

# Social Media Golden Rules Checklist

When developing social media accounts for business there are Golden Rules to follow. We've broken the rules down into their constituent parts. Tick those you feel you've already got a handle on and take another look at those you haven't.

## Rule 1

Go to where your client is – not where you'd like them to be. To focus time and effort, only the most appropriate social media platform(s) should be used for your business. Learn about your target audience first and then pick the platform(s) that they use most.

Do you have a defined target audience for your products/services?

Do you know which social media platforms they tend to congregate around?

Have you chosen platforms you enjoy using?

## Rule 2

Fully leverage images. Images are key to social media success so should be included in every post for every platform.

Do you know how to optimize images for your chosen social media platforms?

Do you use quality images?

Do you brand them the images you use?

If you use text over the images, do you use only up to 20% of image area?

Do you use the full extent of the image presentation functionality on each platform?

## Rule 3

Social Media is about socializing. When we socialize in "real" life we don't just push our own experiences all the time during conversation, we listen to questions and ask for others' opinions.

Do you spam your followers by sending out a lot of posts all at once?

Are only about 10-20% of your posts about YOUR business?

Do you regularly ask your followers how you can help them?

Do you regularly ask your followers about their experiences?

Do you reply to all the comments/questions you receive?

## Rule 4

Remember to be **useful**. Question every post before you send it to check that it fits the "useful criteria".

Do you know what your customers need?

- Do you provide useful information even if it does not lead to an immediate sale for your business?
- Do you ask questions of your followers and other industry leaders?
- Are you up to date with experts in your field and other market leaders?
- Are you transparent with your policies and procedures?
- Do you admit when you've made a mistake and own the resolution?

## Rule 5

Remember to be human. No one wants to interact with a nameless Corporation.

- Is your Social Media account administered by someone who understands the platform and can adopt an appropriate "voice"?
- Do you include pictures and posts about staff doing ordinary, everyday things?
- Are your posts signed off with the name of who wrote them?
- Are your posts unique to the platform and not just synopses of those on another platform and shared blindly by a social media management system?
- Does your account feature a picture of your Social Media administrator(s) and not just your logo?

## Rule 6

For each social media platform you use, create the following best practices:

- Are you consistent with the amount of posts and the time you post?
- Do you know your sweet spot for the number of posts that suits your audience? For example are you posting too much or not enough?
- Which type of posts are the most popular?
- Do you have a posting schedule based on when your posts are most popular?

## Rule 7

Respond to your followers. There's nothing worse than a social media account that never acknowledges their followers or responds to their comments. The main objective for business on social media is to create and encourage interaction to instill KLT factors

- Do you always respond to comments, criticisms and questions in an objective, friendly and non-defensive manner?
- Do you have a policy for handling negative comments?

## Rule 8

Don't be afraid to take a position. There will always be organizational restrictions regarding commenting on things like politics or religion, or maybe restricting endorsements for certain

products or services, but there are still lots of human-interest stories where you can offer a non-aggressive opinion.

Do you post about national human-interest stories where there is some correlation with your business?

Do you keep informed about what is happening in your local area (if a local business) and post an opinion where relevant?

Do you have guidelines for the staff so that they know what they can and can't post about?

Are you willing to post an unpopular viewpoint to generate debate if it is non-aggressive and relevant to your business?

## Rule 9

Comment on trending topics. Most social media platforms now have a "Trending" section where you can see what the most talked about topics are.

Do you keep watch on the trending topics on your chosen platform(s) and post where relevant?

Do you check your social media accounts frequently during the day even if you are not formally posting during that time?

## Rule 10

Learn how to use hash-tags. Some social media platforms support the use of hash-tags to classify posts and for searches to be performed.

Do you know how to use hash-tags in your posts appropriately?

Do you actively use them?

Do you use hash-tags as a search function to find interesting topics to reply to?

Do you know the top three hashtags that are appropriate to your platform and your business?

## Rule 11

Reciprocity wins. Ensure your own account is sharing or retweeting posts from others and that you are liking or following other profiles yourself.

Do you like, share, retweet useful information from your followers?

Do you comment on posts from your followers (ie not questions to you)?

Do you follow/like other profiles/accounts?