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Time Saving Tip

Interested in Social Media but don't have a lot of time to log in for updates and comments? Save time monitoring & managing your brand on Facebook, Twitter & more with this free tool!
www.nutshellmail.com

From all of us...



Wishing a very happy and prosperous 2012!

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Social Media: Communication Has Not Changed

So here you are, trying to understand how to navigate today's new marketing world using technology as your medium. It is hard to believe that Social Media is only 7 years old. Facebook started in 2004. Blogging did too. Twitter was born a few years later in 2006 and LinkedIn, the business networking site began in 2009. It's unbelievable that something has impacted the marketing world with such force in such a short period of time. But has it really?

Marketing theory and principle have not changed. Communication has not changed either. Remember that. What has changed are the tools at hand, allowing your toolbox to expand.

Social Media has evolved from a powerful communication avenue to a key marketing channel. It offers a platform for clients, colleagues or prospects to discover you when you're looking for reviews, comparing pricing, or researching offers. It is paramount for you and your company to maintain a presence, ensuring the opportunities for listening, effective online communications and increased visibility.

More and more, people end up on websites after finding a brand on Facebook or clicking on a Twitter link. The more social media platforms on which you are present, the higher chances you have at turning up in search results, particularly now that social is part of search engine algorithms. When entrepreneurs harness the power behind the tools to engage and connect with customers via social

media, small businesses develop and brands are made.

Social media affords you the greatest opportunity to share your message and build your brand. There is no other venue that provides such viral exposure for minimal to no dollars. It is an investment in time. If you still aren't sold on the extreme benefits of social media, then take a look at these staggering stats from www.jeffbullas.com, 9/02/2011

1. 1 in every 9 people on Earth is on Facebook (This number is calculated dividing the planet's 6.94 billion people by Facebook's 750 million users)
2. People spend 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook
3. Twitter is adding nearly 500,000 users a day
4. Google+ has more than 25 million users
5. Flickr hosts over 5 billion images
6. 190 million average Tweets per day occur on Twitter (May 2011)
7. Twitter is handling 1.6 billion queries per day

It is also really important to remind yourself that your marketing efforts, old or new, need to be proactive, not reactive. Before leaping in with two feet because you perceive that everyone else is doing it and you are behind, STOP. You should choose a communication tool or platform that best suits your business, your clients and your potential customers. You need to know where they are, what interests them and what are their pain points.

By: Jackie Ranahan, Mach One Communications, thinkmachone.com

Commercial Tenancies Act - What you need to know

Background - Ontario's Commercial Tenancies Act outlines the relationship, rights and obligations between commercial landlords and tenants.

Legal Advice - Whether you are a commercial tenant, sub-tenant or landlord, it is strongly recommended that you obtain legal advice to assist you with interpreting how the Commercial Tenancies Act applies to your specific situation.

Leases - It is important to be aware that a signed lease agreement may take precedence over the Commercial Tenancies Act.

FAQ:

Non-payment of Rent - When a tenant has failed to pay the rent, the landlord has two options available: 1) Change the locks and evict on the 16th day after the rent was due and 2) Seize and dispose of a tenant's property. Notification must be given to tenant about distress and sum of monies required to cure the default before selling and before disposing, the property must be held for 5 days. If payment is made within 5 days, the landlord is not permitted to sell property.

Rent Increases - In the event that there isn't a current tenancy agreement between the parties, the landlord may increase the rent by any amount at any time. The Act does not regulate rent increases.

Notice to End Tenancy - Either the landlord or a tenant can terminate the tenancy with a minimum one-month written notice.

Fixed Term Tenancy Agreements - Fixed-term tenancy agreements must specify the length or term of the lease. Under the Act, once the tenancy ends, the tenant no longer has the right to occupy the premises.

Commercial Landlord: Rights and Obligations

- Landlords must notify tenants in writing of specific breaches of the lease and allow a reasonable period of time for them to comply
- Landlords may have the right to terminate a tenancy when tenants fail to fulfill their obligations as outlined in the lease
- Landlords have the right to apply to the Superior Court of Justice (or depending on the amount, Small Claims Court) to seek damages from the tenant for the loss of rental income owed for the balance of the term of the lease.

Commercial Tenants: Rights and Obligations

- Tenants must pay their rent on the due date agreed on in the lease with the landlord
- Tenants cannot hold back rent because a landlord has failed to fulfill their obligations as outlined in the lease
- Tenants must fulfill their obligations as outlined by the lease agreement
- Tenants have the right to take their disputes with the landlord to Small Claims Court for disputes concerning money or personal property under 10,000. Otherwise, an application must be made to the Superior Court of Justice.

For more information, you can contact the Commercial Tenancy Information Line at: 1-800-729-4871

Canadian Entrepreneurs Give Advice on How to Grow a Business



Canadian entrepreneurs apparently have lots of advice to give others who are trying to grow their business. According to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of RBC, when considering what three pieces of advice to share, nearly half (44%) would suggest developing an effective business plan, a similar proportion (43%) would advise managing their time well, and four in ten (38%) say small business owners must network in order to grow their business.

Canadian Entrepreneurs Dish Out Free Advice On How to Grow a Business, Ipsos Reid, 2011

Environmental Approvals

If a business's activities impact the natural environment, that business needs an approval from the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) to operate legally in Ontario. From small restaurants, to large manufacturing facilities, businesses in Ontario must have MOE-issued environmental approvals if they: 1) release contaminants (pollutants) into the air, onto land, or into water or 2) store, transport, or dispose of waste

A business's environmental approval sets out legally enforceable rules of operation. These rules aim to protect the natural environment against emissions, discharges and wastes that are produced by a business's daily operations.

Getting approval for your business

On October 31, 2011, a smarter, faster environmental approvals system came into effect in Ontario. In the past, a business had to apply for multiple approvals (known as *certificates of approval*) for individual processes and pieces of equipment. Today, a business either registers itself, or applies for a single approval, depending on the types of activities it conducts.

Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR)

The EASR allows businesses to register certain activities with the ministry, rather than apply for an approval. The registry is available for common systems and processes, to which preset rules of operation can be applied.

The EASR is currently available for:

- ✓ heating systems
- ✓ standby power systems
- ✓ automotive refinishing

Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA)

Businesses whose activities aren't subject to the EASR may apply for an ECA, using the ministry's smart application form, available online. A single ECA addresses all of a business's emissions, discharges and wastes. **Separate approvals for air, noise and waste are no longer required.**

Contact

If you have questions about environmental approvals in Ontario, contact the ministry's Environmental Approvals Access and Service Integration Branch. 1-800-461-6290 E-mail: eaabgen@ene.gov.on.ca. **For more information:** www.ontario.ca/environmentalapprovals

Spotlight on Upcoming Seminars

10 Steps to Starting a Business

January 12, 2012; 6 – 8 p.m.

Location: Kitchener. Cost \$22+ HST

Young Entrepreneurs Start-up Financing

January 23, 2012; 3 – 5 p.m.

Location: Kitchener. Cost: Complimentary

Income Tax for the Business Owner

January 25, 2012; 6 – 8 p.m.

Location: Cambridge. Cost: Complimentary

Writing a Business Plan

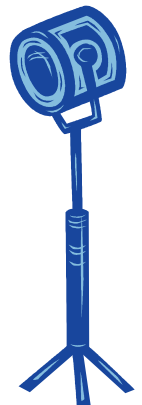
January 26, 2012; 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Kitchener. Cost - \$22 + HST

Starting a Not-for-profit Organization

January 23, 2012; 6 - 8 p.m.

Location: Waterloo. Cost: \$22 + HST



10 Great Business New Year's Resolutions

Here are ten great areas to focus on to make you a successful entrepreneur in 2012:

- 1. Set goals and prioritize:** When you set your business goals for 2012, make sure they are specific, measurable, attainable and trackable. Once you have them in your sight, prioritize, and then break them down into weekly tasks to make them happen. It will keep you on track and make you successful.
- 2. Focus and delegate:** Be wiser at how you spend your time. Stop doing work that does not generate income and focus your time on activities that generate income and growth for your company. This means delegating to other employees (or outsourced contractors) and focusing your time on activities that will grow your company.
- 3. Only market to prospects that can actually pay for your product:** Separate out the “tire kickers” from the buyers by determining the customer’s budget, who the decision makers are, and the time-frame for their purchase. Generating new sales is expensive, so fill your funnel with people that will actually buy from you.
- 4. Meet with customers and vendors face to face:** Stop relying on email and the phone as an exclusive way to talk with customers. Even in a social media world, deep and long lasting business relationships are still built in real life.
- 5. Embrace networking as a key marketing strategy:** People sometimes say that business success depends on who you know. But those that embrace business networking as a marketing strategy understand that it is much more a factor of who knows you that will bring success to your business. Make it your practice to regularly attend business networking events, and make new contacts. Strive to become a trusted source for referrals.
- 6. Invest in yourself and learn at least one new skill:** What you choose to learn may be directly related to your business, or completely unrelated. Learning something new will add to your skills and add a new dimension of interest to your life, an important part of achieving a healthy work-life balance.
- 7. Drop what’s not working for you and move on:** If a technique or a product or a business relationship isn’t working for you, stop using it. Don’t invest a lot of energy into trying to make the unworkable workable. Move on. Something better will turn up.
- 8. Stop letting your money sit in someone else’s pocket:** Commit to strict accounts receivable practices. Establish a credit limit for each account and enforce it. Process ALL invoices immediately and take action on late accounts right away.
- 9. Learn to understand what your financial statements are telling you each month:** Make a commitment to learn what the profit and loss, balance sheet and cash flow statements mean to your business and use them as a guide for future action.
- 10. Get over your fear of growth:** Determine the areas that must grow, in resources, staff, product development, sales, etc., and invest in what will generate the biggest bang for your buck. Make this your year to grow!

[10 Great Business New Year's Resolutions](#). SolidGrowthAccounting.com. Dec. 2011

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