



# 5 Ways Social Media Can Destroy Your Business

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Social media has arguably become the most powerful media platform. It allows brands and businesses to directly reach their customers anytime and anywhere. It has helped small businesses grow larger faster than before.

Social media has also led to the downfall of several businesses that, in one way or another, misused the marketing platform and destroyed their reputation or wasted a ton of money. Maybe you're spending too much time on platforms that your customers don't use or not spending enough time analyzing the right kinds of data.

Here are five examples of how businesses fail when it comes to using social media:

## **1. Your social personality isn't likeable.**

Not every social brand needs to be funny or clever. Over social media your brand should be welcoming, entertaining and show that you're not all business. But keep your audience in mind. If you're providing them with a serious and vital tool for running their business, you shouldn't be sharing cat videos on your social channels.

Also, keep your personal beliefs off your business's social-media networks. Talking about controversial issues that don't make sense for your business to comment on is a good way to split your following and turn them against you. This of course happened to kitchen appliances company KitchenAid after it sent an insensitive tweet about U.S. president Barack Obama's grandmother during a presidential debate. The person responsible for the tweet was let go and the company was forced into social-media crisis mode.

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## **2. You're not following the laws of 'social karma.'**

If you want to get value from your fans and customers you have to provide value first. Most social-media users are looking for a few simple and satisfying things: entertainment, information or share-worthy content that makes them look interesting to their own following.

If you can provide them with those things you'll earn the karma that later leads to clicks, leads, and conversions. If not, you'll just be shouting to an empty room and possibly damage your brand in the process.

## **3. You don't tie social to sales.**

There have been a lot of companies that learn the hard way that social media is essential for marketing success. What usually happens is that they allocate a significant portion of their budget to social media without having a plan to measure and create a return on that investment.

The problem is most social media users don't go directly from Facebook fan or Twitter follower to customer.

If you use Google Analytics, try measuring with assisted conversions so you can see how social plays into your sales cycle.

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#### **4. You don't measure what matters.**

There are plenty of metrics tied to social media. These numbers can be helpful to the people managing your marketing efforts but they don't always relate directly to the bottom line.

Social analytics are not a way to track the success of social-media efforts for your business. They're a way to track the success of your social-media efforts. You need to identify key performance indicators that are specific to your business that are measured on a regular basis so you know.

For instance, the number of 'Likes' on a Facebook page is not a great performance indicator. You can have millions of likes on one page, but no one talking about it.

The better option is choosing something like 'engagement rate' (people talking about us/the number of likes on a page). Then you can tie that in with traffic and conversions from social-media channels.

#### **5. You think an intern can manage your social media.**

Despite repeated disasters, businesses continue to entrust their social media to people who are unqualified. Interns may have experience using social media for themselves, but managing a business' presence is something else entirely. Inexperience can lead to disaster.

Take the Red Cross for example. It had to clean up its own social-media mess after an employee who was unfamiliar using Hootsuite accidentally posted about getting drunk to the Red Cross's main Twitter account instead of her personal account.

Also, you can't assume that one person will be able to handle it all. You need someone who understands how to analyze data to track your results and refine your efforts. You need someone who understands the audience and knows how to engage them through various forms of media. And you need someone to tie it all together. You might consider hiring a social-media manager who can delegate tasks and responsibilities, and can oversee the bigger picture and produce the best results.

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