

Social Media is turning sales and marketing upside-down, are you ready to profit from this global shift?

It's not who you know but who knows you in today's hyper-connected marketplace. Understanding the role social media and social networking play in this new dynamic, is paramount to our future success as sales professionals, marketers, and corporations.

Inside you will learn:

- The new rules of engagement in sales and marketing
- How anyone can become a global brand in their niche using social media
- Strategies and tips on influencing online "Thought Leaders"
- The top social media and networking tools for today and beyond
- How to effectively implement and rollout social media in your organization



Shane Gibson:

Over the past 15 years Shane Gibson has addressed over 100,000 people on stages in USA, Canada, South Africa and South America on the topics on sales performance, leadership, community engagement and using social media and networking to improve business performance.



Stephen Jagger:

Stephen Jagger is an entrepreneur that has been starting businesses since high school. He is the co-founder of two successful technology businesses. Combustion Labs Media Inc, which operates as Ubertor.com, is a real estate software company that provides websites and online marketing tools to thousands of real estate agents across North America. Reachd.com is a training company that focuses on social media training.

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Sociable!

By Shane Gibson & Stephen Jagger

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Turning Sales and
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“Oh, how I wish I could have read Sociable! back when I was a social media newbie. I could have prevented tons of confusion, many headaches, and loads of wasted time trying to figure it out. My advice? Read Shane and Steve’s book and use it as your roadmap to taking full advantage of the tremendous sales and marketing power that social media has to offer.”

Skip Anderson Founder & President,
Selling to Consumers Sales Training
sellingtoconsumers.com

“As in business and in life, actions create reputations. A brand is the conversation that users are having about a product or service. As a professional speaker, consultant and author I have been obsessed with providing the best possible staff recruiting and retention solutions thus relying solely on “word of mouth” advertising. Lately, I have felt a massive disconnect with the philosophies touted by “Social media marketing Guru’s”, advocating using these new mediums to market one’s products or services rather than engaging with their community of users.

Happily, Shane and Stephen in their new book Sociable share how the world really works by providing their powerful insights on how organizations can actively facilitate and contribute to the online word-of-mouth conversations pertaining to their brands that will greatly impact profits.”

Dr. Denis L. Cauvier best selling author of
How to Keep Staff Productive and Happy and
The ABCs of Making Money series of books
deniscauvier.com

Sociable!

“You guys have really nailed the critical components of using social media for business, and you’ve done it in language that is easily understood and enjoyable to read.”

Jerry Kennedy author of
Motivation 101 and
Co-host of the *Sales Management 2.0 Podcast*
jerrykennedy.com



Dedication

*This book is dedicated to our community;
you're the real teachers.*

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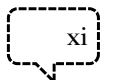
And of course our Twitter friends and followers you're an awesome source of insight and a great cheering committee, we hope to return the favor soon!

Foreword

Hello, and welcome to the foreword! My name is Kyle MacDonald, the author of the foreword. I sincerely hope you enjoy my pre-introduction to the book, *Sociable!* My section is short because I've spent far too many hours reading the advance copy of the book, and using the tips. I guess foreword writers aren't supposed to read the whole book, but well, I couldn't put it down.

Shane and Stephen invited me to write this foreword because I'm obviously an important qualified 'expert' in social media, and I guess they're right. But there's one thing I should probably clear up right away. I'm a digital immigrant. I'm not some eighteen-year-old wonder kid who lives and breathes social media. I did get involved in social media earlier than most; I started my first blog in 2005, which in internet terms, is just after the big bang and the formation of the universe. I started a blog at oneredpaperclip.com to help realize my goal of trading for bigger and better items, starting with a red paperclip.

I posted some ads in the barter section of Craigslist.org and looked for people to trade with. Slowly but surely, I met up with people and we made trades. I took pictures of the trades and wrote small blog posts to introduce people to the traders, to show I was legit, and to promote my next item up for trade. After several trades and several months, the blogosphere caught wind of my exploits in a big way and began to talk about my blog. A snowball effect happened where the more that people talked about it, the bigger it became, so the more people talked about it. And so forth. Next thing I knew CNN was on the phone and TV networks were sending crews to follow the



trades live. It was a quite a thrill. After one year and 14 separate trades, I managed to swap from a red paperclip to a house.

That was in the old days - all I had was a blog, an email address, and a cell phone. There was no MySpace, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, or most of the hundreds of amazing social media platforms available nowadays. There weren't even iPhones! Hard to believe, I know. Much has changed since then in the online world. Mobile technology has exploded over the last couple years, and people are more digitally intertwined than ever before. Sure, many principles of social media don't change over time: Be honest, converse as opposed to sell, and above all else, be real. But with more people becoming '*Sociable!*' every day, including myself; this book is an indispensable guide to the rapidly developing realm of social media. Excuse the plagiarism, but here's a line from later on in this book I think is outrageously important, and worth repeating:

“It’s about letting pieces of our own passions and personal identity bleed through online.”

I can honestly say that's all I understood when I started my red paperclip blog back in ye olde 2005. Be yourself, and be honest. That's it. I figured out how to construct a hodgepodge old-fashioned web presence by trial and error. I would have killed for the social media tools we have now. Well, not really, it's just a figure of speech. Luckily for you, it's quite easy to get your hands on the appropriate social media tools or to learn how to use them effectively.

The book you have in your hands will sort that all out. I learned a ton from this book. It's chock full of goodness. It's even better than this foreword. Trust me.

Have fun,

Kyle MacDonald

OneRedPaperclip.com

Author of One Red Paperclip

Introduction

The landscape of sales and marketing is in the midst of a great shift. Web strategist Jeremiah Owyang, believes that “you no longer own your brand, your customer owns your brand.”¹ With the advent of the social web, often referred to as Web 2.0, the consumer can now have conversations about any brand, and those online conversations often become the brand.

Social networks and social media sites have provided the masses with tools to communicate and propagate messages rapidly, in a viral way, that at times can even overpower traditional media. A great example of this is something that occurred with CNN. They had to make several retractions because of the negative responses by internet bloggers. In April 2003, Eason Jordan, CNN’s chief news executive made statements alleging that coalition troops intentionally targeting several journalists in Iraq. Soon after he retracted his statements, but the damage was already done.

Traditional media dropped the story and moved on, but for a period of two years, bloggers continued dig into the issue. He finally quit in February 2005 because he felt the issue was tarnishing CNN’s credibility as a news organization.² It is amazing that individual bloggers are able to impact major media organizations with nothing more than their own blog writing. Now, just a few years later, CNN is integrating tools like Twitter feeds right along with their regular reporting to see what the world has to

1 “Strategy First on Facebook: Opportunities of a Ready-Made Marketing Platform” Webinar by Jeremiah Owyang, Jan. 10th 2008 at <http://marketingprofs.com>

2 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eason_Jordan

say about a particular topic. It's a fusion of old media and Web 2.0.

We sat down in July 2008 to record our first podcast on social media together and posted it to iTunes. The topic was focused on using Twitter and Google's Grandcentral.com (now Google Voice) as sales tools. We got a lot of good feedback from the show and began to work together on joint events and lectures on social media for sales professionals and entrepreneurs.

Both of us are a bit different than most people espousing the benefits of social media marketing. Until recently, neither of us would have referred to ourselves as bloggers, podcasters, or new media consultants. When we sat down and reviewed how we had built our businesses and client rosters, we realized that the majority of it was through the use of tools like blogging, Meetups, Facebook and a variety of other web-based strategies.

Our personal meme is about being *Sociable!* Being *Sociable!* is about using social media to create real relationships that impact you, your business and your community in a positive fashion. It's about more than just the internet or social media; it's about thought leadership³, building community, having fun, and of course being profitable.

We are sales professionals and entrepreneurs who have built our businesses using social media and social networking combined with the ability to sell and close a deal. We're business people using technology to grow our businesses, not techies trying to fit technology into a business setting. Its purpose is simple: we want to share with you "why social media is turning sales and marketing upside down" and how you can profit from it.

If you're reading this and you're a senior executive, you may be someone who has mistakenly banned people

from engaging clients online, or you may have blocked tools like Facebook, Twitter, or others from your office network. People will find a way around this. Instead, you need to become proactive. Give them the technology and insight into how to use this powerful suite of business building tools and watch the results grow. *Sociable!* has been written to help you effectively wade into the sea of social media and to profit from it.

Throughout this book there will be some unfamiliar terms and tools mentioned. Don't feel like you have to read the book from front to back. If you come across a term like "Twitter" or "Meetup" and are not sure what it is, feel free to jump ahead to the section of the book that covers that topic and then come back to where you were. Most chapters were written as stand-alone modules. Read what's important to you and carry this book as a reference guide.

In Chapters One through Three, you will learn about the significant changes that are occurring in sales and marketing due to social media and hyperconnected consumers. You will also learn the role thought leadership plays in online success. Chapter Three should get you over any social media or technophobia that may be getting between you and your own success.

Chapter Four will walk you through the rules of engagement in social media. The goal of this chapter is to help you adapt to and profit from these communities while maintaining your brand integrity.

Chapters Five through Eight will help you define key social media tools like blogging, Twitter, video, LinkedIn and Facebook. Each chapter includes strategies and anecdotes on how to use these tools effectively.

Chapter Nine addresses social media etiquette, critical to your success in social media marketing. Social media is social. This means you are entering into or creating net-

³ Thought Leaders are online personalities that influence, create great content and mobilize unique groups of people or communities.

works that have an expectation of certain behaviors. We must adopt this etiquette in order to effectively connect with these communities.

Chapter Ten is about how to deal with criticism, underhanded tactics and unruly customers, something that most companies moving into social media marketing are worried about. Most are ill equipped to deal with this new challenge. We show you how to meet these challenges head on and win.

Chapter Eleven is one of the most important chapters in the book. Building networks, blogging, or creating beautiful videos doesn't mean much unless it results in something measurable. This chapter will help you get real and get profitable with social media.

Social media success is tied to listening to your customers and monitoring discussions about your brand online. Chapter Twelve will show you what tools to use and how to get involved in the conversations about your brand online.

Finally, a great marketing idea without a solid implementation plan is usually destined to fail. Chapter Thirteen, takes all of the lessons from the book and condenses them into a simple seven-step plan for helping you launch your business into the social media space.

We hope *Sociable!* will help you expand your network, help you engage in and build community, and help you grow your business by embracing social media marketing.

Chapter One

Burn Your Business Card

Why Burn Your Business Card?

We would like you to burn your business card, not because they don't serve a great purpose but because they're a remnant of the old economy. When we talk about burning your business card, it relates to the fact that in the past we thought about mainstream marketing and advertising tools as being business cards, billboards, and expensive magazine, radio and TV ad space. In the past, corporations told you what to think about their brand, which they defined using traditional media, a one-way mode of communication. They dictated how the consumer should feel about the company.

Decades ago, all it took to own a brand was to advertise when the Jack Benny show or the Honeymooners was playing on television. All of North America was tuned into those few key programs and you could dominate the market if your brand message was delivered in their advertisement breaks. Now, in TV alone, there are hundreds of channels. In addition, the internet is consuming more and more of our media time.

There are tens of thousands of web based bloggers and podcasters, and the niches are ramifying further everyday. But it is not just single disparate voices. We also have, as Seth Godin describes them, multiple tribes being created online. These groups of individuals, who share similar interests, and are galvanized by leaders who have

created a movement or single point of focus for them, forming communities of like-minded people.

Old Media is Dying

In 2009 and 2010 it is expected that between one to two out of every ten major newspapers in North America will go out of business. Most major media houses are cutting back, and we have seen bankruptcies and restructuring of newspapers and traditional media trying to protect themselves. People stop buying into companies for which they cannot measure return on investment. Being able to track how many people clicked through from a specific Google ad or Twitter link makes it much easier to gather data and project the results of an online campaign, as compared to a print media campaign.

Today, people are more likely to use Google, or some other online search tool, than the giant yellow pages directory, which is more commonly used for propping open their office door or elevating their computer monitor. It is a big shift from a decade ago, and one thing we know about change is that it is happening faster, not slower, giving us less and less time to adapt.

While writing this book, we were betting on which social network or social media platform would be acquired and assimilated, or simply made redundant by the time you read this. It's just a fact of life with the speed of evolution of internet media technologies. Daily newspapers will still exist, but most will be a smaller version of their online counterpart and most cities will not be able to support more than one daily. We don't want to come across as anti-newspaper, and we believe they continue to represent a high level of journalistic accountability. The reality, though, is that eyeballs are continuing to move online, and advertisers are following them.

Some people will respond to this change by saying, "I am just happy doing business offline." They would rather spend a lot of time and money selling on the phone or advertising and utilizing media and methods that are becoming less and less effective, instead of embracing new opportunities. The typical statement is, "I have always done it this way and it worked, why would I try something new?"

Businesses big and small should be focusing on new marketing channels. What you have always done may have worked, but even if you keep doing it a lot of those media are disappearing as their audiences move away. Century 21 Real Estate has announced that they are ceasing all TV advertising. That is a massive change in how real estate works, to have a major brand announce that they are cutting all of it. They're moving most of this budget (or whatever is left of it) online.

In short, if you are dependant on traditional media to drive traffic to your business, generate leads, or brand yourself, it's advisable to that you allot a portion of those budgets to new media and guerrilla marketing efforts. It pays not to be the last guy on a sinking ship.



Suppose information doesn't want to be free? Suppose what information really wants is to be meted out in tiny, controlled doses at an outrageously high price?

The New Consumer, Why Traditional Media Doesn't Work

Traditional media doesn't work like it used to. This is especially true when you are targeting the younger generations.

Note from Shane Gibson: "Kristian, my eight year old son, and I were watching TV when an ad came on for a new toy. Two kids were shown having fun playing with it; in fact I was already getting excited about heading down to the store and buying it for Kristian and I. Then I looked at Kristian and said 'pretty cool huh?' He wasn't buying it, the ad had not convinced him. He simply looked at me and said 'Dad, I think that is going to break.' That marketing piece that would have worked great on me as a kid, did nothing for my son."

This is what the consumers are like today. Even kids are skeptical of traditional media, but they believe what their friends say, they believe trusted referral sources. And we all know that word of mouth has always been the most powerful form of marketing.

Word of mouth now has the ability to go global, as what you say today online can grow legs and travel around the world. This is fantastic because we are seeing disruptive technologies upsetting the apple cart, causing traditional industry leaders to falter, opening opportunities for non-traditional competitors.

It's not just about economic challenges or shifts in various industries, it's that the rules of the game have changed. It is a global marketplace, which is becoming highly personal with online networking and social media marketing tools. With these tools it's possible for an individual, like a real estate agent or financial advisor, to open

up shop and, by engaging consumers directly, within 18 months have a stronger brand in their immediate community than some of the big brands.

The New Consumer

In the last ten years, (Shane and Bill Gibson's company) Knowledge Brokers International "KBI," has trained over a 100,000 sales professionals across the United States, Canada, South America and South Africa. KBI has seen a significant shift in what is appropriate or what is acceptable in the marketplace. Traditionally, if you want to sell a product or service, you would put 50 people in a boiler room, give them a script and a phone, and have them indiscriminately call people. They would do the numbers and they would give everybody the same pitch.

Today, consumers want things customized, they want it authentic, they want it personalized, and they don't want sales or marketing messages shoved down their throats. They want to consume the information the way they choose to receive it. They might want it through Twitter, or through watching a video, they might want a phone call, they might want an email. But they get to choose. They insist on choosing.

Social media tools enable people to leverage themselves. Faster than any other time in history you can establish a brand and a presence thanks to social media and social networking. In a remarkably short period of time, you can develop a very strong global network of loyal followers and associates.

In June 2008 we formed a group called the Vancouver Sales Performance Meetup utilizing the Meetup.com platform. We spent \$220 on targeted Facebook advertising to get the first 30 members in the group. Since then we were able to establish 500 new relationships with sales professionals in our local community in a matter of

twelve months. We did this using online and offline word-of-mouth and free promotions driven by Meetup.com. Facebook and Meetup.com allowed us to rapidly take 500 relationships that were created online and solidify them offline. We get to shake hands, have a beer together, and share best practices and connect with other professionals.

In the traditional marketing sense, if we wanted to establish those relationships a decade ago, we would spend thousands of dollars on marketing, graphic design, newspaper ads and would blanket the market. We would probably also cold call, and deliver presentations and pitches. This would cost a lot more than \$220 and would entail a much larger investment of time and downside risk. With our Meetup the only work we do now is show up and network, and make sure that we connect and share with the group. The success of this group is driven by the fact that these events are about community, education, and connecting.

Fire Your Marketing Department

As consultants, when we run across organizations with antiquated mentalities who want us to come in and help them fine-tune their cookie cutter, boiler room sales process, we say, "No thanks." Unless you are willing to move from being a product peddler to engaging the market like a trusted advisor, you are going to be road kill on the information highway. The consumer wants to deal with empowered individuals, every sales professional, every marketer, even your accountant has to be equipped and be a node in your marketing and sales network. If you give them the tools and direction to establish your brand, you can mobilize this untapped network, and you can fire your marketing department.

When we talk about firing your marketing department, it is not really about firing them, but shifting their focus. It's letting go of the traditional role they have played. They are no longer going to be the sponsors of the message and pushing it down, peppering the company with collateral materials that are used to sell. Instead, progressive organizations are enabling their teams with social media and social networking tools to go out and propagate the brand. They also teach their non-marketing colleagues a set of principles to grow the culture of the organization online.

Get Everyone Involved

Zappos.com is a leading online retailer that started with shoes, expanding to clothing and accessories. Everyone at Zappos is on Twitter. The Zappos website shows the staff accounts as a collective Twitter stream, so you can choose who you want to follow. Even Tony Hsieh, CEO, is on Twitter. They have heavily invested in their YouTube presence, and they allow customers to post YouTube videos right to the Zappos account. This gives them fresh live testimonials added all day long from happy customers. Their key customer service policy is about over-delivering. When they say things are going to arrive in 72 hours they sometimes arrive the next morning. This type of service stimulates online talk and testimonials.

At Zappos, branding and customer relationship development are no longer delivered in a top down approach. Tony Hsieh is sponsoring this change as he leads by example, engaging the marketplace and eliminating layers of hierarchy and class that traditionally exist in corporate environments. In the past, the CEO was untouchable. Front line people were put in little cubicles and were told what they could say and do. Now, the CEO is accessible as

part of the brand and empowering his or her people with all the tools to engage in service.

These include everything from finance to social media tools. It is a flattening of the organization. It's extremely powerful, and you don't have to be a Zappos CEO to use these tools. Most of the tools these major corporations are using to become extremely successful online are free or nearly free. What you do need is a little a sense of curiosity, creativity, and a willingness to be transparent and get active and communicate to the marketplace.

Another good example of organizational flattening comes from Gillian Shaw of the Canwest News Service. Five years ago it was very difficult to track down and engage somebody in the media. Now you have people like Gillian Shaw who writes for the Vancouver Sun Newspaper and is on Twitter (@gillianshaw). You can easily create conversations with her. She talks about stories she's working on, and will engage in conversations on articles she has published. You can see Gillian communicating on Twitter with people who are throwing ideas, questions and tips her way. Gillian says it has made her life easier in sourcing stories and connecting with businesses for her popular columns and blog posts. Additionally, it's easy for the public to connect with her and have their message heard.

While writing this book we have witnessed some of the world's biggest newspapers go bankrupt or cease printing. While traditional newspapers are dying, formally trained journalists like Gillian Shaw can and will develop powerful and trusted online brands. Media will still exist, but the medium is changing.

Rapidly Leverage Your Network for Free

Historically, even if you had a large contact base, it was usually a challenge to mobilize them and get support on

a project or event. It might entail dozens of phone calls, administration work and staff, and possibly costly advertising. Today you can achieve the same results faster and at a much lower cost by harnessing tools like Facebook, Meetup.com and LinkedIn.

Imagine a rookie stockbroker with a very small business network, but who happens to have been on Facebook for 2 years and developed a good sized personal network. Using Facebook, she can quickly brand herself, make new connections using tools like the “Fan Page” and Facebook events to accelerate her business growth. From her fan page she can create an event. The next step may be inviting her top 20 friends to the event along with a personal message asking each to refer or invite specific types of people from their own networks. Within a few days, and at no cost, she is able to organize an with a group of 20-40 qualified prospects sitting in a room.

As a new stockbroker, without a tool like Facebook, it would take a significant number of cold calls and advertising dollars. Using Facebook, LinkedIn events, or Meetup.com, you are able to look at guest profiles and understand who is attending, even knowing what they do for a living, or what they ate today for breakfast. These tools can enable you, as a sales professional or entrepreneur, to organize events and gain insight into who your audience is before you meet them.

Thanks to social media you have the same ability as a large corporation to influence a broad market. Reach is no longer budget dependant.

The Reverse Drip Process

“[traditional marketing] annoy the 90% of your audience that is not interested in your product to reach the 10% that might be” - Chris Anderson⁴

Today, you have the same ability as a large corporation to influence a broad market. In the past, it was almost impossible to compete with their advertising budgets. You now have the capacity to leverage your own network. In the past, mind share was built by pushing our message out to prospects using the so-called “Drip Process,” contacting the prospective client regularly with phone calls, email, lunches, personal visits, etc. The goal of a drip marketing and sales campaign is to build trust, mind share and eventually wallet share with outbound messaging. We’re not arguing that this doesn’t work. Indeed, it’s proven to work. However, with effective planning and execution, you can create a “Reverse Drip Process” where the market comes to you instead.

After meeting with her 40 people, our rookie stockbroker doesn’t have to worry as much anymore about getting them on drip email programs. Instead, she can start posting videos about her thoughts on a variety of companies, or the market in general. Over time, she can share her knowledge and demonstrate to people that she knows what she is doing. If she connects well with her initial audience of 40, and continues to deliver value to them, she can grow her network and audience base by encouraging them to bring in their own friends. She’ll do this with text and video blogging. She will develop a following on Twitter. When members of her audience next meet her in person, or for the first time, they will typically already

⁴ From his podcast interview at “Managing the Grey” interviewed by C.C. Chapman <http://www.managingthegray.com/2009/06/24/chris-anderson-interview/>

have a shared insight and a level of trust that a traditional corporate website or brochure cannot create.

***The Customers You Don't Know –
@ianwatt of IanWatt.ca***

Inman News, the leading source of independent real estate news on the web, named Ian Watt as one of the top 10 Real Estate bloggers worldwide. Ian delivers a video blog 5 days a week, predominantly discussing the Vancouver market. He forwarded an email to us that he received from a gentleman in Boston:

“I am a doctor, I am moving to Vancouver in a year-and-a-half, me and my wife and two kids, we are looking for a condo in Coal Harbor, I am willing to spend \$1.5 million Canadian, love your website, I am looking for your opinion; is the market going down...?”

This is a perfect example of the Reverse Drip in action. A very qualified client was watching, learning, and observing Ian. And Ian didn't know this fellow was in his audience until the man reached out with that email. Through constant communication and creating valuable content, Ian is able to attract customers that connect with his vision and personality. When he meets them, they feel like they already know him. Ian did not have to drop flyers all over the country or email a list of people that typically never get the message due to spam filters. He simply shares his knowledge and unique brand in an engaging way, through the right social media channels, and customers come to him.

Marketers historically collect info, then guard it in a locked database. The new approach is to engage this “live database” and provide the customer base with choice.

You don't have to go pushing people anymore. It's no longer about the number of messages we send out. A Reverse Drip process builds a genuine relationship. In his book *Tribes*, Seth Godin explores this concept. The term tribe refers to a group of people who are interested in what you do. This can be scary for traditional marketers. They are accustomed to building a big list of potential contacts so they can hit them all, and hope to get a 0.5% to 1% response rate. (A response could be anything from sharing your site with others, right up to making an online purchase.) The problem is that they have established credibility with 1% of their market and are just noise or, worse still, are an annoyance to the other 99%.

The traditional approach to marketing is to say, “I need to control the message. I need to build a fence, a gate, and a lock around my database. I am going to push my email at you when I want to, you are going to read the information that I want you to read, and you are going to discuss it only by submitting comments that I approve.” The marketer or sales person used to control how we experienced their brands, products and services in the sales processes. This approach no longer works. People don't want to fill in their information on a site to learn about us. Your database is basically alive now. They choose whether or not they are going to learn about us. Furthermore, they choose how they are going to learn. They also choose when they will do so. It's on their timeline.

In most cases, if you have set up your blog properly, engaged in using social media tools well, and are consistent over a period of time, you are going to build a loyal following. People might change their email addresses, but they are much less likely to change the thought leaders that they are connected to. This is the real goal. Forget about being a brand leader and start thinking about being a thought leader. That's what it is about. You don't

have to be the CEO of a company. You can be a brand new salesperson working for a financial institution, or a new business coach, and you can create a significant following of clients and associates in a very short time using social media and social networking tools.

Another real estate agent and client of Ubertor is Tom Everitt from ThinkTom.com. Tom shared with us just how quickly his social media activity has spun off into opportunities:

“I was introduced to video blogging and Twitter by Steve Jagger and Ubertor websites a few years ago. A television show called ‘Realty TV’ asked for some ideas for shows. I immediately ran to my Garagio (garage/studio) where I film my video blogs and shows. I filmed a pitch for the producers to do a story about my ‘Garagio’ and sent it off within an hour. They responded within 2 hours after that and the result was a 15-minute feature episode about myself and my real estate business on Realty TV. The host of the show also did an episode of my blog with me.

This kind of exposure and advertising would normally have cost tens of thousands of dollars. The result was a huge increase in visibility in the Province of British Columbia as well as nationally and internationally when I posted the episode on various websites and forums. It also led to a very substantial increase in business. The timeframe that everything happened within was literally a half a day.”

Leadership at All Levels Without Permission

Frank Eliason, or as we know of him @ComcastCares, runs the Comcast customer service Twitter account and is a great social media success story. Largely due to his efforts, in 2008 Comcast was ranked by Tech Crunch as one of the top companies in the world for using social media

effectively. Tech Crunch is arguably the top mainstream technology blog on the web.

Eliason was one of many people on the customer service team in the organization. And then he got on Twitter to engage Comcast customers directly. He started answering people who were having problems and complaining about Comcast in Twitter. As a group, he and his team came up with a title for Eliason, “Director of Digital Care.” He has created a massive following for himself, and while he is one of many employees, he has made himself invaluable to Comcast.

When you do this, you become indispensable, a person that they cannot afford to get rid of. Who knows, they may even pay you more because you have made a name for yourself, if you can get to the point where the company needs you more than you need them.

Engagement by One of the Big Three

“Any customer can have a car painted any color that he wants so long as it is black.” – Henry Ford (1909)

If we think about traditional top down organizations, we think of Ford. Ford talks about one of their biggest successes being centralized management and collaboration via their “One Ford Concept.” Even though there are offices all around the world, they collaborate as a single unit making key decisions in one place.⁵

Ford has realized that one of the challenges they had was the online conversations people were having about their vehicles and their brand. They hired Scott Monty, now head of social media at Ford. He monitors the web all day. Monty might not describe it this way, but he actively watches Twitter, he watches the blogs. He listens to

⁵ Bill Ford (Video Interview) <http://www.thefordstory.com/planandprogress/?videoId=302>

conversations, and when people talk about things like why the big three US automakers are in trouble, he will get in there and talk about how Ford is different, often pointing them to check out theFordStory.com to learn what makes Ford different.

Even when someone complains about their vehicle, he is listening, engaging them, and directs them to the nearest dealership, or where to look for help. This is an example of an organization that understands the power of social media, and we believe that's the first step. What Ford needs to do now is roll this effort out to all their dealerships worldwide.

Our prophecy is that in the near future you could see most Ford dealerships throughout North America having a social media strategy in place at the dealership level and their sales team will be video blogging, and using other forms of social media. If it's not Ford then it will be someone else. But the first major auto manufacturer that does will reap the rewards.

Note From Stephen Jagger: The Ford Motor Company was an early-engaged leader online. I was invited to Ford's 100th anniversary party in Detroit. Mitch Jarvi who worked with Ubertor at the time, had created a website called FordHarley.com. He was using the Ford brand online in an unauthorized fashion. He had a lot of traffic and fans commenting about this special Ford truck called the Ford Harley.

Ford was engaged in trying to find people that supported their business, they were looking for ultra fans that had these websites, and they actually flew Mitch, Ubertor co-founder Michael Stephenson and myself to Detroit for Ford's 100th anniversary. We had VIP treatment at the whole event,

along with 19 other guys that had websites and were ultra enthusiasts of Ford. Ford is good at paying attention to these things and embracing the fans. That's expensive to do. The beauty about it is that they didn't need to do it, they didn't need to fly guys into Detroit. But they did and it was powerful. It intensified loyalty to the brand.

Here's the alternative. The same cost of flying 20 guys to Detroit is probably a fraction of what a more archaic, protectionist company would spend suing them for using their brand online. This would only result in negative spin on the web, and it would cost them a lot more in the end. Hiring a team of lawyers so you can control your brand online is a lot less effective than engaging your fans and directing the conversation positively.

The Vlogger from Jersey

There are many examples of how social media tools are helping accelerate people's businesses. Gary Vaynerchuk was working in his family business in New Jersey, a relatively small wine shop doing \$4 million per year in revenues. One day he picked up a video camera and in his very New Jersey style, with his accent and his enthusiasm, started to talk about wine. Gary created video blogs every day. It wasn't until the 30th week, on his 148th episode, that Gary began to get a massive response to his show at WineLibraryTV.com. The store now does over \$40 million in sales. Gary has two book deals, is constantly being interviewed by TV stations across the continent, and is in high demand as a public speaker for conferences and conventions.

Not everybody loves Gary. Some people have watched his video and don't get him and have asked others, "Why do you like the guy? I don't appreciate what he has to

say about wine. He isn't even using the proper terms!" What is great is that he has a very strong personality, he is consistent, and with nothing but a video camera and a website, not internet marketing, he just kept going and he slowly built his following until it exploded. The key lesson here is that you can go from being an unknown to having a strong and loyal following, without spending all the money that advertisers did, and do, using traditional marketing strategies.

Old School Sales Pro Learns New Tricks

Note from Shane Gibson: I started my career by marketing professional speaking services to conference planners and associations in the early 1990s. When I first started, I wasn't speaking at conferences, but I was working in my family business, booking speakers for conferences. At that time, if I wanted to book a speaker 20 times a year, I would have to be in the office all day, burning up the phone calling lists of conference organizers.

I would get on the phone, and "hammer" it. Once someone was interested, I would fax them a one or two sheet on what we offered then I would follow up. If they were qualified, I would send out a very expensive package, which included a CD, a full color brochure, a stack of photocopied reference letters, and pay to courier it to them. That whole process just to pitch the client not only took a long time, it was also quite expensive. To get 20 deals I would have to send out at least 100 packages, at considerable cost.

In 2001, my business was getting about 5% of its business coming from our websites, while the rest was cold calling and word of mouth. Fast-for-

ward to 2009 and 80% of revenues generated are from web based and social media leads.

There has been a shift in web literacy and in decision-making power in the marketplace. In the past, when people were researching who to hire for a conference speaker, it was Betty, the 60-year-old personal assistant who has been working at XYZ company for a few decades who was in charge of that. Betty has retired in the last three years, and along comes Paul or Sarah. They are 20 to 30 years old, are university educated, and they are digital natives. They were born with a computer in their hand. They don't go to the Yellow Pages when they need a new product or service. They research it online; trusting in feedback received via social media and in the top search engine results.

A lot of these tools are going to change. We are going to talk about Twitter, Facebook, Viddler among others, and how to best utilize them, but at the end of the day those tools might change. Twitter could go out of business or be bought by somebody else. Nonetheless, hang on to the principles in this book on how to engage people, to perpetuate your brand, and we believe that you can be a household name in the market niche that you want to dominate.

Digital Citizens and Levels of Engagement

The Digital Natives Are Restless

Mark Prensky, author of *Digital Game-Based Learning*⁶, coined the terms “Digital Native” and “Digital Immigrant” to describe two distinct groups of people involved in technology. The digital immigrant is anyone born in 1979 or earlier. These people tend to look at technology as a utility to get something done, as something separate from them.

Most people born after 1980 in western countries would be digital natives. They were born with a PDA or cell phone strapped to their hand. Technology is second nature to them. It is part of their culture, it’s not an add-on. While there is much criticism of this demographic and their work ethic, they are extremely adept at simultaneously managing multiple tools and channels of communication. They may say, or think, something like, “Who cares if I pay attention as long as I get the work done, and by the way I’m going to socialize online while I’m working.”

While attending a recent networking event for high tech professionals in Vancouver, BC, put on by 6S Marketing called Ideas on Tap, these two demographic groups became quite obvious. One group networked with a drink and business cards, the other with a drink and an iPhone.

6 Digital Game Based Learning, by Mark Prensky - McGraw Hill, 2001