

## Social Media for B2B - It is not about if, it is about when



In 2010 social media, and especially Twitter, made huge progress in B2B companies. And in 2011 this curve will continue to move upwards. Therefore, this year the question is not if a company should engage in social media activities, but when. When meaning „as soon as possible“. Why? Firstly, social media activities, be it on Facebook or Twitter, are mostly about dialogue. It takes considerable time to identify matching dialogue partners and establish a consistent and valuable flow of conversation. Secondly, Twitter

and Facebook are ideal PR instruments to increase brand awareness and contribute to a positive, dynamic image. PR as a rule requires consistency and regularity in order to be successful. A valuable reputation on social media cannot be created over night; it takes time, skill and perseverance.

Furthermore, well-orchestrated social media activities allow especially B2B companies to show a human face to their customers and stakeholders, make them more approachable, friendly and open-minded. To achieve this, enterprises need to appoint experienced social media experts, fully respecting and integrating the company's general communication strategy in their social media activities. In addition, management must grant these employees a good deal of autonomy in their daily social media communications. They need to know and feel how and when to react spontaneously in order to maintain an interesting, living and breathing dialogue. Especially every business page on Facebook requires a vigilant, attentive moderator checking postings and comments extremely regularly and interacting accordingly. No doubt, social media renders companies very transparent. Some perceive this as a danger and decide to stay away. But, today modern, successful companies no more have the option to stay away. Customers and stakeholders thrive on the power they got through the social media dialogue. The power to contribute, to comment and - sometimes - also to complain. Companies need to rethink and stop considering this input as an imminent threat, but as a huge chance to understand their customers' functioning and requirements. The dialogue will take place anyhow. But only companies participating in this dialogue as soon as possible will be influential and successful in the long run. So, what is keeping your company from leaping into the adventure social media?

*Yours sincerely*

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