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Scott Cytron • Mar. 11, 2014



When I educate CPAs and accountants on social media marketing, I get two questions more often than any others. First, which application they should be on, and second, how they operate or participate in social media to get results.

Both are simple-enough questions, but kind of hard to answer without spending some time analyzing what it is they really *want* to do or what they want to accomplish. After all, you wouldn't buy new tax software for your firm without first evaluating what it is you want to do with that software.

At its core, social media is about creating conversations through an online, two-way discussion. Most people who don't understand social media think something like Twitter exists only to post status updates about what you're doing. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth.

You will first want to determine where you want to spend the most time and the

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including [YouTube](#), [Pinterest](#) and even [Instagram](#).

If you want to network and prospect for new clients, then LinkedIn is where you'll want to be. Long considered the most professional of the social media Holy Grail, any professional who is *not* on LinkedIn must be living on the side of a mountain without access to daylight. However, there is a key difference between merely having an account and working that account to generate referrals. Those who are on and not spending at least 10 minutes a day participating in LinkedIn are not using it properly.

What can you do in 10 minutes? Quite a bit:

- Connect to five new people a day.
- Peruse your connections' updates and send a direct message with an observation about an update. Example: new title or position. Congratulate the person.
- Explore new networks to join. If you're already on a network, read the updates and respond appropriately.

You Live on the Edge and are Spontaneous

It isn't a question of liking or understanding advanced technologies; it's a case of being a bit more flexible with how you spend your day on social media. If you like to pepper your day with social media or just want to take a few breaks from demanding clients, then check out [Twitter](#).

Twitter is probably the easiest of the Big 3 social media to be on; yet, a lot of professionals might think otherwise until they dig in and tweet. Twitter is simply a way to send a message to a group of followers to let them know what you're doing or how you're feeling about a certain topic. Once you get a "handle" (@scyttron, for example), you can begin composing messages that have a maximum character count, with spaces, of 140. Twitter is smart! If you use Twitter, itself, to compose tweets (there are lots of third-party applications, but we'll leave that for another article),

the message window will tell you how many characters you have left in your

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Explore both related to five management attributes here: <http://bit.ly/NttJ2t>

- @menswearhouse: When you get the right fit, you look great. Pronto Blue Jeans – just \$9.99, today only. Enjoy this online exclusive: <http://mensw.com/1fIfooS>

Putting aside the fact that you now know where I shop for clothes, what these tweeters have done, successfully, is get their point across in a very succinct format. That's meaningful for several reasons. First, it reinforces the fact that they are a trusted provider of content, and second, it helps get their name "out" to their followers and is in front of them on a regular basis.

However, what I find with Twitter is that it's not very effective to jump in and out of it on a non-frequent basis. Otherwise, you can't keep up with what others are doing or thinking. In a future article, I'll talk about how to get followers and follow others.

You Meld Your Professional and Personal Life

I'm talking about [Facebook](#), of course. If you haven't yet discovered Facebook, you should! It's a great way to keep up with what others are doing, or thinking – much in the same way Twitter does – yet with a more personal touch.

I am a bit sour, however, when it comes to having a business presence on Facebook. It takes an inordinate amount of time to maintain and refresh your corporate page, let alone get friends to "like" your page. Maintaining a corporate page on Facebook, to me, is like maintaining your own website – and let's face facts: that takes time!

Still, if you have the means and the time to participate in Facebook on a corporate level, that's fine. Yet, I've yet to encounter one accountant who told me he or she was able to get new business from a corporate page.

Instead, what I suggest is one page that blends your personal and professional lives. Your Facebook page should be an extension of your personality. If you are a more

serious kind of person, keep your status updates businesslike. If you enjoy creating a

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generate instant referrals. It doesn't work that way.

The point is to have fun, yet meet your goals. If you've had some success with social media, share your story so other readers can benefit from your experience!

Scott H. Cytron, ABC, is president of [Cytron and Company](#), known for helping companies and organizations improve their bottom line through a hybrid of strategic public relations, communications, marketing programs and top-notch client service. An accredited consultant, Scott works with companies, organizations and individuals in professional services (accounting, finance, medical, legal, engineering), high-tech and B2B/B2C product/service sales. Contact him at scott@cytronandcompany.com and visit his blog, www.absolutecytron.com.

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