

Solving the Mystery of Social Media for Small Business Ventures

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Abstract

Anecdotal discussions with students since I began teaching in 2006, concerning specific application of marketing principles and promotional techniques in entrepreneurial small enterprises in my other marketing courses had been frequent. Requests for help from students, friends and families of students for marketing plans and integrated communications plans were numerous. In 2010, I designed a course, MKTG 4666, Marketing for Small Ventures to meet this need. Since then, I have conducted the class 12 times with 408 students, serving local clients in Kennesaw. Each client received customized marketing plans, market studies and campaigns. The net gain for the students is an opportunity to utilize their marketing education and skills to assist a real world, local business with marketing expertise and social media plans. The net gain for the client is help with marketing efforts, at minimal cost and often, with new customers and increased business. Clients visited class and students visited the client's site or future site. The City of Kennesaw has been involved with students and providing economic and demographic data to class and students. Survey data is being gathered from students and entrepreneurs to assess social media before and after knowledge and campaign results.

Executive Takeaways:

- Most entrepreneurs do not understand marketing campaigns.
- Most entrepreneurs don't understand the business application of social media.
- Few entrepreneurs appreciate the need to analyze social media data.
- Small businesses have minimal appreciation for research in making decisions.
- Government entities have little experience in entrepreneurial engagement.

References:

None.

Keywords: *social media, entrepreneurs, small business ventures, marketing campaigns, research*

Relevance to Marketing Educators, Researchers and Practitioners: This is an opportunity for marketing educators to engage university students with local small business ventures in a practical application of classroom knowledge; and secondly, for educators and entrepreneurs to understand the need and use for a social media plan and its impact. As survey data is gathered from students and the engaged entrepreneurs, additional insight will be gained with data based research.

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TRACK: Entrepreneurship / Small Business Marketing