

A Digital Ecosystem for the New Generations

By Mario Aleman

Our current ecosystem is Web 2.0, interactive publicity and online marketing.

Ever since the Web 2.0, social networking and *community management* concepts became «popular», we have witnessed drastic changes in the way we communicate, that slowly and fearful, create «*engagement*» (another term that became popular with the social network boom).

Social networks shouldn't be an isolated area inside the company, but they shouldn't also be subjected to a specific department, because they collaborate with all the areas. Customer Service, PR and Marketing Planning should be involved in the development of the new «social company».

To define the social identity is to define the behavior of the brand inside the social network, its language type and the level of interaction with the consumers. Brands should behave naturally with a personality of its own inside the social media, because that is precisely what will lead customers to involve in a two-way communication system.

To create a social media strategy doesn't just mean a 360° approach, but to think which long-term role will the company play in the social media and what will it be doing not just today. To accomplish that, it is necessary to structure the strategy by phases:

- **Training**

The company must develop a constant training program, in and out from the Web. A marketing and communication system integrated with social media will ensure an adaptation to the social online world.

- **Organization**

Social media doesn't belong to the Marketing, PR or Customer Service departments; however it works along with each one of them in one integrated strategy that creates excellence in the company.

- **Listen actively**

This goes beyond listening to what the consumer has to say: it is also the knowledge of handling the received information, to share it innerly and to answer to it adequately. Constant monitoring ensures a communication system between consumer and company, but most of all, helps to improve the inner marketing systems and the campaign strategies outside the net. Besides, to know how to listen allows to handle

correctly any crisis that might appear.

- **Define media: own, bought and earned**

The own media is related to the sites or networks that the company manages, based on a social content strategy. The bought media is the digital tools that provide reach to the company, such as radio, press and TV. It's developed publicity to sell. The earned media is the influence that the social relationship of the company with its networks, which determines how much reach has the social contents strategy had. If we take into account that the trend is going to the «mobile» life, it is necessary to change certain paradigms related to the way we communicate. This way, the contents on the networks will be adequate for each type of audience.

The effective social contents usually meet strategic parameters (even though they're not precise rules):

1. Lead to action: They promote a determined action in the users.
2. Graphic messages: Visual contents have 10 times more impact than simple text.
3. Humor: To make someone smile is one of the best ways to draw the attention to one, but let's be cautious: we don't want to fall constantly on being sarcastic or on making jokes, specially if it's a customer service company.
4. Live communication: It is of relevance to communicate facts right in the moment, in events or conferences.
5. Allow users to express freely: A golden rule in social networks, considering also several filter options to avoid any trouble.
6. Always tell the truth.
7. Inspiration doesn't mean copy-paste.
8. Innovation and adaptation: The message should be the same but with a different format according to the audience.
9. Resources and tools: What we have available and what does this allow us to do

(human/technologic resource, budgets, etc.).

Maybe this seems complicated, but if the company manages to coordinate and plan its strategy correctly, then it can find its way in this daily changing ecosystem. It is important to keep a continuous participation in dynamic conversations, to identify new links and future clients, to breathe and feel technology, develop socially valuable contents and above all, to build corporative trust, the base of user and client fidelity. This strategy enables daily improvement on sociability practices inside the corporation and an own social identity in new media.

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