

9 Immutable Laws of Social Media Marketing

By Jim Gilbert

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“What kind of return on investment will I get?”

“I tried social media and got no customers!”

These are the kinds of questions and responses I hear daily in my conversations about social media. Often I tell folks to set and manage expectations correctly. From these conversations I’ve come up with a set of nine laws of social media to provide all marketers with proper expectations.

- 1. Brand + time = revenue.** The more time consumers spend with your brand and products, the more likely they are to buy. Engaging customers or prospects in social media channels increases brand/time.
- 2. Brand + channels = revenue.** The more channels in which consumers interact with your brand, the more likely they’ll buy. Offering multiple engagement channels allows for consumer self-selection of preferred channels. Being in the right social media channels based on your market increases channel interaction.
- 3. Brand + time + channels = advocates.** Consumers spending time in multiple channels breeds customers more likely to become brand advocates and influencers. This is the new multichannel marketing model for the 21st century. Social media creates brand advocates and turns peers into your best salespeople.
- 4. Exponential search factor.** Social media increases your search engine rankings and, when combined with your website, drives additional traffic via organic search.
- 5. The newfangled customer service factor.** Consumers choose their contact preferences. Brands that don’t have multiple channels for customer service risk losing customers. Consumers expect instant gratification, and social media delivers.
- 6. Behind-the-scenes factor.** People don’t buy from brands; they buy from people. Social media puts a human face on the faceless corporate entity. Social media’s biggest opportunity is to allow people to connect with your employees as peers.
- 7. Trust is the new black.** If done correctly, the aforementioned laws allow consumers to build or rebuild trust. Social media harkens back to the days of the corner store where consumers and brands had a cordial relationship. Social media builds relationships over time.
- 8. The reputation factor.** Whether you like it or not, consumers are talking about your brand. Social media is the great neutralizer. It allows you to seek out negatives and turn them into positives via reputation management and communications.
- 9. The time spent factor.** Customers aren’t always ready to buy. Social media prepares customers with all of the above over time.

Jim Gilbert is president of Gilbert Direct Marketing, a Boca Raton, Fla.-based catalog and direct marketing agency. His LinkedIn profile can be viewed at www.linkedin.com/in/jimwgilbert. Reach Jim at jimdirect@aol.com or follow him on Twitter at www.twitter.com/gilbertdirect.

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13020 Earhart Ave • Auburn • CA 95602

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