

InForum on Social Media

Insight Publications and Innovationedge

How do you use social media to leverage your business profile?

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Cheryl Perkins: Welcome, I'm Cheryl Perkins, president and CEO of Innovationedge and I'm pleased to be here today with leaders from the area to talk about a topic that is fairly controversial: Social media. We're going to hear from these leaders today in terms of what's working and not working. But before we get started, let's introduce themselves. Steve?

Steve Tyink: Good morning I'm Steve Tyink with Miron Construction. My title is vice president of business innovation. I'm responsible for working for my clients and finding solutions for the businesses.

Vince Gallucci: Good morning I am Vince Gallucci: I'm chief administrative officer for Affinity Health System. I oversee a multiple set of corporate areas, some of them being marketing and PR, human resources, legal, lean and Six Sigma, facilities, physician relations just to name a few. I've been there for about six years.

Jason McGlone: My name is Jason McGlone I am with Kerntke Otto McGlone Wealth Management Group. I am a senior partner. My main role is as a fixed income securities specialist, dealing with client estate planning, tax planning and individual wealth issues.

Vicki Updike: I'm Vicki Updike. I'm president of Miles Kimball in Oshkosh, direct to consumer brands, and we have six brands at Miles Kimball Company.

Cheryl: Part of the reason we have this diverse group of leaders is we really want to talk broadly and understand – again, as I said earlier – what's working and not working in this space. And to start with I just pulled some facts that I thought would be kind of stimulating for you this morning. The first is, two thirds of Americans have visited social media sites. Most of that is related to Facebook. So, the way I look at this, social media is becoming what television was for our parents or grandparents. Social media is kind of the new thing out there that everybody is experimenting with. But you hear mixed results – certain things are working and certain things aren't working. So, let's just think about and name all of us together here some social media you have thought about. Obviously the top couple ones are Facebook, Linked In, Twitter. Others?

Vince: YouTube

Cheryl: YouTube, absolutely.

Steve: Flickr.

Cheryl: How about blogs, do any of you have blogs?

Vince: I don't but our CIO has a pretty popular blog, he has something called the Candid CIO, he's been writing that for a long time and it gets a lot of attention, he had a blog argument with Michael Dell, he's pretty out there with very pointed opinion, which again is usually pretty accurate.

Cheryl: Well, it's interesting blogs are one area where people are finding value, because first of all clients or customers can hear about your company or your services or products, but they're also learning about what clients are not happy about. Companies are hearing about blogs becoming a pretty effective media to understand what might exist out there.

Do any of you use any photo sharing sites?

Steve: We use SlideShare, for white papers and case studies. It's really effective, as far as helping in communicating the story, if you will.

Cheryl: Well, Steve, that's an example of where you are sharing both ways and benefitting from that. I think that is the broader definition of what I really want to talk about today.

Vince: Another part of this that is starting to address reward types of systems, such as this geotracker locator with Foursquare. We have a number of folks – I'm not this far into it yet – but there are folks that are looking at what offers are happening at a coffee shop; you come three or four times and you can have a (free) cup of coffee.

We have some restrictions in terms of rewards we can give at a health organization, but we can offer healthy eating and habits and lifestyle tips. I think what folks are trying to find nowadays are some reward for their activity that goes on within these type of social media settings.

Cheryl: I was at a conference in Miami recently and I was at a hotel and Foursquare said, "special nearby" and if you hooked on to that special, you were offered a free drink or appetizer nearby. So this interdependency, collaboration, networking takes it to a whole new level, so it's kind of exciting to see that. Another thing I like about Foursquare or Twitter is you can find out where people are, and lots of times they'll talk about the food they're eating. It's a good tracking mechanism – especially if you have teen-age children. How about bookmarking sites, Digg? Have any of you heard about that? Anything like that? That's a pretty new one. Lastly, there are live-castings, there's an awful lot going out there in terms of instant information, getting it out there and having them respond type of thing.

Steve: Something we've done that's been helpful is Newsroom, to try and get our arms around all the social media information that's out there, and put it in a condensed spot, so people can get to it easily and try to decipher what's most important to them. versus., what of the 60 do I look at?

Cheryl: In preparation for this forum we had interviewed several people just to see what they're doing to understand was now the right time. The people that are having it work well are very clear on their target. They know what they want to do and who they want to do it with. Because if you have a very broad target it's often hard to find the right media or set of media to do it.

So, let's dive into this a little bit.

Do you see social media as replacing – or additive –to a lot of your current marketing strategies?

Vicki: Definitely additive. Social media is not ... we still have a brand strategy, and social media is a component of it. So ... it's just another arm, and it's to be relevant to the customer and be there. And they're there, so we should be there.

Cheryl: Right, you brought up an important point because most of the social media is spontaneous, right? So how do you keep the brand equity and that strategy in existence?

Jason: It's additive, in dealing with small business and dealing with Pitney Bowes and larger businesses, for us, we're a very small company, we don't try to bring on hundreds of clients, it's trying to keep up with our current clients and understand what's going on. The media world is changing; they may know somebody at work that just switched jobs, they were at Affinity and went to ThedaCare and hey you may want to call this company, and before they ever call us they know everything about us. They can go to Facebook, they can click and be a fan of this and go right to our website. They can come in and they are educated about you, they know a lot about you before they get there, so they can say hey Jason, I know how you work, tell me how you can help me, so you can get right into it – it saves us time that way.

Vince: I know this may sound a little edgy for health care, but I'm going to vote more for replacement, because I think as much as we talk about what we do to deliver care, it's still a very consumer driven type of decision and marketplace, and what better way to make that happen than through the discussion of others. So if you see any advertisement we do today, it's always driving folks back to our YouTube site, it's driving them to a discussion on Facebook, and we're letting the patient tell their story. Now there's a lot of protectiveness that we need to have of health information that again has to be very well thought of and contained, but yet if it's the patient telling their story – especially in a closed market like we have here – that is such an important piece of our ability to let folks know which doctors are doing excellent work, which doctors are seeing people, what are specialties that are out there, what technologies are being used, what was the experience that people are taking away. Our brand is around personalized care, treating people with respect, putting their needs and interests first and listening to what people have to say. That's our brand position, and what a better way to have that position

endorsed than by the consumer itself. When you think in years back, what type of promotional or marketing or messaging would you have in health care? I don't think the message was always having people tell their story. We've actually heard from people around the country who say, you guys are moving pretty quick.

Steve: To all of your points, it's here to stay, so we might as well figure it out. In our company, we've realized that just to build isn't enough. It's interesting we were just looking at some research that we see about 5,000 ads every day as a consumer in America, and we remember less than three. So if you think about the traditional advertising/marketing channels we've all been accustomed to, they're still important, but in our world it's about 50 percent of the dollars that we spend while the other 50 percent is spent on social media and plans around it. Where the future is, we don't know but we have to somehow put our arms around it together and help all of us.

Cheryl: If you think about it, anything that's new, people are experimenting, some people suffer fatigue, disillusionment – what does it really bring? Where is the value? You obviously need to be very clear on that journey, you need a target, you need to set goals and you need to have strategies, you need to really put a plan in place in order to do this. Where are you in your progress, what are you experimenting with?

Vince: We took on a branding initiative across the system about two years ago and it really came out that this is what the consumer wanted to hear and have and we had a bunch of attributes that supported that brand position. And once we heard it wasn't about you need to have the latest and greatest and robots and medical instruments and so on – it was all about the experience that they wanted to have. So when we learned and really started to get firmly behind with investments in things we do, how we build buildings, where we're going with everything in our organization, it was about delivering this degree of personalized care. And what a better way for us to get a message out and have that discussion happen, with us watching – to say what are we doing well, and to be so immediate for us to be able to take action on things we felt short on.

We started this whole initiative about two years ago, with a branding effort that was driven by research that turned into a very service-minded, personalized experience of the patient coming in. We've actually changed agendas and how we work, for example every morning at St. E's I think it starts at 8:10, the management team – and they do this at Mercy in Oshkosh too – they have their morning huddle and they will gather every source of information they have, whether it's off the floor that night or off one of these channels, and find out who said something that could have been done better and at 8:25 the meeting is over and off they go to get things fixed. If it was something significant the president of the hospital gets called and he's on it, if it's my team. So, this has become a new way of delivering care. It doesn't replace the overall medical importance and technology and what have you, but it has become such a way of our being because of where we took the position. It was a business driver.

Jason: I think we're behind the 8-ball on social media, being a small firm. The reason I came to it is I'm the youngest in our firm and we have a client base that a couple of our advisors are in their 50s, I'm 36.

Pete and Mike, they don't use social media ... They are slow to adopt it and say what's the benefit to us? Then you look at our client base, I'm in my 30s, my wife is, and everybody our age or younger has a Facebook account. Maybe it's slowly going to penetrate. The question for us is do we have to hire somebody to handle social media, how do you implement a plan to take care of it?

Cheryl: And we're going to talk about resources later and that is a very important point. What does it take to really become institutionalized and really change behavior?

Vicki: It's interesting, although the 40-plus or 50-plus is the smaller segment on Facebook, it's still the fastest growing. That is how they are keeping up with their grandkids. They're sharing photos and stories. So when the kids go to college, they don't feel that they are that far away anymore. But our reason we have a Facebook account and it really gives us a level of credibility, it lets our customers talk to each other. And it really puts your brain in the hands of the customer. So it's no longer what we say our brand is, our brand has to hold up and it's what the customers now say it is. That's very important to us. We sell a lot of products, but it's our customers' stories that bring life to the products. They are creating that community and so in the end, we are not selling just products anymore and it's our customers sharing that.

Cheryl: Well then they become a community in themselves and some people worry about that, you can't control the voice of the customer. How did you deal with just, internally, the debate and those that feared what would come from that? Because we've heard it from many others.

Vicki: Yes, you have to feel comfortable letting go. And no matter what there is a point in time when you will have less control over your brand reputation. And you will get the negative comments. But what we found so refreshing is that other customers will inform them on how to get it fixed or what went wrong. And we will respond too, we listen, respond and then we act. You have to do something with the information and it just builds credibility. So if you're out there with all rosy comments, it's a lack of credibility.

Vince: Talk about a new way of holding an organization accountable...

Steve: You know what we see –and we run into this all the time – is organizations rarely keep their promise. And what better way to allow that to happen, is you immerse yourself. So, in our case, a number of years ago we realized that, so what does "building excellence mean?" And we did a research study and we realized that 25 percent of what happens is outside your walls and 75 percent is what happens within. So you have to be interesting or invisible. There's a little in between of that. So how can we create those memorable experiences? Gallup did a study a number of years ago and said that 75 percent of experiences that people go through are forgettable. Twenty percent are memorable horrible, and only 10 percent are experiences are things people can actually talk about. What better way to communicate with that than social media.

Vince: Nobody in our market walks into a hospital in our area and says, “I wonder if they have a license to practice medicine?” they know what they are doing. It’s fantastic care. So you can look very vanilla really quick, because all of it is good. Then it becomes, what experience are you going to take away? At the end of the day, it’s who’s going to have the best delivery of experience?

Cheryl: Vince and Steve, what have been the most powerful social media tools have you used?

Steve: We’ve used a blog and it’s been successful. The key with everything we’re trying to do is, is it relevant to the marketplace? So we found that to talk about wellness issues within our organization, experience issues, sustainable issues, how can we add value to people’s lives, sharing case studies and best practices from other organizations and industries has been helpful. People are coming to us and saying, “Help us rethink the building of the future.” So how do you close the gap between 2010 and 2025, because you don’t want to build a building and have it already being obsolete? People are asking us that and the way we share that and to help them with their decision making is through past experiences, sharing information from sometimes even competitors so they can learn from each other, because the benefit is the community.

Vince: YouTube, by far, is where we send folks. You have three things happening there. We have patient stories. We do all these stories in a really organic way come in with a flip video, nobody is made up, nobody is scripted, we give a little guidance about what they might talk about. First is patient experience, the second thing we are using YouTube for is with our nurses, they will talk about why they enjoy what they do, why they are nurses, those are the ones doing the real delivery of a lot of that care. The third thing you’ll hear from is our physicians. They will talk about who they are, where they came from. If you go on our website you can click on a doctor and see a WebOut, and the doctor walks out and introduces himself. It’s around the patient story, around the nursing message and why they chose it and the physicians’ point of view.

Our next step is really around employment branding. A perfect example is something you’ve seen at IBM, they are talking about their company and why they are proud to work there. Not usually found in health care, but we try to think out of the box. It’s about an employment brand and experience management. Because we have already set the tone and the pace what the consumer wants, we always need to keep checking in but this really drives people to our YouTube site.

Steve: You know Cheryl something else that I think is important to understand is how can we better connect with the customer’s customer? An example, in our world, in the school business we are developing Ipad apps for citizens to learn about a referendum that is going to happen. So if it’s FVTC, you look on the logo, see the site plans and see the relevance to the students in the community. So we’re developing those apps internally to help answer those questions.

Cheryl: Vince you use YouTube but what else have you tried?

Vince: We think Facebook is an important piece ... For the best, most organic way to hit, the most organic easy way is, bang – we hit YouTube. Our IT shop uses Yammer for internal communications. And everyone has their own way but mostly YouTube is our approach.

Cheryl: It's picking the right vehicle for you. You know, Jason as you try to advance and move people into this for your industry that might not be the right approach. Where are you Vicki?

Vicki: Facebook. Each site is a little different and you do have to align who that demographic is and align it with your right brand strategy. And Facebook is where we are. We always thought it was important to have a forum to connect with our customers, and we thought about creating one – and now there is one, so we're just using what's available.

Cheryl: Resources: It takes a lot of work, these things just don't happen. Do you have dedicated resources, or a team to share it? What does the structure look like internally, Steve?

Steve: It's too big of an animal for one person in our case. It's a team that shares it, all based on a plan. The key is how you continue to match that to our strategy and our business goals, and to realign that. Just to be in the social media business isn't what we are all about. The team together uses the different resources, and we share that responsibility, we take different parts of the blog approach, the YouTube approach, continually update and monitor it from the entire marketing prospective.

Vince: It's broken up both between our marketing group and our PR group, and our PR group is an external retained group; we use Red Shoes PR. But it's mostly our four marketing managers. We have also built a social media council which meets once a month and they were the ones that developed and delivered a policy. And all of this I am happy to share with any of you anytime. If you want to call me over to your office and ask me to bring stuff and learn what we're doing? And learn from you as well. They drive policy, they drive different approaches for different experiences we want to have. All of that is part of the council and I'm the executive sponsor for this. The social media group also involves somebody from legal services, people from compliance area, patient experience area – it's a mix of about 12 people that meets once a month.

Cheryl: The council even outside the area is something that has proven very valuable for lot of companies. You bring that cross functional group, all your support resources like legal and compliance and they keep the integrity of the social media piece aligned with the brand equity and the marketing strategy. I've heard that's a winning thing to do.

Vince: Maybe it's just the notion everyone involved has had some type of experience, done something, had a baby, a parent, been sick. So they can say here's what I want. How exposed would you want yourself to be?

Cheryl: But that is the key, your targets are all there sitting around the table. Jason, in your perspective you're trying to plant some seeds and get this going. What types of things have you done or seen successful?

Jason: We use Facebook, and most of our PR work we hire an outside advertising firm. We outsource this at this point. We're trying to do some in-house, do we hire someone to do it full time? For social media a couple things that could help us, we have advisory councils of clients and ask them why they come to us. And if you can get that feedback from social media, that's still what we're trying to figure out. What's the easiest way and best way to do it and that is still something we are trying to figure out.

Cheryl: Twitter. One thing I want to talk about is Twitter – 67 percent of moms actually follow brands by using Twitter. Are you actively using Twitter to reach her? Is that something you look at.

Vince: We are using it but we're not heavily focused on it.

Steve: In our business not a lot of moms follow the construction world. But I will tell you that Nielson just did a study and asked 26,000 people who were connected on the Internet, "Why do you buy, what do you trust?" And 78 percent said, the No. 1 reason is "Someone told me to go there;" it was word of mouth. We have to remember this is all about building relationships. And that's why the attraction is to Twitter – I want to know more about that person, I like them or want to somehow connect to their thoughts.

Cheryl: And these brands are taking on more of a personality. I think more and more, they want to connect to that person and hopefully that brand is not a blank sheet of paper.

Steve: Most rarely work on it. People are sick of the noise, sick of the clutter, the 5,000 messages a day and Twitter gives the option to maybe bypass that and get right to the essence of why I want to know more from that person?

Cheryl: They are starting to want to be rewarded with ads or tips. Facebook did a study with Nielson also, and they said awareness for certain brands doubled, just based on doing some things on Facebook. It comes down to one of the last questions: Business value. We talked a lot about changing behaviors. Is it creating business value yet? Do you feel it? Lots of times business value is all about the bottom line. How are you translating the results you're seeing in behaviors and awareness to that?

Vince: Absolutely. We are seeing great value-added in this and from a number of fronts. First off we included three questions in our annual value survey inside the organization. We measure a couple things: The integration of our Catholic identity, we measure commitment of employees and management index. Three questions we asked were about delivery of this brand of personalized care, and – I am proud to say that of the questions we have, you either have a positive or negative responses, on a scale of one to five positive to negative – the two of the questions we asked, the only ones of 85 we

asked that had a zero negative response rate. And you deliver this brand ... out of 4,000 people and 3,000 respond, you see something like this you have to stay with it.

From an internal side and level of return and understanding, yes. From the business side of it, the brand position was built around people's choice. We actually opened up our access for people to come to us, mainly through insurance contracting, we've opened up access for people to make a different choice. We asked people in a blind study, "If someone was going to deliver this type of experience to you, 100 percent of the time, would you consider changing the relationship with your doctor, the hospital, or clinic you go to today? And 90 percent of all in the study said, "I would change the relationship with my doctor if insurance didn't matter."

We are opening the market up and with the level of control we have, and the message to the organization is about, "Folks, this is not contained anymore. This is about an option to choose. And this is a message experience, relationships, and referrals." They will go where their doctor tells them to go. Has this helped, has this driven value? Absolutely. And it may save us tens of thousands in market research that we want to do down the road. But we hear every day where it's working and where it's not and how quickly can we address it.

Cheryl: Can you attribute everything to social media?

Vince: No.

Steve: I don't think so. Are the metrics defined enough for us to really get a feel for the difference it's making in the marketplace? Probably not. We do know that differentiation is occurring within our organization and our industry, dynamically right now. And we feel social media is a big part of that. So, are we going to put more effort towards it? Yes, absolutely, no question about it.

But again, I go back to what is the relevance? Just to create stuff – it doesn't help anybody. So we're really being thoughtful, and trying to be thought leading so if we are going to put something out there, why would people want to know it. Why would they want to understand it? Does it make their life easier? Does it somehow add something that they didn't have to their life? Because that seems to be the filter? Or why do it?

Vicki: We feel we are just getting started. The value right now is the feedback loop, absolutely. If we don't listen, it won't bring value at all. Right now it's really a service mechanism for our customers. And that, to hear this kind of feedback from our customers, before social media you would really have to invest in surveys and customer research, and now it's just a great feedback loop that's continuous and day to day.

Cheryl: And Jason, too early for metrics right now?

Jason: Like on Twitter, why would someone want to listen to me Twitter all day, and follow me, when they could listen to Warren Buffet? What makes me any different? At this point, you've got to decide how much you want to devote to it and what part of your business. For us, we're a small firm and it

could make it seem like we're a bigger firm. When I go in to talk to somebody about their company and you can't find anything – you can't find a website or Facebook page, you wonder, well, is this company really there, or is it fly-by-night? So for us, it can make you look bigger than you are.

Vicki: That is a really great point. The Internet itself has leveled the playing field for brands. There is no more walking into a store and seeing one major brand, you are walking into the Internet and everyone has the same amount of space – and that's a very, very good thing.

Vince: I would like to comment on Steve's point. For our industry to hear this type of ready to serve all the time. Before I came here I was president of the business-to-business division of Lands' End. When is the most popular time of day that people shop on line? 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., when they are at work. So this whole notion of not allowing people to do personal things on line, this is just a replacement of personal phone calls. When we actually built our policy (we considered) how do you balance that time between work? I told them to start there. Think about personal phone calls and this type of thinking, how you balance what people do at work.

Steve: You know the one thing Jason mentioned that we haven't talked about yet, Cheryl: As we connect with other organizations, how do we better understand your culture? The world is tired of being satisfied. They are bored, in some cases they're angry they're taken for granted; they don't feel like people care about them. Look at the iPhone, people had phones but they threw them away and now they have this better one. It helps to better understand people and build those relationships and that helps in understanding the people you are working with. Because you no longer want partners just to do stuff, you want people who are going to make a difference in your organization as well, or in your client. Because I'm sure in the sea of sameness there's a lot of people in the investment people that you compete with every single day. How can I better understand as we work together, the end goals.

Cheryl: Everyone agrees there are certain channels that work best for them. E-mail? There was a study done with teens, 11 months ago, they said a lot of teens – because they've picked up this other social media – don't use email. They are using texting and other routes. The number is pretty high, close to 68 percent or so. In light of that where is e-mail?

Vicki: It's becoming less effective, so that's important to understand that trend. E-mail was created to make communication easier, then marketing got a hold of it and started sending out thousands of messages and for us to go into our inboxes and say how many of those e-mails are relevant to me that I have to read today? It's a very small percentage. People are finding a way to move away from e-mail. So I ask the same thing of Facebook. Facebook was created as a communication mechanism. Being a retailer, is Facebook where people want to shop? I'm not sure that's really been answered yet. If we force that to happen, will people migrate to something different? It's an important evolution and I think it's important to be there.



By Margaret LeBrun
Photographs and videos
by John Behrens, Ark Media Group

Connecting you with thought leaders for insight on innovative ideas that work

Steve: One of the most effective ways to communicate is still the personal note – because no one does it. So we have to remember that if we’re trying to build relationships, e-mail may eventually be diluted but it’s always going to be relevant because it’s another way to connect back that other people don’t. So as more people become Twitterized and Facebookized, and Tweet each other to death, we’re going to get sick of that as well and we may connect back. We still use e-mail in our business.

Cheryl: For my clients globally; I still use two-thirds e-mail and one-third face-to-face or on the phone. Transferring information online is fine. Anything beyond that needs more.

Vince: I think e-mail will stick around. I have more of an opinion that websites are toast. I think those have got a shorter lifespan than e-mail. When we first started rebuilding our website and a couple people a whole lot smarter than me said, why would you do that? They said let me show you another way to do this, and it has nothing to do with all the architecture and the wiring and all this other nonsense that goes along with a website. There is another way that is a step we are probably going to take in the next six to 12 months. Which is to take a look at redesigning our website, it will be very interactive, very discussional, very social-media-like. It will still look like a website – but it’s going to function a whole lot differently.

Cheryl: that’s what the trends say, people don’t often go back to websites, they want something more engaging, something that can get that two-way going just like they do with other social media areas.

Vicki: I think mobile will step in front of website design. It’s going to be about the mobile market. I think we’re very close to that as priority No. 1.