



Social Media Etiquette

Ingenuity Marketing Group

By Christine Nelson and Rachel Gold

Communications Consultants

www.ingenuitymarketing.com

Blogs

Don't create a firm blog unless you are willing to maintain it with new posts at least weekly; some experts recommend bi-weekly to build a following.

Don't advertise too much on your blog. It's supposed to be conversational and observational and informational.

Don't be self-promotional on other blogs. Talking about issues will communicate your knowledge and experience. Talking about yourself too much is annoying.

Do keep blogs short; 200 words is plenty.

Do look for opportunities to guest blog on other sites, which is just as effective for PR and SEO.

Do post comments on other blogs to build good will in the blogging community.

Make it easy for others to subscribe to your blog with RSS feeds. Check the tools area of your blog host site or ask your IT coordinator to include popular RSS options on your blog. For a how-to on RSS Feeds, visit the Tools section at IngenuityMarketing.com

When other bloggers talk about you, ask them to "trackback" to your website or related blogs you've written. This means that they would embed a link in their blog post that refers people easily back to your content.

Podcasts

Don't make podcasts too long. They can be as short as three minutes and shouldn't be longer than 30 minutes or you could lose your audience.

Do make podcasts downloadable. Not everyone wants to listen to them online. They should be portable.

Do record podcasts with quality technology ("clients" like iTunes or iPodderX) and choose someone in your firm with a strong, clear voice to record them.

Do use podcasts as a way to drive traffic to your website by referring to this additional related content following a speech, workshop or published article (in print or online). With online articles, you can include the link. With published articles, include the podcast link in your bio.

Do ask for an MP3 file of any radio interviews in which your firm participates and post them on your News or Tools page.

Videos

Don't just host your video on the video host site and post it to your firm website because all kinds of weird promotions can show up on your website that way. Host it on your own site, but also leave a copy of it on the video site as a teaser.

Do keep videos short. A 60- or 30-second clip is sufficient for general videos. For more niche specific information, you could go for two-three minutes.

Do use a professional videographer or editor to create a compelling, clear video.

Don't wear bold patterns or dress too casually.

Don't look directly at the camera when speaking or it will feel like an advertisement.

Social Networking Sites

Don't post information or photos that you wouldn't want your grandmother to see.

Don't post firm, client, vendor or co-worker information that is meant to be internal or confidential. When you do make a reference, where possible trackback to the source.

Do create guidelines on how your firm should be represented on staff profiles. For a great example, visit <http://www.ibm.com/blogs/zz/en/guidelines.html>

Do create hard links from social networking profiles to your website for SEO.

Don't try to ban social networking because you will be viewed by young professionals as archaic. This is how many of them are building their power base for future career and business development.

Do ask young professionals to help others in the firm learn about social networking and create their profiles.

Forums/Newsgroups

Do participate in industry forums, newsgroups and listservs to learn what your peers are discussing, struggling with, learning.

Don't criticize, argue or write nasty comments. It reflects badly on you and your firm. You could also be banned from the group.

Do post questions to take advantage of the knowledge available and to create exposure for your firm.

Do follow up with people who offer good advice to build rapport beyond the online conversation.

Christine Nelson and Rachel Gold are communications consultants at Ingenuity Marketing Group who assist professional services clients with strong branding, written communications and public relations. Visit www.ingenuitymarketing.com to download their free Virtual Fame PR Toolkit or contact them at Christine@ingenuitymarketing.com, Rachel@ingenuitymarketing.com; 651-690-3358.