

Lilach Bullock

How to build an engaged community



Social media is undeniably a great way of putting a face and voice to a company or business and build solid relationships. This means that you can grow a loyal and supportive community of followers for your brand especially as social media enables you to respond directly to and engage directly with individuals. By communicating with your community on a regular and a more personal basis, businesses can demonstrate to them that their comments are not only being acknowledged but their feedback, whether constructive or otherwise, is being taken seriously, and most importantly, is appreciated.

As the benefits of managing a community increases we are seeing a rise in companies investing in community managers. Dan Purvis wrote an excellent post [here](#), which dives deeper into what a community manager role entails as well as the key differentiators between social media managers and community managers.

Let's assume you have a community of people who like your brand... it's all very well *liking you* but that doesn't always bring in big results. What if you could convert these people into a community of raving fans so that your brand is amplified as a result? Imagine if everyone in your community brought just two more people to your website? And those two brought another

two... hopefully you're getting the picture now!

1. Keep it fresh

One of the key factors in keeping social media traffic consistent, and preferably growing, is to remain 'on trend'. There is no such thing as old news! Every story has the potential to be retold in a new and different way. If everyone is talking about a particular topic; don't just rehash the same old facts. Find a new angle; a way to make it more targeted for your community and wow them with your fresh insight.

Content curation is another approach to keeping old topics fresh. Content curation involves pulling together the best of the ideas and information on a particular topic, and providing your community with easy access to them.

Remember, if you show that you are knowledgeable and have researched thoroughly about the current key trends and appear up-to-date with the latest goings on, your content will not only be considered trustworthy, but it provides uniqueness that many find so difficult to achieve.

2. Quality over quantity

Whilst it is true that regularly updating the content on your website not only gets you valuable Google brownie points (aka SEO ranking), it also encourages your community to visit more frequently; posting poor quality articles for the sake of posting is counter-productive. The gold

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standard is to blog frequently, ideally at least 2-3 times per week. It's much better to have less content but content that provides lots of value than simply publishing "filler posts" for the sake of publishing "something".

Poor content really is a waste of everybody's time. Your community are likely to tire of the inconsistency in quality and tired content. The key is not to put yourself under too much pressure, if time (or having the right skillset) isn't on your side consider **outsourcing** your content to an agency.

3. Controversial content

Freedom of speech is always encouraged in the world of social media (that's not to say go around upsetting people!). We really admire people who are prepared to step away from the herd and go out on to the plains in full view of the stalking predator to put across their own unique / controversial views. Most people find it refreshing being exposed to different ways of viewing things and alternative viewpoints.



If your aim in social media is to attract attention and stand out from the multitudes you need to be prepared to voice a controversial/different view. Being opinionated doesn't mean you necessarily have to be offensive or show a lack of respect. However, strong convictions will generate more interest and more traffic to a webpage. The more traffic, the more likely you will gain a loyal community, who will re-visit time and time again. Your content is never going to please everyone, it's a personal taste at the end of the day, but you should never be afraid to speak up and put your opinion – controversial or not – forward for a discussion.

4. Acknowledgement = loyalty

People like to be appreciated and replying to comments on a personal basis demonstrates that you appreciate the individual, whilst creating solid and loyal relationships. If you ask for feedback you need to be prepared to receive the negative as well as the positive. Our top tip for dealing with negative feedback is:

Don't take it personally

If you don't take it personally you can move your ego out of the way so that you see validity in their point. Their point is valid even if you disagree with it. Leaving a comment takes time and it is better to see this as an honour that they were prepared to invest some time in communicating with you, even if it wasn't what you hoped for. Being argumentative or retaliating to a comment you perceive to be wrong, no matter how right you feel you are, will only put your audience off and prevent people from wishing to provide opinions in the future.

Remember, the more you encourage social sharing, the more willing an audience will be when promoting and sharing your content with a wider and more diverse audience across their own personal social networking sites. Social sharing buttons are a quick way to endorse the sharing of your content and also promote the work of others.

Finally, don't be afraid to ask your community directly to share your content with other like-minded people who might enjoy it. Social Media is about maintaining people's interest, and keeping your community engaged. Sharing is the cement between the bricks – it holds it all together.

5. Getting the balance right

If you use language that is a chore to read, your audience will give up. Your Social Media content should be engaging and written at a level that is easy to read and digest quickly. The most successful books are those written in grade 8 English, i.e. at a level that a 13 year old could understand. This is because we are all short of time and if you use complex, difficult to follow language, the majority of your readers will quickly give up.



To summarise, spending time building and working on relationships is imperative and arguably the most important factor when utilising social media, because once you have established that trust, you *will* start seeing results.

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About the Author

Highly regarded on the world speaker circuit, Lilach Bullock has graced Forbes and Number 10 Downing Street with her presence! She's hugely connected and highly influential serial entrepreneur – the embodiment of Digital Intelligence.

Listed in Forbes as one of the top 20 women social media power influencers and likewise as one of the top social media power influencers, Lilach is one of the most dynamic personalities in the social media market, she actively leverages ethical online marketing

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A business owner, social media consultant, internet mentor and genuine digital guru, Lilach is consulted by journalists and regularly quoted in newspapers, business publications and marketing magazines (including Forbes, The Telegraph, Wired, Prima Magazine, The Sunday Times, Social Media Today and BBC Radio 5 Live). What's more, her books have achieved No 1 on Amazon for Sales and Marketing and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

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