

Foundations—a Pedestal Group Publication

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FOUNDATIONS

The Pedestal Group

Google+ - Google's Answer to Facebook

Special points of interest:

- *Marketing Plans*
- *Questions to Ask Yourself*
- *Archiving Email*
- *LinkedIn Usage*
- *Movie Quotes*
- *AND MORE!*

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Google launched its latest product, Google+ at the end of June. It is clearly intended to compete with Facebook although they were quick to disassociate the two. There are some great features to it as well as some interesting twists. One thing to note at the onset—there are no private profiles on Google+. If you set your profile to private during the beta phase, it will be DELETED on July 31st.

As with all social networks, Google+ starts with a profile. The Google+ profile is simple and streamlined so there isn't a lot of cluttering stuff people don't need to know.

The difference really starts as you add people to follow. Google+ uses a concept called, "circles". The idea is if you went to an event and worked a room, you would group people in different ways. Some people are your close and personal friends while others are business friends. Yet others may be business associates and finally just acquaintances. With circles, you can create those groups just like they exist in real life and add people to them as appropriate. Then

when you share information, you can choose which circles to share with. The right information gets to the right people.

Google+ also offers a feature called Hangouts. Hangouts is a video chat area where you can log in and multiple people can join you in a conversation. It is intended to be like real life. You are hanging out somewhere and people "run" into you. But because it allows groups to chat for free, it should give Skype a run for its money.

In an effort to consolidate your information in one place, Google+ has a feature called "Sparks". Sparks are things that "spark" your interest and allows you to track topics, keywords, or other content on the web.

Finally, Huddle is a place that allows quick access to a group chat. Trying to set up a meeting or dinner? Get everyone on a Huddle and you'll be done in no time.

So Google+ has a lot going for it in terms of day to day usage. But why would Google do this when currently there are no ads? The reason dis-



cussed the most is because right now Google can promise to help companies target what people are looking for through their search engine. But they don't have access to what people actually LIKE or talk about. Gaining access to a social network like this can change their analytics and give them whole new ways to look at information.

So the real question is, will the average user stop using Facebook and pick up Google+ instead? There are no business pages so businesses will not be jumping ship any time soon. In addition, there are no games so avid game players will stay put. We believe at this time it is another tool to use but the average user is not going to switch from Facebook yet. As it evolves, that may change, but for now, use both!

Marketing Plans

Small businesses often fall into a cycle of marketing, completing the work and then marketing again. The stress caused by having work and then having none, coupled with the constant need to strictly manage cash flow causes many small business owners to feel trapped. Can't hire a full time sales person and yet can't spend all their time on sales. So how do you break the cycle?

The key is to commit to marketing **EVERY WEEK**. There should never be a time when you go without marketing. New clients will only come in if they have a reason to do so—so give them a reason!

The next time you start a marketing cycle, commit to this being the **LAST** start of a marketing cycle. Instead, make this the first day of the rest of your marketing life. Set your plan so that it is continuous and easy to add new prospects to on a regular basis. Once you have the mechanisms in place, you can hire a student worker or researcher to get you the list of prospect names. Adding a reasonable number each month will become part of your routine and keep the pipeline flowing.

When you are ready to design your

plan, keep in mind that each prospect added to your list should get 7 touches before being moved to an ongoing campaign area. Each touch should be unique but there are some obvious choices. The first introduction can be either phone or email and then followed up with the same information in the other format (2 for the price of one!). There is no way to know which format a prospect would prefer so hitting them both ways will help you identify that. Emails should be done through a system that allows you to track opens and click throughs so you know who is paying attention. In your tracking system, be sure to note how the person responded. If they responded by phone, assume they prefer phone until otherwise told. Email is the same. You've already hit them with two touches!

NOTE: Once a prospect has responded, they should be moved from this marketing plan and put into your negotiating tier. They may receive many of the communications sent to the others but it is important to separate them right away so they don't receive something that looks like you don't consider them more than a cold prospect.

Your next step is to create the remaining 5 touches. These should be set out in detail with the text of emails written, voice mail scripts determined, and any items to be sent procured. If it is time to update your brochure or materials, do that now. Once you have this set up, it will be easy to maintain your contacts and send information when needed.

The last step is determining your ongoing campaign. At a minimum you want this information to go out monthly and email is great at this point. You want to send them something informational and framing you as an expert in the field.

The last step before starting the actual marketing work is to create your schedule. Determine **TODAY** how many marketing hours you will spend per week. These are not negotiable. Put them on the calendar and keep the spirit of the appointments; meaning you can move them around the calendar, but you always use those hours for marketing. Schedule this time **EVERY WEEK** so there are no weeks where you aren't marketing.

Sticking to this really works and evens out those business cycles. Commit **TODAY!**

Questions to Ask Yourself

There are two questions that really stood out for our clients in a recent book by Rob Kaplan called, "What to Ask the Person In the Mirror." First, do your actions reflect your vision and plan for the company? The second, if you had the opportunity, what would you do different if you had to design your business from the bottom up and start over?

Both questions lead to interesting in-

sight into what you are doing and how you are doing it.

The first question requires a thorough analysis of how you spend your time. Wasting it on non-mission critical tasks can be taking you away from achieving your goals. Couple that with how you would redesign things, and suddenly obvious changes to really make a difference come through loud

and clear.

We have walked several clients through this activity and the results are really great. Many of the things the business owner would change can be changed right now. So if you want assistance in talking this through feel free to call. Otherwise, give it a try. It is also great to see what you would keep!

Archiving Email

It has been awhile since we touched on one of the greatest management tools in Outlook—the ability to archive. Archiving moves email messages out of the primary file and into a new file to reduce the size of your email file and making Outlook more efficient.

When managing email on a day to day basis, most of us use a folder system to organize and maintain information. With archiving, you can archive the entire folder together so that organization structure is maintained.

To archive a folder, go to File, Archive, and select the folder you want to archive. At the bottom of that window you can select if you want everything in the folder (anything before today's date) or choose a date range, and then what you want the archived file to be called. This is where Archive becomes so valuable. In the link, go to the end and add the name of your folder. This will create a unique archive file for that folder.

Now, when you need to access that folder of information, just open that

file and you are all set. To do so go to File, Open, Outlook Data File. Because you left the defaults when you created the file, it will be in the list that comes up automatically. When you open the file, it will appear at the bottom of your folder list under "Archived Files". It will then act just like any other folder. Add information to it, move things out, etc. Great way to be organized!



How People Use LinkedIn

LinkedIn is often considered THE business networking site and with good reason. Having hit the 100-million user mark in March, adding one new member every second and recently going public really makes them an incredible player in the social networking arena. But different people use LinkedIn in different ways. How do you find out what they are doing?

Lab42 wanted to look at exactly that question (<http://blog.lab42.com/the-linkedin-profile>). They did a survey of 500 LinkedIn users to see how people are really using LinkedIn. This can be truly key information for sales people and business owners.

Of LinkedIn users, 61% indicated it is their primary site for professional networking. (22% said Facebook and 4% said Twitter).

When asked "how often do you access LinkedIn?" 67% are at least a few times a week with 35% report in daily.

81% belong to at least 1 group and 52% of those participate in group

discussions.

61% do not pay for LinkedIn.

42% change their LinkedIn information regularly while 7% said they haven't updated since they created their profile.

18% don't have a profile picture while 37% change their picture regularly.

82% were aware there are ads on LinkedIn but only 20% said they click on them.

90% of LinkedIn users think the site is useful, specifically because:

"It helps me to connect to individuals in my industry as possible clients", "It is more professional than Facebook", and "It allows me to hire people that I wouldn't regularly meet".

But the most interesting data is how people at different levels of management use LinkedIn.

Top executives in companies reported using LinkedIn for job searching only 9% while entry level people said 24% and middle management 8%. Top

level executives reported their main use for LinkedIn is Industry Networking (22%).

The survey separated networking into "with former employers", "with current coworkers", etc. but if you combine those categories, 73% of top level executives use LinkedIn for networking.

Only 12% of top executives and 9% of middle managers reported using LinkedIn for hiring.

And as far as self-promotion went, only 6% of top level execs said they use LinkedIn for business promotion while 7% of middle managers and 5% of entry level employees indicated they do.

So on your LinkedIn profile, get your industry expertise out there and be sure you are a full participant. Clearly decision makers at companies are there and if they aren't, they know they should be. Leading the way in using LinkedIn can be a great help to your sales, relationships and understanding your market!

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Putting our clients where they belong.

The Pedestal Group was founded to answer a need we saw in small businesses to have a source for help. That could be how to find and integrate the right technology, how to better hire and manage people, how to set goals and create a strategic plan, or really attack and own your marketplace.

Our team has worked in a variety of industries including staffing, recruiting and executive search, retail, technology, healthcare software / IT, higher education and franchising and the consistent theme we have found it is very hard to see the forest for the trees. In small business, that is compounded by the number of resources available.

Our approach is unique in that we don't just say it is all about the customer, it really is. The Pedestal Group puts our customers on a pedestal – right where they belong. That isn't to say the customer is always right because that is an adversarial relationship – in our case, we always come to agreement. We are always in a partnership with our clients but also remember who's the most important – YOU.

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Having Fun with Movie Quotes

It is July so everyone is up for a little fun, right? Sometimes you need just the right quote to send with your marketing email or signature. Forbes posted the best business quotes in movies recently and we wanted to share some of them you might be able to use!

Boiler Room—2000 “A sale is made on every call you make. Either you sell the client

some stock or he sells you a reason he can't. Either way a sale is made, the only question

is who is gonna close?”

American Gangster—2007 “The loudest one in the room is the weakest one in the room.”

Office Space—1999 “My only real motivation is not to be hassled—that, and the fear of losing my job. But you know, Bob, that will only make someone work just hard enough not to get fired.”

Working Girl—1988 “Never burn bridges. Today's junior prick, tomorrow's senior partner!”

Any Given Sunday—1999 “No intensity, no victory.”

Jerry Maguire—1996 “The key to this

business is personal relationships.”

Catch Me If You Can (2002)

True story of the infamous con artist Frank Abagnale Jr., who collected cash passing himself off as an airline pilot, doctor and lawyer. Quote: “Two little mice fell into a bucket of cream. The first mouse quickly gave up and drowned, but the second mouse, he struggled so hard that he eventually churned that cream into butter and he walked out. Amen.” --- Frank Abagnale Jr. after he was asked to say grace

And of course, from Glengarry Glen Ross—1992 “Only one thing counts in this world—Get them to sign on the line which is dotted.”