoop.it. It's a way to put all of your relevant posts in one place AND get that post on different social media sites at the same time!
- I created a page (it's free) on scoop.it called "Inside the VoiceOver World". When I find an article I want to post about, I will hit the "scoop.it" button (that is in my menu bar) and it will post to my scoop.it page. When it posts there, at the same time, I also have it set to post on my LinkedIn page. Then on my scoop.it page I can hit the "share" button underneath each article & post it on facebook, twitter, google+ and pinterest. I pick & choose and space out the posts so not everything is going all at the same time, to the same place. Whenever I post an article on scoop.it that I want to post on twitter, I will manually set it up in Hootsuite with the scoop.it link to that article, so that I can tag the appropriate people, because without the proper tagging, it's not really worth it!
 - I get multiple new followers a day! Even on a day when I only have a tweet or two scheduled (or sometimes nothing at all) I still will get new followers. The more visible you are, the more the RIGHT people will find you!
 - #ThrowBackThursday – this is a fun thing that people do on Twitter and Facebook (and other social media sites, I'm sure!), where you post information (comments, links, videos, photos, etc.) about something that happened in the past.
 - #FollowFriday – is when you post on Twitter on Friday and tag #ff or #followfriday and tag everyone you want to give a shout out to. The best way to do that, is to group the people you want together (example: voice talent, local businesses, target businesses for your marketing, ad agencies, agents, etc.). You're giving each of those people a shout out, with the hopes that it'll help build their visibility and more people will follow them. You #ff people and they #ff you back – it's a nice give and take.
 - You can also schedule your Facebook posts to show up on Twitter too – but just remember the 140 character Twitter limit, and the importance of tagging! You tag on Facebook and Twitter, but they're not necessarily the same handles (@____), so sometimes it's best to keep those two separate.

Conclusion

I know all of this may seem overwhelming, but the more you do it, the easier it becomes and turns into a regular part of your marketing. When done correctly and efficiently, it will pay off!

Recap -

- A. Select the right social media sites for you
- B. Incorporate this into your marketing
- C. Follow businesses/agents that you work with, want to work with
- D. Follow those same businesses that have blogs (you need content to post!)
- E. Create a system for finding relevant content to share, while sharing your own content too
- F. Post the information and tag and hashtag correctly
- G. Engage with these businesses
- H. Remember it's not just about marketing yourself, but building relationships and sharing content of others too

“Talent will get you in the door, but character will keep you in the room.” Social media is one big water cooler - come join the party!