

STEP 19

The internet is currently being swept up in an explosion of social interaction. Social based sites like Facebook are driving the trend. When you have a website it is a good idea to tap into some of these sources. I want to look at a couple you should be using, and why they help.

Facebook Fan Page (www.facebook.com) - A ton of people use Facebook. Millions in fact. If you are under 30 then a majority of people you know probably use it. The younger you get the higher the ratio gets as well. You want a facebook fan page because you tap directly into all that traffic. People can easily share your business fan page to their "friends" and these "friends" can share to their "friends". Another bonus is you can share your website link to these people as well. Lastly, your Facebook fan page will have a lot of power in Google's eyes and it might rank on the search engines by itself. Try to get a keyword into your Facebook Fan Page title!

If you want to invest money, Facebook also offers a great advertising opportunity. You can purchase ads on the Facebook network that you can target to people in any geographical area, and base it on any of their "likes". For example you can target it to people in Canada who are 18-35 and interested in weight loss.

Twitter (www.twitter.com)- I also think all local business should have a Twitter account. Twitter is another super popular social site. It is a great place to get up to the minute information. To really tap into Twitter, you need to devote time to it and for most small business owners, that is impossible. Still it can be great for networking and as it grows in popularity it may become a must have for any business.

It allows you to keep track of anyone talking about you or your business in real time. You can also respond instantly to people who have questions about your general area of business. Monitor what people are saying about your competition and instantly woo the ones who complain.

Lastly, Twitter is now showing up in Google searches. Quite often when you search for current events, a Twitter feed will pop up above all of the Google results. As search engines begin the shift to social based searches, you will want to be active on these type of sites!

Digg (www.digg.com) - Digg is a social bookmarking site. At it's most basic level it is a place for people to share interesting links. You are going to want to create an account here and submit all of your webpages to Digg. Even if this doesn't result in traffic, it can give you a boost in your Google rankings. If you have a blog you should submit every post you make to Digg once you publish, this will help Google find your new content quickly.

Connotea (www.connotea.org) - Connotea is another bookmarking site. You can store all of your favorite websites here. Why not start with your own? Create an account here and link to each of your webpages. Connotea will create links that have your title tags as your anchor text. If you changed your title tags like suggested in an earlier lesson, you are set. Instant anchor text rich backlinks to your website. Again, if you have a blog submit each post here as you publish.

Mixx (www.mixx.com) - Mixx is yet another bookmarking site that will provide you with a solid backlink to your website (and blog posts). Just like Digg and Connotea, join and submit your website. Use keywords in the "title" field.

These five sites are a great way to get started in the social media world. You can be assured of a steady stream of web traffic if you are active on all of them. If you don't have time to manage these yourself, think about educating one of your tech savvy staff. Staff will often be motivated by these type of jobs if they are already active on these sites.