



Social

By Evan Carmichael

I'm going to be featured in Forbes as one of the "40 most influential marketers in social media." They asked me 5 questions on how you can use social media to generate results and I thought I'd share them with you.

I don't know how much or if any of it's going to be published. But I have some strong views... that not many people agree with.

So here goes! I hope you find value and enjoy.

1) Can you give any specific strategies, tips and/or examples of using social media for lead generation? To cultivate prospects?

The most important rule in social media is to stand for something important. You should CARE about what you're sharing. If it wasn't you or your company making it, would you actually want to share it? Probably not. Because your content is boring. Most companies' content is boring. And so you don't get any results. Make me FEEL something with each post. You should feel proud and get excited by the content you're creating and sharing. If you're not, then start over. I've gotten speaking engagements around the world, product sales, new people to join my team, and so on - tons of ROI. But it's not like pulling a lever. Stop treating it like advertising. If you're doing a pay per click campaign you know that by increasing your spend you will get x more leads and y more sales. It's not that measurable in social media. I don't know which

YouTube video or which Tweet or which Facebook post is going to land me a deal. But I know by creating content that I care about and feel passionate about I get results. I recently came back from speaking at a conference in Malaysia, for example. They paid my speaking fee, airfare, hotel, transportation, etc... and I made a lot of great connections. How did they find me? "We saw your YouTube videos and had to have you come" was the answer. This happens every day when you create great content that you're passionate about.

2) Any predictions for social lead generation or lead nurturing you'd like to share over the next twelve months?

It's getting noisier. Every. Single. Day. More people are going on social. More companies are going on social. They're all just broadcasting and are already being tuned out. More and more companies will struggle in the next 12 months to get a ROI from social media because they have the wrong mindset and approach.

3) From an employer's perspective, what are the advantages of hiring marketers with a lot of 'Klout'? What are the perceived risks? What can management do to minimize these risks?

First of all - I love that we're talking about hiring people. You can't outsource your social media campaigns. For social to work they need to have soul and that comes from your company. Klout is one metric and for all the people who hate on Klout, it does give a fairly decent overview of how much reach someone has in social. It has flaws and if someone is a Klout 70 vs Klout 65 that doesn't tip the scales but if

someone is Klout 70 vs. Klout 15 you can assume the Klout 70 person knows a lot more about social. Backing this up, however, the most important thing to hire for is cultural fit. Back to #1. What do you stand for as a company? What is your soul? Nike can't hire a marketing manager who doesn't love athletics even if their Klout score is off the charts. You can always train those skills. You can't train values.

4) What do best-in-class companies do to empower employees to use social media as part of their sales and marketing process?

Stop trying to control what happens. The brands that will win will let the conversations happen. You can't control the conversation. If that's your mindset, you've already lost. What can companies do? Hire GREAT people who LOVE your mission. Who eat, sleep, and breathe what you stand for. Then give them the training and tools they need to succeed. And turn them loose. You want to use social in a sales & marketing process? Stop blasting out coupon codes and promotional offers. Stop just sharing your blog posts that are boring and nobody cares about. Are you actually seeing any results? Instead focus on the customers. Follow them on Twitter. Comment on their YouTube videos. Congratulate them on their victories when they post on LinkedIn. CARE about them. Stop trying to push product and actually care about them. If you do that then they'll care about you. They'll buy from you. They'll refer business to you. They won't leave you when your competitors drop their price 2% below yours. That's what best-in-class companies do.

5) What do you as a social marketing influencer look for in a prospective employer or business partner? Can you give an example/(s) of a red flag(s) that would steer you away from joining a company?

I turn down more deals than I accept. From huge brands. People often write in with something like this: "Evan we'd love for you to come on board and make a video about how great our product is."

Meanwhile, I don't use your product, and it's honestly not that great. I help entrepreneurs. What I share is real. If I'm recommending a product it's because I use it. It's authentic. And that's why people pay attention and follow me. I use it. I get value from it. It helps my business. And so I'm happy to share it to help yours. Because I want to see you grow too. That's what I stand for. If I were out hawking everybody's product because I can make a quick buck then I'd lose my audience pretty quickly. Some companies get that. Some agencies get that. Lots don't. Most don't. They're stuck in advertiser mode and they're going to lose the social game.

Believe.

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About the Author

Evan Carmichael helps entrepreneurs. At 19, he built then sold a biotech software company. At 22 he was a venture capitalist helping raise between \$500,000 and \$15 million. He now runs EvanCarmichael.com, one of the world's most popular websites for entrepreneurs. His goal is to help 1 billion entrepreneurs. He has helped set 2 world records, works 20 hours per week, uses a stand-up desk, rides a Vespa, raises funds for Kiva, and created a line of Entrepreneur trading cards. He graduated from the University of Toronto and enjoys salsa dancing, being a DJ, and the Toronto Blue Jays.

Co-ordinates

Mail: 4665 Yonge Street,
Suite 303, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 0B4
Canada
Email: evan@evancarmichael.com

Web: <http://www.evancarmichael.com/>
LinkedIn:
<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/evancarmichael>



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