



## **GET STARTED - SOCIAL MEDIA SITES – JANUARY 2015**

In this document, we'll list some of the top social media websites that your business should be registered on. Many business owners have probably heard of the importance of being on “social media” but don't really know what to do or how to make it fit in with their business.

Indeed, many business owners are simply too busy to be creating profiles and keeping them regularly updated, and it can be a chore to keep them organized. As well, there is often no real strategy employed when embarking on a social media campaign and many promotional opportunities are missed.

This document is not intended to provide a full discussion on strategy for social media marketing (another document is being prepared to address that – watch our website for more information), but rather as a guide for business owners who are just beginning to dip their toes into this area of marketing.

But first, let's briefly touch upon the points as to why you need to be active to some degree in social media marketing.

### **Why You Need To Use Social Media**

The most important reason your business needs to be making use of social media is because your competitors are probably there, and if they're not, they soon will be. The goal of every business is to earn profits and grow (if you're not growing, you're actually getting behind, even if you think you are just standing still) by creating and keeping customers.

Using social media helps your business to be where present and potential new customers and clients are. A few benefits of using Social Media:

- Interact with other people who may be potential customers
- Interact with present customers while keeping your brand and/or business in their mind
- Learn what others think about your business. Do you need to improve in some areas?



- Advise your present and potential customers/clients of present and upcoming promotions.
- Branding, Branding, Branding!

## **Importance of Branding**

Even IF you do not intend to use every Social Media site, it is still important to register a profile with your business name with as many as possible. Having you as the registered profile “owner” ensures that someone else won't register a social profile on the same site using your business name. It prevents someone else basically trying to appear as if they are you.

If someone does register a social profile in your business or personal name, it can be difficult and time consuming to have it removed. And this is after dealing with any nuisances or harm that may have arisen as a result of someone else pretending to be you.

How would you feel knowing there was an imposter out there, using social media sites to represent themselves as you?

There are many other reasons as well for creating a large social media footprint. We won't go into all of them as there are far too many reasons to discuss for the purposes of this document.

## **Time Consumption of Social Media Profile Creation**

Yes. It is time consuming. Not only should you register your social media profiles, but you ought to set them up correctly. This takes a great deal of time. It's probably one of the key reasons why you might want to hire a professional to help you with this.

While there are automated software programs that you can purchase a membership or one time fee to register on your behalf, this is not recommended. Social Profiles should be created manually as no two are exactly alike. Some have different maximum numbers of characters they will allow. Some want your phone number. Some require a date of birth and other information from you.

This is probably the type of information you want to only share with a professional that you've communicated with and not some automated process that who knows does what with the information you've provided.



Each social media profile has its own unique issues or requirements, and sometimes, these are not dealt with in the best way possible by auto-generation. Manual generation is preferred, but time consuming.

If you need help with this (and you probably do if you're a small business), call us today at (519) 940-3504 or email [info@ianscottgroup.com](mailto:info@ianscottgroup.com). We've got the people and resources that can help you get this done and also, help you create an ongoing strategy while we watch out for trends and changes that occur.

### **What About The No Follow Back Links? Isn't That Bad?**

Many social media sites do automatically make any links you create as “nofollow.” For a long time, some people in the SEO space advised to only spend your time on backlinks that were “do follow,” however their advice is wrong. Especially when it comes to Social Media.

Let's look at the SEO issue of nofollow links. If your site only has “do follow” backlinks, that's going to be a red flag to Google. It's not natural to have only those types of links, and you need a good natural mix, especially if you are actively engaged in link building.

Social Media and nofollow backlinks offer much more than simply an SEO opportunity. Social Media offers marketing and promotional opportunities that can help you, regardless of where you rank in search engine results pages, and over the long term, with the additional exposure, may indirectly help you to rank better than you do now.

Ok, so now that you know you need to be making use of Social Media, and some of the reasons, let's get to our short list of the top social media sites you should be creating profiles on.

We're not going to provide you with the direct “register” links as they sometimes change frequently. Instead, here's our list and you can look for the “register” link from their front page.

1. **Facebook.** - Having a Facebook “page” for your business is vital today.
2. **Twitter** – Twitter is extremely important. While Facebook is still the most important social media site to have a presence, Twitter is gaining more and more users in the younger age groups. Twitter use has actually increased in the past year, while Facebook



has remained the same – neither growing or decreasing.

3. **Pinterest** – Pinterest ought to be a priority especially if you are marketing to ladies. According to recent research conducted by Pew Internet, 42% of ALL women online use Pinterest, compared to 13% of all online men using the site to share and look at images.

**Be sure to set up a “Pinterest For Business” account and not just a personal account.**

4. **LinkedIn** – Professional and business networking site has been around since 2003. While you might not benefit directly from the networking possibilities that are available here, it still is highly recommended that you set up both your own personal and business profiles here. Interestingly, according to research, LinkedIn usage has increased **significantly** over the past year.

5. **WordPress.com** – Yes, it's a blogging site, and even though you may already have a blog on your own website, it's still important to get your business profile on others, including WordPress.com. Remember, it's about branding as well as making sure an imposter isn't trying to appear as you elsewhere.

Use blogging sites to post snippets from your content on your websites and link back to your site.

6. **Blogger** – A blogging platform owned by Google. Advice is the same as for WordPress.com, above. You'll need to create the Blog using your Google Account.

7. **Youtube** – Again, you'll need to create your profile here with your Google Account. As an aside, do you know that video is now the most popular form of medium on the Internet and is an awesome way to capture attention? If you don't have any video(s) to post on Youtube, we may be able to help you with that.

8. **en.gravatar.com** – While not exactly a “social media” site per se, we're including it here as having a gravatar (your business logo could be used, for example) along with a registered email address helps with your branding. Commenting on a WordPress.com site using your registered email address may include your gravatar beside your comment.

9. **Tumblr.com** – Another blogging platform that also allows you to post images, text, links, video, audio and quotes. It's a very popular platform and you can post to your tumblr blog via email as well.

10. **Scribd.com** – Share your documents and make them available to others on this document and book sharing website. Documents on scribd get indexed by search engines and are in the results pages.



## **Not A Comprehensive List**

The above list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of social media sites where you should create business profiles, but is a good place to start. There are actually dozens more that you can take advantage of, and over time, and as quickly as possible, you should try to “claim” your business profile on them by creating them.

It is a big job but it is very important for your own business branding to do so, as well as to be able to take advantage of further promotion of your business and its activities.

## **Discover Fake Accounts Not Set Up By You**

While some consider it vain to google your own name or business, the fact is you need to do this regularly so you can see whether an imposter has set up fake accounts in your name. If you find them, report them to the appropriate site and request they be removed.

You need to take steps to protect your brand and your business.

## **This Is A LOT Of Work!**

Yes, it can be a lot of work, especially if you are just starting out. Why not take advantage of our knowledge and assistance? We can help you not just create your business profiles but come up with a content posting strategy that is effective and that isn't simply a random exercise. Make sure your social media involvement has some strategy and purpose.

Local businesses face a fast paced and changing digital era, and it can be tough to compete. We've helped a number of businesses obtain and keep high local search rankings which has helped them grow and keep customers that their competition would otherwise have had.

You can wait and “think about it” - but while you are waiting, your competition is getting stronger and stronger in their efforts, which, the longer you wait, the more difficult it will be to catch up. Why play catch up when you can get ahead? **Give us a call now at (519) 940-3504 or [visit our website](http://ianscottgroup.com) and send us an email.**