

Blancminge

Does Twitter deliver real business benefits to ebook marketers?

Everyone and his dog is trying to leverage social media for marketing. But does Twitter deliver genuine ebook sales benefits?

Are you in a panic because you haven't got to grips with Twitter and co yet? Take it easy. Ask yourself three sensible questions before you take the plunge:

A direct marketing-led question: Is it possible to get rock solid empirical evidence that the time and money you spend Tweeting - or whatever - delivers a sound return on your investment? Or any return at all? Good marketers never embark on a direct marketing campaign without knowing they can track response and conversion properly.

A human being-focused question: Do you enjoy being marketed to while you're relaxing on your favourite social media site? Social media networks are hot property at the moment but you know what they say... when the marketers move in, the users move out!

A logical question: Are you thinking about trying social media marketing because you've worked out a clear strategy to the direct benefit of your ebook marketing plans? Or because everyone else is doing it?

It is also wise to keep abreast of the latest social media marketing news before making a decision. Here are some recent social media marketing stats from a survey by www.growsmartbusiness.com:

- 1 in 5 of 500 US small business owners said they use social media for marketing
- 69% add status updates, news and links on various networks
- 61% say they use social media to identify and pull in new customers
- 57% are using social media to build prospect networks
- 50% of small businesses who use social media for marketing said it takes too much time
- 17% feel that the experience has been negative, encouraging people to criticise their business unfairly
- 6% said social media marketing has done more harm than good
- 45% feel sure their social media marketing will turn a profit in the next 12 months

There's no sign of social media marketing giving birth to healthy new revenue streams just yet. So far it seems to be functioning just like offline 'above the line' advertising, boosting brands rather than driving sales.

If you're not sure whether to join in, wait and see. If you're not involved in social media marketing while it is still in its infancy, don't worry. There's no great merit in being first. But there's a lot to be said for waiting in the wings until the medium has proved it's commercial worth.

The Twitter logo, consisting of the word "twitter" in a lowercase, blue, sans-serif font, is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page. A vertical line is to its right.