

LEARNING MADE EASY



4th Edition

# Social Media Marketing

for  
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Social Media Marketing trends

Build and launch a campaign  
for any sized business

Learn cost effective ways  
to reach your audience

**Shiv Singh**

**Stephanie Diamond**





# Social Media Marketing

4th Edition

**by Shiv Singh and  
Stephanie Diamond**

**for  
dummies<sup>®</sup>**  
A Wiley Brand

## Social Media Marketing For Dummies® 4th Edition

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774, [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2019957434

ISBN: 978-1-119-61700-6

ISBN: 978-1-119-61701-3 (ePDF); ISBN: 978-1-119-61702-0 (ePub)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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# Introduction

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**S**ocial media has transformed the Internet and society as a whole. It has impacted global revolutions, elections, and the way we communicate on a daily basis. Social media also presents unique marketing opportunities that force marketers to revisit the core guiding principles of marketing while providing new ways to reach social influencers, thereby encouraging people to influence each other and do the marketing for the brand. Social media marketing (SMM) forces companies to rethink how they market online, whom they market to, and how to structure their own organizations to support these new marketing opportunities. For anyone involved with social media marketing — and Internet marketing, more broadly — this is indeed an exciting time.

*Social Media Marketing For Dummies*, 4th Edition, is written to help you make sense of the madness. Because it's such a hot topic, the press and the experts alike are quick to frighten marketers like you and introduce new terminology that confuses rather than enlightens. This book cuts through all that noise and simply explains what social media marketing is and how you can harness it to achieve your objectives as a marketer. It also aims to help you prioritize what's important and what isn't.

## About This Book

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The social media marketing space changes rapidly, so by the very definition of social media marketing, this book can't be completely comprehensive. It does, however, aim to distill the core concepts, trends, tips, and recommendations down to bite-sized, easy-to-digest nuggets. As social media marketing touches all parts of marketing and all parts of the Internet, too (from traditional websites to social platforms to the mobile web), based on your own experiences, you'll find some sections more valuable than others.

As you read this book, keep in mind that the way people influence each other online and impact purchasing and brand affinity decisions is similar to the way they've done for thousands of years in the real world. The technology is finally catching up, and social media marketing is fundamentally about allowing and encouraging that behavior to happen in a brand-positive manner online, too.

This book helps you understand why social media matters to marketers and how you can harness it to directly impact your own marketing efforts in meaningful ways. Targeted at both marketers in large organizations and those of you who work in small businesses or run small businesses, it includes advice for every business scenario.

## Foolish Assumptions

In writing this book, we imagined someone pulling a copy off a bookshelf in a Barnes and Noble and scanning it to see whether it's a valuable guide. And we wondered what that person would need to know to find this book interesting. Here are some of the assumptions we came up with about you:

- » You have a computer and/or mobile device with Internet access.
- » You're using social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter.
- » You're working in marketing or want to join the marketing field.
- » You have customers or prospective customers who use the web frequently.
- » You sell a product or service that you can market online.
- » You're curious about social media and how it changes marketing.

## Icons Used in This Book

In the margins of the book, you'll find these icons helping you out:



TIP

Whenever we provide a hint that makes an aspect of social influence marketing easier, we mark it with a Tip icon.



REMEMBER

The Remember icon marks paragraphs that contain a friendly reminder.



WARNING

Heed the paragraphs marked with the Warning icon to avoid potential disaster.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

Whenever we get technically inclined, we mark the paragraph with a Technical Stuff icon. If you're not technically inclined, you can skip these nuggets of info.

## Where to Go from Here

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This book is designed so that you can quickly jump to a specific chapter or section that most interests you. You don't have to start with the first chapter — although if you're new to social media marketing, we recommend that you do so. Understanding the foundation of social media marketing (which we explain in the early chapters) helps you better apply the techniques that you learn in the later ones to the specifics of your business.

You can also find the cheat sheet, complete with additional nuggets of information, for this book by going to [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and searching for “Social Media Marketing For Dummies cheat sheet.”



# 1 Getting Started with Social Media Marketing

**IN THIS PART . . .**

Find out how to begin practicing SMM.

Learn how to find your SMM competitors.

Discover what goes into developing a Social Media Marketing mindset.

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Understanding social media's role in social influence
- » Discovering the different roles played by social media participants
- » Knowing what types of influencers you're marketing to
- » Coordinating your efforts with other types of marketing
- » Moving beyond corporate marketing

## Chapter **1**

# Understanding Social Media Marketing

**W**hen marketing online, you design websites, run display banner advertising, publish videos to YouTube, and push your website listings higher up in the search engine rankings to promote and sell products. It's easy to forget how people actually buy. It's easy to assume that the potential customers are lonely people crouched over their computers late at night, choosing what products to add to a shopping cart — isolated from the real world and their family and friends.

But in reality, that's not how people buy online today. It might have been the case in the early days of the web, when the people spending time online were the early adopters and the mavericks, the ones willing to take the risk of putting their credit card numbers into a computer hoping for accurate charges and secure transactions.

In those days, few people bought online, and the ones who did were on the fringes of mainstream society.

Those days are over now. With over 300 million people using the web on a regular basis in the United States alone and approximately 3.2 billion users globally, using the Internet has become a mainstream social activity. Consumers approach purchasing online differently, too, and as a result, you need to approach your marketing online differently as well. Your approach must incorporate influence and the different roles that people play in the realm of social media, especially because social media itself has changed over the last decade with the rise of smartphones.

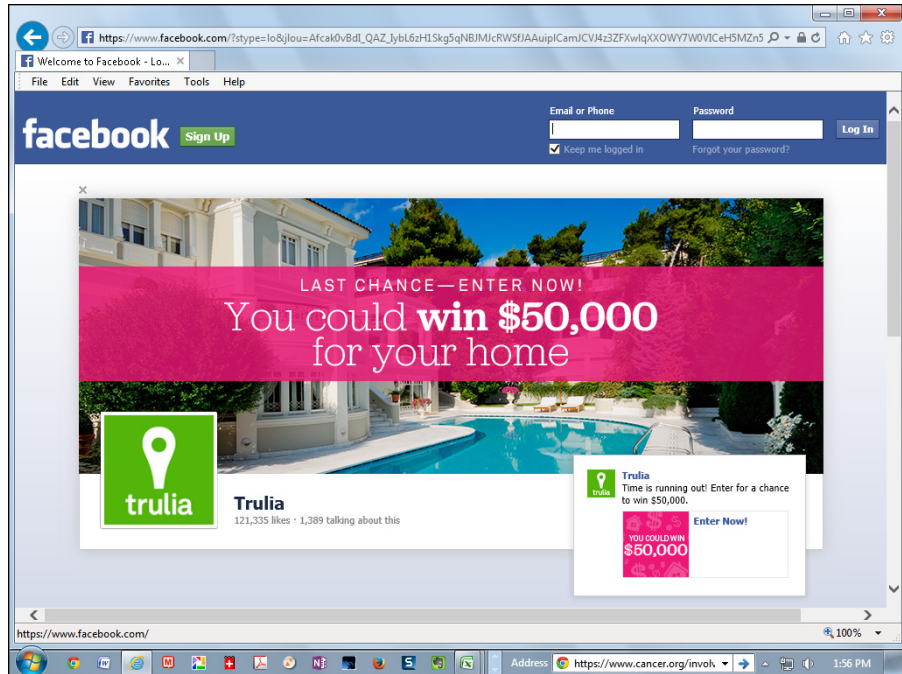
This chapter discusses the fundamentals of social media marketing: what it is, how it works, who the players are, and what it means in the context of your other marketing efforts.

## Defining Social Media Marketing

A discussion of any subject needs to begin with a definition, and so here's the one for social media marketing: *Social media marketing (SMM)* is a technique that employs *social media* (content created by everyday people using highly accessible and scalable technologies such as social networks, blogs, micro-blogs, message boards, podcasts, social bookmarks, communities, wikis, and vlogs).

Social media (which has probably been one of the most hyped buzzwords of the last decade) refers to content created and consumed by regular people for each other. It includes the comments a person adds at the end of an article on a website, the family photographs she uploads to a photo-sharing service, the conversations she has with friends in a social network, and the blog posts she publishes or comments on. That's all social media, and it's making everyone in the world a content publisher and arbitrator of content. It's democratizing the web. Facebook, shown in Figure 1-1, is the most popular social network. It allows you to connect with friends and share information in a matter of minutes. Facebook has 2.41 billion monthly active users around the world.





**FIGURE 1-1:** Facebook is just one example, albeit the largest, of the many media platforms.

## Learning about the Roles People Play

To look at the framework of social media marketing, we need to look at the different roles played by those engaged in social media. They are as follows:

- » **Marketers:** They publish and share content online to achieve an organization's marketing and business needs. Today's marketer looks nothing like the marketers of the twentieth century. Customers now own the brand conversation. The opportunity to interrupt and annoy those customers has dwindled. Customers now meet businesses on their own terms. In the following section, we discuss the new role that marketers have to play.
- » **Influencers:** Several types of influencers contribute to the decisions customers make. They may be everyday people who influence the consumer as he makes a purchasing decision. Depending on the decision, the social influencers may be a wife (or husband), friends, peers at work, or even someone the consumer has never even met in real life. Simply put, the people who influence a brand affinity and purchasing decision are the social influencers. They may exert this influence directly by rating products and commenting or by publishing opinions and participating in conversations across the web. Anyone can be a social influencer, influencing someone else's brand affinity

and purchasing decisions, and you, the reader, are probably one, too, without realizing it. We discuss the specific types of influencers in the section “Understanding the role of the influencer.”

» **Platforms:** We used to believe that the social media platforms on which marketers, influencers, and consumers published content were neutral technologies without playing a role in whose content got promoted and shared the most. However, in recent years, the actions of the major social media platforms have shown that their leadership has an active role to play in what gets promoted, shared, and inversely censored on a social media marketing platform. If you’re a small company, their influence may not be noticeable but for larger companies who market and sell many products online, understanding how the platforms and their leaders think about content is important.



REMEMBER

It isn’t enough to market to the consumer anymore; as a marketer, you have to market to your potential customers’ social influencers as well so that they, in turn, influence either overtly or just by what they publish and share online. And that’s what social media marketing is about.

## Changing roles of the social media marketer

Anyone who has worked in online marketing for a while has watched amazing changes take place. Starting in 1994, one of this book’s authors, Stephanie, worked at AOL, watched that company and other online services help start a social media revolution that continues to change the world. At that time, the other author, Shiv, created his first website using HTML 1.0 and added the ability to comment at the end of each page.

Since then, a lot has changed, and today many marketers are looking for a specific set of rules to follow to be successful. We can assure you that there aren’t any, but there *are* some guidelines. Following are some of the actions that social media marketers must take if they want their company to compete successfully in the new social marketplace:

» **Become the top persuader.**

When you lead an SMM team, you need to understand that persuasion is your most important tool. You persuade your team that you can help its members achieve success, and you persuade your customer to buy your product. Throughout this book, we discuss the role that influence plays in social media and in the art of persuasion. Before you influence, you need to figure out the persuasive message that will sell. When you do that, you can unleash the groups that influence your customers.

### »» Use a variety of distribution channels.

The key mistake that some new social media marketers make is to focus solely on social media platforms to carry their message. This does half the job. Although it gets people's attention, it doesn't always get them to the sale. For example, imagine that you have just tweeted about a solution for stain removal. Unless you provide a link to your product and a place for discussion and reviews, you have a missed opportunity. Draw a map of all your channels (blog, website, Facebook page, newsletter, and so on), and use it whenever you plan a new campaign. You need a link to all your venues.

### »» Reinvent your strategy to emphasize value.

Value is a secret weapon in this economy. When you boil away all the other ingredients of a product sale, you uncover value. This is a tricky concept because value is in the eye of the beholder. Understanding what impacts that value should underlie your entire marketing strategy. Think about your current SMM campaign. Are you focusing on features and benefits or on how the product makes your customer feel? For example, some companies focus on making people feel smart and sexy when they buy a certain model car. By the same token, others may focus on models that emphasize safety and responsibility. If you understand the value, you can establish a bond with your buyer.

### »» Market to inspire.

The globalization of our world via the Internet has given us a window into the lives of others. It's hard to ignore the poverty and disease that plague much of the world's population. Many companies are seizing the opportunity to use their businesses to help make an impact. SMM encourages awareness of the connection we share with others. Think about how your business can participate.

In fact, in the last few years alone, purpose driven marketing, which is about defining why you do what you do, has become one of the most important ways to engage customers. Dove's #speakbeautiful movement Twitter campaign, which encouraged women to speak positively about themselves, is a perfect example of this type of marketing as it flowed naturally from Dove's broader purpose of improving the self-esteem and confidence of women. It wasn't just about selling a product but demonstrating that the brand has a more meaningful role to play in people's lives.

### »» Create and curate content.

Offering engaging content is a big part of any SMM campaign. You need an editorial calendar that lays out your topics, creation tools, and deadlines. You also need to focus on curating content already published on the web. Becoming a trusted source of information is key to getting your customers to visit often. It's important to remember that your customers are leading highly

engaged and entertaining lives in the social media world. Your content can't just be about your product. It needs to be valuable to them and their lives.

» **Know when to resist the next shiny object.**

As you well know, new web tools pop up daily. The best way to avoid being distracted is to write down your objectives. The last thing you want to say to yourself is, "Everyone is using such and such, so we should use it." Place your objectives in a prominent place and refer to them often. If they change, revise the document. But whatever you do, don't try to do something on every social platform — you'll quickly discover that you don't have the tools, training, and — most critically — the resources to support all the tools.

» **Be prepared to be wrong.**

This is a tough one. In your role as marketer, you want to lead your company to successive victories. SMM is not a sure thing. You need to be prepared to experiment and change course using the feedback that you get from customers. You may start with a small idea and develop it into a full-blown campaign. It's unlikely that you can start out with a very expensive big effort and not have to correct along the way. When management and staff start out with the notion that they are testing and experimenting, changes in direction won't seem as shocking. This cuts down on wear and tear of the psyche for everyone. It also limits the risks to your core marketing efforts while you learn this space.

## Understanding the role of the influencer

To understand how social influence works, you need to look at how people are influenced in the real world, face to face. Social influence isn't something new. Long before the web, people asked each other for advice as they made purchasing decisions. What one person bought often inspired another to buy the same product, especially if the original purchaser said great things about the product. That's how human beings function; we're influenced and motivated by each other to do things. We're social beings, and sharing information about our experiences is all a part of social interaction.

Is influence bad? Of course not. More often than not, people *seek* that influence. People ask each other for advice; they share decision-making processes with friends and colleagues; they discuss their own experiences.

How much a person is influenced depends on multiple factors. The product itself is the most important one. When buying *low-consideration purchases* (those with a small amount of risk), people rarely seek influence, nor are they easily influenced by others. Buying toothpaste, for example, is a low-consideration purchase because each product may not be that different from the next one, and they're all fairly inexpensive — so you won't lose much money if you choose one that

doesn't fit your needs. On the other hand, buying a new car is typically a *high-consideration purchase* (a purchase that includes a large risk).

The price of the car, the maintenance costs, and its reputation for its safety all contribute to making it a high-consideration purchase, not to mention the fact that you want to identify with a certain brand versus another one. Social influence plays a much bigger role in car purchases than in toothpaste decisions. Mercedes-Benz has used social media marketing time and again to leverage influencers in motivating consumers to purchase its cars. The Mercedes-Benz *Take The Wheel* campaign for which they hired five top Instagram photographers to each take the wheel of a new Mercedes CLA was a standout example. (Figure 1-2 shows the webpage for this campaign.) Whoever got the most likes on Instagram when publishing about the car and their roadtrips got to keep the car. So as you can imagine, the photographers really worked hard!



**FIGURE 1-2:**  
The Mercedes-Benz Take The Wheel campaign.



**TIP**

Social influence matters with every purchase, but it matters more with high-consideration purchases than low-consideration ones. Most consumers realize that when they're making high-consideration purchases, they can make better and more confident purchasing decisions when they take into account the advice and experience of others who have made those decisions before them. That's how influence works.

## Considering the types of influencers

When discussing social media marketing, people often ask us whether this means that they should add product review features to e-commerce websites or advertise on social networks. Yes, product reviews and advertising are important, but there's more to social influence than those two things. When you think about social influence in the context of your marketing objectives, you must separate social influencers online into three types: *referent*, *expert*, and *positional*. These categories come from thinking that social psychologists John French and Bertram Raven pioneered in 1959.

As a marketer seeking to deploy social media marketing techniques, the first question to answer is this: Which social influencers sway your consumers as they make purchasing decisions about your product? After you identify those social influencers, you can determine the best ways to market to them.



REMEMBER

Any major brand affinity or purchasing decision has referent, expert, and positional social influencers all playing distinct and important roles. Which one is most important may vary slightly based on the purchase, but the fact remains that you need to account for these three distinct types of social influencers in your marketing campaigns. If you're a marketer trying to positively affect a purchasing decision, you must market not just to the consumer, but also to these influencers.

### Referent influencers

A *referent influencer* is someone who participates on the social platforms. These users are typically in a consumer's social graph and influence brand affinity and purchasing decisions through consumer reviews, by updating their own status and Twitter feeds, and by commenting on blogs and forums. In some cases, the social influencers know the consumers personally. *Social graph* is a term popularized by Marc Zuckerberg of Facebook and is used to describe the relationships that people may have on a social network and how they connect to one another.

Because the consumers know and trust their referent influencers, they feel confident that their advisers are also careful and punctilious. Because they're people they trust, they value their advice and guidance over most other people. Referent influencers influence purchasing decisions more than anyone else at the consideration phase of the marketing funnel, according to various studies.

For example, if Shiv decides to make a high-consideration purchase such as a car, he might start by going online and discussing different cars with a few friends on Facebook or via Twitter. And then that weekend, he might meet those friends over coffee and carry on that discussion in person. They tell him about the cars they like, their own purchasing experiences, and which dealerships they've had