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### **Proper Facebook and Twitter Communication Tactics: Communicating vs. Advertising on Social Media**

Being “social” on social media is inherent in the medium. Many businesses fail to realize that it is still about engaging and conversing with fans, followers, and customers. It is not just about selling. In fact, one of the biggest mistakes businesses make is thinking that they will make money on social media. Of course, the engagement and customer service rapport that you establish through social media can have a positive effect on sales, but having revenue as a social media goal is, as a general rule, not going to be realized.

#### **Why “Selling” on Social Media Doesn’t Work**

Social media channels are vehicles to communicate with your customers. Think about mingling at a party. What if everything you said to friends, or the people you met, was trying to sell them something? What type of a reaction do you think they would have? The reaction is, no doubt, decidedly negative towards someone merely trying to sell something. Think about it in terms of shopping in a store, a situation where even some amount of selling or advertising is to be expected. Yet, who likes to be bothered by the overzealous sales associate that is obviously working on commission and desperate to make a sale? You must think about your social media channels in these same terms. Sure, it is important to keep top of mind with your audience, but find the right ratio for your business and your customers, fans, and followers. By the same token, if you are overly social and you neglect to mention your latest products, hottest sellers, company news, or special offers, then you miss the boat as well. You can’t get away with posting about cats and jokes all day either. Mix it up between engaging, fun content, local information, sales, coupons, special offers, and the latest products or services you offer. Metrics will help you measure engagement and constantly monitor sentiment so that you can find the right blend. Plan out your posts and be sure that your company culture instills in all employees that interactions with customers is genuine.

#### **Train Your Social Media Staff to Be Genuine & Customer Service Forward**

Customer service is one of the most important drivers in any business today. Social media channels have turned into customer service portals because customers often use them to connect with companies to interact, ask questions, or lodge complaints. Since it is such a public forum, answers must happen quickly and efficiently. Therefore, social media staff must work closely with customer service employees and should be trained in customer service techniques

# Best Practices for Communicating Genuinely on Social Media

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and tactics as well. This is one of the best ways to be genuine, true, and helpful to those who interact with your business through social media.

## Summary

The idea of social media cannot be lost on businesses who assume that social media networks are just another sales channel. Being overly sales forward on social media is not a best practice and is not going to win customers over. However, this does not mean you should abandon the idea of social media marketing. In fact, being genuine in your communications and customer service friendly can help advance your company forward because positive sentiment and staying top of mind can cause sales to happen. You just have to learn how to handle social media and find the right balance between staying top of mind, being social, and not trying to sell with every post.

## The author

Elizabeth Victor is Brand Advisor for [Isentia](#). She enjoys sharing tips on social media monitoring and analysis as well as traditional media intelligence, and PR measurement.