



Sailing the Social Media Sea



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Embarking On The Journey

Chapter 1 – In which I highlight the intricacies of Social Media and outline what you'll get out of this course

Social Media is a game changer. There's no doubt about it. It has made it possible to connect with people who share your interests, rather than those who are geographically convenient. This, along with the internet and some of the technology that goes with it, has made the world a far smaller but more connected space.

And that's just it. Social Media has become the new thing. You can't do anything if you're not on Social Media. You have to be authentic, engaging and have something important to say. You have to maintain a presence on all possible platforms so anyone can find you. You have to, you have to, you have to. Everywhere you look is someone telling you something else that if you don't do it, you're going to fail.



Here's the thing.



Every time you hear the phrase 'have to' or the word 'should', understand that it's the Dragon speaking.

When people say "you have to do something" one of two things is taking place. Either they aren't entirely sure that what is being advocated is correct and they're trying to convince themselves. Or they're stuck. They don't understand why doing 'a', 'b' and 'c' aren't getting them what they want, but they can't think of anything else, so they repeat the same instructions that they were given. The challenge is to be able to take the formulaic instructions (of the kind doing 'a', 'b', 'c' gives you 'x', 'y' and 'z') and derive the valuable information from them. This could be something small, such as a readjustment of your goals, or something massive like a complete turnaround in how you go about achieving these goals.

You need to think about any advice you're given and only assimilate the bits that feel right. Occasionally you may find that your current methods aren't working and things need to change, but, as long as this is a decision that you've thought through and you are happy with the new direction, you can't possibly go wrong.





“That’s all well and good” I can hear you thinking to yourself, “All you’ve done is highlighted the problems. How is reading any more of this going to help me?”

Here’s how!

I’m not going to give you any tactics for getting 87 542 followers on Twitter or 1273 subscribers to your site, mainly because all the information is already available out there. What I am going to do is give you a consistent strategy so that you can measure any new information against that strategy, take the bits that fit and ignore the ones that don’t. More importantly, you won’t worry that you’re not doing what everyone says you have to, because you’ve thought through your decision.

I’m not going to give you specific strategies to use on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or any other Social Media platform you could care to name. I am going to show you how to develop a coherent strategy for using all of them, how to use them together in a manner that you’re comfortable with and one that isn’t going to cause you more stress than you’re already under.



By the time you’ve worked through to the end of this course, you’ll have a strategy that feels right, as well as an objective way to measure if it’s working and how fast it’s working. I’ll also give you some hints on how to implement this strategy, and when you need to change it, how to go about that.

Shall we begin?



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Cartography

Chapter 2 – Realising what you know about Social Media and deciding which platforms to use

Before we start with developing your Social Media strategy, there are a few things you should do to make it easier. If you know what you want out of your business, finding where a Social Media strategy will fit is easier, but you can continue without one.

The first step is to map the waters. You can't plot a course or successfully navigate the reefs unless you understand where they are and what sort of undercurrents you're dealing with.

On Worksheet 1 – Social Media Platforms, I've started a list with the most obvious Social Media platforms. The list is incomplete as there may be platforms I've forgotten. I also haven't put any forums into it as each forum belongs on its own line.



We now have a complete list of all the Social



Media platforms you know of.

You're not finished with the list yet. There are two columns, in the first is what you know of the platform. Specific facts about how the system works and so on. For example, next to Twitter is 140 character limit, easily searchable.

The second is far more important. This is how you feel about the platform. Things like whether you think it's useful or a time suck. Whether you can use it to effectively communicate or is it so much hot air and attention seeking.

Next you start eliminating platforms that you know very little about or feel aren't useful. This should pare down your list nicely.

A Note: The point of removing the platforms is to take them out of your circle of concern. You've removed them because you don't like them, you don't understand them, or you don't know enough about them. You can still learn about, and use these platforms, but, at this point, they should not form part of your strategy.



Fight
Mediocrity

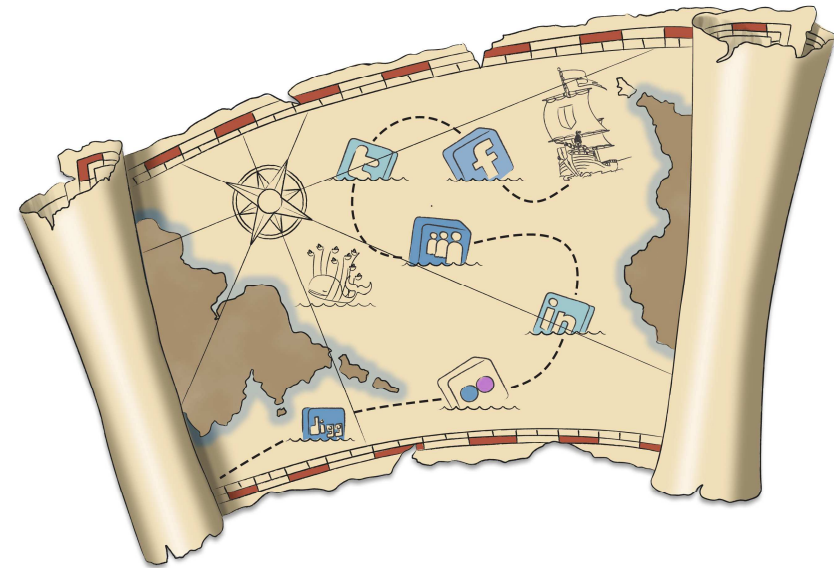


The only exception is this.

If you have a platform that you think is useful but you don't know enough about it, develop your strategy without it. Later go and learn everything you can about the platform, play around in it, take it for a test sail. When you re-evaluate your Social Media Strategy, you can include it then.

Now it gets a little tricky. Pick up to 5* of the remaining platforms. More than this and you won't be able to give each one the time that is needed to do it properly. You are far better off doing 1 thing well and not touching the other than you are going half-heartedly at both. Social Media does not follow the 80/20 rule. 80% of the results are not generated by 20% of the effort. To get results you have to go all out.

Now you've got the platforms you want to use, go to Worksheet 3 – The Cheat Sheet and put them into the small dragon footprints. The big dragon footprint on the top is what we're going to fill in next.



* A question was asked about business forums. Do they go in 1 footprint each or can you lump all of them into a single category. The answer here is "It depends!" (not very useful but there it is) If you have enough time to spend on all of them without causing undue stress and aggravation, lump them together. If you have limited time you may want to pick one to focus on and spend most of your time there, while maintaining a presence on the others.



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Worksheet 1 – Social Media Platforms

Social Media Platform	Facts	Feelings
 Blog		
 Blog Commenting		
 Guest Posting		
 Twitter		
 Facebook		
 Linked In		
 Youtube		
 Del.ici:ous		
 flickr		
 digg		

