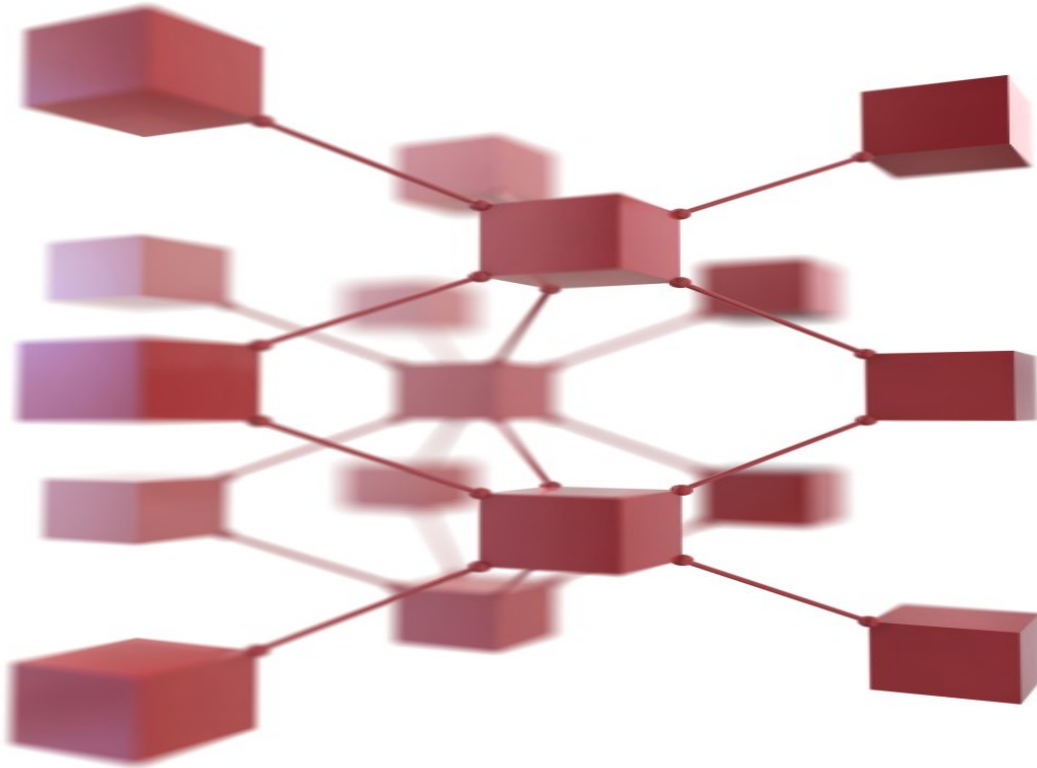




The Basics of Web 2.0 Business Networking



Expand and Explode Your New or Existing Business *Online AND Offline*

Power Networking Alliance 2008
www.my-pna.com

If you do a web search for definitions of Web 2.0 you're likely to get a bit overwhelmed. Don't worry too much about that. Web 2.0 defies one single definition – or at the very least, causes arguments about what it is and what it isn't.

The term was created by those who were describing a huge concept shift in the way that the internet would be used.

To Simplify: Web 2.0 Can Be Understood As A User Involved Internet Experience.

The internet is no longer a digital library that we visit to read; it is an ever changing and responding archive we are impacting with every action we take.

Sure, internet users have always been able to contribute to the old 1.0 library in that we could buy a domain and build a website or contribute on bulletin boards or forums - but 2.0 sites take things farther. Websites that incorporate 2.0 principles literally respond and can change shape according to the needs and input of its users.

What do you think of when someone uses the term ‘Web Two Point Oh’?

Blogging?

RSS?

Tagging?

Comments?

Social Networks?

These are all aspects of 2.0 and we will look at them all individually in a moment.

Probably two of the largest and most well known examples of how Web 2.0 principles are shaping the internet are Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.com>) and Craigslist (<http://www.craigslist.com>).

Through these two powerful resources, the world is connected and even to some degree defined.

Wikipedia is an amazing phenomenon. You rarely see internet users linking to dictionary or encyclopedia references anymore; they link to a Wiki page. The Wikipedia’s main page welcomes you and claims to be the ‘encyclopedia that anyone can edit’. In most cases, anyone can add or tweak information on any topic.

Other Wiki contributors, known as Wikipedians, can correct misinformation or even in cases of disagreement, come to a consensus through interaction on a talk page.

Isn’t it interesting that the world has shown a definite preference for information that is provided and maintained by the world itself rather than by a publishing company?

Through Craigslist anyone in a wide number of locations can seek out barter, jobs, relationships, rentals and events. Posting on Craigslist is free in most cases though there are a few situations where it costs money to post a job or housing ad in select areas. Craigslist also includes topical message boards.

How Are You Expected To Respond And Incorporate 2.0 Tactics In Your Online Business?

To embrace 2.0 in your online business you'll approach it from two directions.

- From an internal point of view, you'll create a web presence that is designed to interact and respond to users.
- From an external point of view, you'll want to come out from behind your website and have an active presence where your target market can be found.

Internal First

In the past, building a web presence involved creating an 'online brochure' or 'website store front', a site that visitors could come to learn from and buy from. Interaction was rare and usually involved calling a telephone number or sending an email.

Today's technology makes it possible for a website to be truly interactive.

For example...

Customer Service scripts allow site owners to monitor visitor's movements on their website. Contact can be initiated by the visitor or the site's representative to ask or offer answers to questions.



Many ecommerce websites including massive Amazon.com has made it easy for users to create wish lists and recommendation lists that other users can view and respond to. They even incorporate ratings scripts, let website users give an instant thumbs up or thumbs down to books and products. They not only invite user reviews, they ask other users if the review was helpful or not. Every step of the user's experience is molded by the last step taken.

Create a Great Customer Support System

In almost every online business, there is a need for customer support. Where do your customers go when they need help? If you have a good customer support system in place, customers will feel valued, respected, and appreciated. This means they're much more likely to remain customers. Conversely, if your customer support system lacks, then customers will feel undervalued, frustrated, and quite likely go elsewhere.

Step 1. Choose a customer support system. There are two basic ways to handle creating your customer support system; ticket based or email based. Ticket based involves a software program that not only organized your inquires, it enables many operators the ability to facilitate any troubles or questions. Ticket based does not

have to be expensive because there are a few open source software programs available or you can create your own CGI script and generate forms.

Your customer support system can also be email or chat based. Email is likely the simplest and most basic form of customer support systems and it uses less bandwidth.

Whatever system you choose, here's how to make sure your customers feel valued and appreciated and continue being customers!

Step 2. Have a customer support page on your website with a list of Frequently Asked Questions. This may eliminate up to 50% of your customer's questions.

Step 3. Provide a form for your customers to fill out with room for their email address and/or phone number and a separate place for them to post their question. You can also provide a form whereby they can choose from a list of 'subjects.' For example:

- Billing question
- Return or cancellation question
- Technical assistance
- Other

Step 4. Organize inquiries so that they are sent to one central location – you, if you're the sole business owner. If you are using an assistant or two to handle customer inquiries organize a method of responding and follow up that ensures the customers' needs are placed first. Your system won't work if each of your operators thinks the other operator is handling the ticket.

Step 5. Always make sure every single customer inquiry is responded to promptly, within 24 business hours, and always by a real person. If you're using an email based system and you have more than one operator handling inquiries, it may be helpful to require a bcc, blind carbon copy, to the operator that is not handling the inquiry to ensure that no duplicate messages are sent.

Step 6. Create a process of documentation. This way if anything happens and questions come up about how an issue was handled, even if you're handling it yourself, you have the records to back you up. If you're creating an email based system find a way to archive your email communications in an organized manner with customer name, date, and detailed response.

In the world of online business where people shop for convenience and every lost sale is just a click away, there is nothing more important than your customer service. Pay attention to the details of your customer support system and make sure no one is falling through any holes, everyone is being responded to promptly and considerately, and every communication is documented and tracked to ensure quality management.

Set Up Live Customer Service in an Online Business

(live customer support on your website)

Small businesses seeing several hundred website visitors on their site each day and receiving more than 10 or so customer inquiries a day may want to consider setting up a live customer service option on their website. This doesn't have to be a website visitor's only option, however if a customer is on the verge of making a purchase and wants a question answered immediately, live customer service can reduce or eliminate shopping cart abandonment. Here's how to set up a live customer service option on your business website.

Step 1. Choose a software product. There are a large number of software options, hundreds actually, available to businesses looking to add live chat to their business website. When evaluating products, compare price, features available, and reliability. Purchasing a program that has too many bugs won't help improve your customer service! Customizable pages with your logo, colors and surveys can add to your customer's experience.

Step 2. Consider 'testing' the software first. It is important to make sure the program fits seamlessly into your current website software and that your money is being well spent.

Step 3. Customize your live chat screen as much as possible. This customization can include a photo of the customer service representative, a name, color coded responses so that the customer can separate their text from the text responses of the customer service representative.

Step 4. Make sure that when a customer service representative is not available, the "Live customer service currently not available" icon or sign is on. There's nothing worse than asking for help via the live chat button and being ignored.

Step #5 Many live support products provide critical customer information. Make sure you or your customer service representative pays attention to this information when a visitor initiates a chat. For example, it would be helpful to know that a customer is in the checkout phase of their visit.

Adding a live chat to your business can be a huge boost in your website's ability to close a sale and it can add to your visitor's feelings as they relate to your website and your business. We, as customers, all like to feel appreciated and it's great to know there is someone available to answer any questions immediately.

Here is a quick overview of a few of the most used and highly effective Customer Service Tools on the web today.

PNA CRMPanel – <http://www.pnacrmpanel.com>

Live Chat Software for your website CRMPanel is an easy and affordable customer relation management hosted software application for one to one live chat with availability status (Live Support is Online/Offline) and real time visitors monitoring. CRMPanel is low cost ASP solution, keeps you free from your own script development, maintenance and upgrade research.

Whether your web site sales products or provide support and/or services, your site should have human interaction with customers and visitors to be ahead of your competition. You can assist your customer in buying and resolving their query when they are in interest of buying your products or services. You can lead to fast sales. Your web site can provide on-line support. Providing on-line support means fast response to the customer and gain customer faith.

WebsiteAlive – <http://www.websitealive.com>

Live chat software is quickly being adopted as a standard communication channel for serving customers via the internet. Some industries include web hosting, real estate, financial, universities, eBay and e-commerce stores, insurance, law firms, and much more.

AliveChat allows your web site visitors to connect to your company representatives and have their questions answered instantly by clicking on a live chat button embedded on your web site. AliveChat is a 100% hosted, on-demand live chat software solution which means there is nothing to install on your servers. For your staff, AliveChat creates a "bird's eye" view of every web site visitor and which page they are browsing in real-time. Instantly see which city and country your visitors are coming from and which particular product or service offering they are interested in. Provide a "virtual hand holding" with your visitors in order to assist them through purchases, while building trust in your company, and getting to know your customer on a personal basis.

The Customer Service Training Institute <http://www.infowhse.com>

Good, quality training need not be expensive or inconvenient. CSTI's computer based Customer Service Training Manuals are the perfect solution for all types of training needs.

The Customer Service Training Institute is directed by David V. Greis. Mr. Greis has over 35 years experience in Customer Service. He has trained individuals and corporate staff in a wide variety of employment sectors. His experience includes training in both public and private sectors, financial institutions, manufacturing, retail, and service sectors. His vast and varied experience gives him a unique ability to provide training materials that are relevant to just about any application in the marketplace today.

Dynamic Content Changes Everything

In a CMS (Content Management System) content is managed by a database and can be accessed via RSS (Really Simple Syndication).

Keeping things basic, RSS is a file created by your CMS that makes your content broadcast-able. This lets your online content reach out beyond the pages of your website to touch users wherever they access the RSS feed.



There are a wide variety of RSS Directories that allow users to search for content they are interested in. Users can also subscribe to your specific RSS feed through a feed catcher or by subscribing through a web based feed service that will allow them to track feeds of their own choosing. An excellent resource to help you explore the various faces of RSS in the fields of marketing and publishing and help you discover the possibilities of expanding your various business opportunities like never before through this incomparable e-book on RSS called [The A to Z About RSS](#)

RSS also allows for the use of Tags.

Tags identify the topic of the content and are a large part of what makes using RSS so attractive. Entire websites have been developed around scripts that search RSS feeds for common Tags. You can visit a site like Technorati (<http://technorati.com/tag/>) and see which tags are being used most in real time in the form of a Tag Cloud. The larger words and phrases indicate the tags that are being used more often.

Technorati and similar services also allow users to set up RSS enabled search strings that will notify them as soon as content is posted on topics that interest them.

All this means is that there is more to attracting your target market than ranking in search engines. If you use RSS enabled web pages and you make sure that your RSS feeds are submitted to as many RSS directories as possible so that your target market has more ways to find you.

Beyond RSS, a CMS based website or blog (a blog is a CMS) has an interactive element in that users can be allowed to make comments on your content. Any level of privacy can be chosen, from letting anyone post comments, to requiring user registration.

Comments build content for you – and provide you with valuable user feedback, both good and bad.

Plugins and modifications for many CMS systems invite even more interaction. Polls gain information from users. Forums invite the formation of a community. The options are increasing all the while and if you don't find something that does what you want, you can hire a freelance programmer to create something for you.

Social Bookmarking

Sites like Delicious (<http://del.icio.us/>) provide us with a way to share our favorite links and blog posts with others. Instead of adding a 'favorite' to your browser, you create a bookmark in your Delicious account. You can then make your list public to others and see how many others have also bookmarked a particular resource.

Items that get a lot of bookmarks rise up in popularity and gain exposure on the website.

Digg (<http://www.digg.com>) allows users to add stories to the site so that other users can give it a vote of confidence (digg it) and if it gets enough diggs, it rises in popularity and hopefully reaches the main page. Top stories get discussed on the popular DiggNation podcast.

OnlyWire (<http://www.onlywire.com/>) has a large list of social bookmarking sites and provides you with a way to add items to all at once if you have accounts with them.

Now for the external.

Your participation 'out there' on the web...

Web 2.0 Social Networking allows for greater connectivity over greater distances than ever before in the history of the world.

You can find a friend, a spouse, an employee, a new boss, a business partner... just about anything.

The key to initiating and benefiting from successful connections online is seeking out the right networking environment.

Social Networking

Social Networking is such a huge part of Web 2.0 that we're going to devote quite a bit of attention to it in this report.

Social Networks of every kind have popped up on the web, making interaction and connection easier than most would have imagined possible just five years ago.



Just in case you're wondering, a Forum or Message Board on its own is not defined as a Social Network. Why? While a forum does allow for communication and the development of a community it does not usually provide a way for users to create, search for or store individual connections.

Social Networking is used to initiate relationships for friendship, romance, information, entertainment, careers and perhaps most importantly for our interests, Social Networking is used to foster and grow business relationships.

Here is a quick overview of some of the most highly traveled Social Networks on the web today.

Linked In – <http://www.linkedin.com>

This site's purpose is to equip members with the means to grow a list of people (Connections) they meet and learn to trust in business. As your list of connections develops you can view their connections (known as 2nd degree connections) and ask them to help you with an introduction.

Linked In is used to locate work, make new business partnerships, find employees or freelancers, etc.

PNA / Power Networking Alliance – <http://www.my-pna.com>

My-PNA.com is an online business networking site that helps members around the globe connect via online and offline networking events and meetings.

Members can create a custom profile, upload photos, upload image ads, test out your 30 or 60 second audio / radio spot ads, upload videos, test out your 30 or 60 second video spot ads, leave comments on member profiles, write your very own blog, search for old business partners or make new ones, realtime chat, realtime video chat, IM, Teach an Online Class, Workshop, or Seminar Take an Online Class, Workshop, or Seminar, Announce Your Events

Xing <http://www.xing.com>

XING is a multilingual business network. They offer personal profiles, groups, forums, events, and other social networking features. Basic membership is free but full features are only available to premium members.

Ryze – <http://www.ryze.com>

Ryze is a widely used business network that allows you to create a page for free that can be customized with your own HTML. You can activate a guest book that lets other users comment and you can also communicate with each other via private messages. Gold and Platinum level members can host networks and set limitations on who can contact them based on level of membership.

Networks incorporate traits of an email list and a forum and network owners can communicate with their networks through broadcast emails.

Meet Up – <http://www.meetup.com>

Meetup.com is an online social networking site that helps members connect via offline meetings all around the globe. You can find groups by searching for a common interest and your ZIP code or city out of the US. You can find MeetUp events even in smaller communities.

My Space – <http://www.myspace.com>

MySpace is famous for social networking. The website offers users the ability to create highly interactive web profiles and a network of friends to share it with. They can post to blogs, participate in groups, share photos, music and videos.

Since MySpace is ranked as the fifth most visited website on Alexa.com and because it is relatively easy to create a large network of contacts using automated tools like 'adder bots', MySpace is constantly targeted by social network spammers. (Even though using these bots are against the MySpace terms of service.)

The popular Badderadder lets you send out bulletins, comments and messages automatically. Those who are using MySpace as it is intended, for social networking are usually quite irritated by the spam messages.

Freindster (<http://www.facebook.com>), **Bebo** (<http://www.bebo.com>)
and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>)

These sites are all similar to MySpace in that they attract a young crowd focused on making social connections and are generally unfriendly to business networking.

Windows Live Spaces <http://spaces.live.com/>

Live Spaces looks and feels quite a lot like MySpace. You can create a profile, post to a blog, post photos and videos, make connections, etc.

Yahoo 360 <http://360.yahoo.com/>

Yahoo 360 again, has a similar feel to most of the other social networking sites out there, but if you're using Yahoo Mail or a member of any Yahoo Groups you'll soon find that your 360 connects you with these areas, making it quite useful.

An exhaustive list of social networking sites can be found here:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites

What about Squidoo?

Squidoo (<http://www.squidoo.com>) is certainly a Social Networking website but it does differ from most of the resources listed above in that it focuses on the creation of valuable web content more than on the development of individual connections.

Squidoo members create lenses, as many as they like, to display their expertise on the subject and in many cases, to draw traffic to their individual only projects. Squidoo lenses can be monetized in a variety of ways.

Lenses can be tweaked to allow commenting and Lens Masters can connect their lenses through Groups according to the topic of content they are focusing on.

How do I decide where to network?

It is time consuming to build a worthwhile presence on any of the above networks so it would be a mistake to jump into all of them at once. It's smarter to take one at a time and give it your focused attention for a period of time.

If you have a multifaceted business, you should choose one aspect of your business to highlight and promote on a network. Profile pages that list every business you're involved in and every website you own is not likely to be effective as visitors are faced with too many choices.

For example:

You can make your MySpace profile to highlight the part of your business that relates most closely to you on a personal level or that connects to a popular hobby. Then build a profile on My-Pna that would appeal to professional contacts.

Create a Squidoo lens for each topic you have created an information product or content website about. Use your Ryze profile to highlight your partnering opportunities.

The Good, the Bad & the Ugly of Business Focused Social Networking for the Internet Marketer.

Business owners in the offline world know the value of networking. There are many opportunities locally, nationally and worldwide for meeting new people who share similar business interests and benefiting from these contacts.

The value of networking only increases when you take it online. It's easier to reach more people and it usually costs far less.

There is a wide variety of networking opportunities on the web – as you've seen from the list above, some are free and some come with features that involve a fee to use.

Good networking opportunities bring you into contact with those who are potential:

- Customers
- List Subscribers
- Source of Word of Mouth Referrals
- Affiliates
- Cooperative Partners
- Media Contacts

Good networking behavior includes:

- Showing interest in others.
- Asking questions that help you to learn about your target market.
- Offering to help others with useful introductions when possible.
- Answering questions when appropriate.
- Respecting moderators and rules.



Bad networking behavior includes:

- Only talking about you.
- Spamming with links or ads.
- Offering non-constructive criticism.



Ugly networking behavior includes:

- Pushing business opportunities on those who haven't asked for info.
- Harvesting contact information without permission.
- Flaming competitors.



Online networking can move beyond interaction on social networking sites. There are a growing number of opportunities for networking via audio and even video through services like Skype (<http://www.skype.com>), Co-Op World (<http://www.coopworld.com>) and Go To Meeting (<http://www.gotomeeting.com>).

Measure Results and Embrace Limits

Social Networking can be addicting, especially for those who are otherwise spending a lot of time working alone on a computer. Take care that you don't lose track of time and end up spending more valuable business hours on it than you should.

Take steps that will let you measure the results of your networking efforts. Use special landing pages, ad trackers or redirect links to count the number of responses to a particular offer you promoted.

If you've spent five hours each month networking to promote a particular project, yet haven't seen related subscribers or purchases – it's time to re-evaluate what you're doing. You may be networking in the wrong places or if you are reaching your target market, you may have just learned that they don't want or need what you have to offer.

I Don't Have Time For This!

Don't let a lack of time keep you from benefiting from Web 2.0. Many aspects can be outsourced easily. Find a Virtual Assistant with 2.0 savvy and put him or her to work on the project.

Additional Resources:

[Mailloop](#) -- email and Business Automation Software. Designed to give small and home-based business owners ALL the email automation tools you need, in one easy-to-use software interface.

[Traffic 2.0](#) details strategies for drawing traffic from busy Web 2.0 social networking sites. The beauty of Web 2.0 traffic is that they are way more dedicated than normal traffic.

With normal traffic driving conversion percentages, a 5% CTR would be considered very high. With Web 2.0 traffic, 5% would be considered low.

So with Web 2.0 traffic, not only do you have the ability to drive a lot more people to your website, but those people who come are also more inclined to purchase. It's a win-win situation for you.

[Powerful Storytelling for Web 2.0](#) This is an audio interview with Lorrie Morgan-Ferrero and Kate Yandoh about using storytelling and how it plays into the web 2.0 phenomenon.

Along with the hour plus long audio (broken up into 4 different segments) you also get a complete transcript of the audio (which is nice for reviews) and a storytelling checklist that includes a glossary of Web 2.0 terminology, links to websites mentioned and 10 tips to help you get started with using storytelling to market your business.

The product is a good introduction into using story telling in both your sales message and to attract new interest and traffic through Web 2.0 methods. While it wasn't earth shattering information that will take my business to the next level, this is one of those courses I keep close at hand and revisit when I'm out of ideas on what to write about on my blog, or just need a little refresher in storytelling. I also find that I get something new out of it - some little tip or idea - that I missed the first few times of listening to the audios.

You will learn how to use story telling in anything from your sales letter and newsletter to your blog or podcast. The course also gives you a good idea why storytelling is now more important than ever if you want to get and keep your visitors attention.

The transcript is also great if you want to quickly glance through the content of the audio interview to find and review a particular part of it. Overall, this is a good product to have and keep around revisiting every few months.

Content Infinity - The Net is made up of information (or articles). We all know that Content is King and in order to dominate the search engines, you need to produce more and more quality information for your websites. The biggest mistake that most Internet Marketers do is to focus only on the 2nd part of the content creation process which is "Writing" and completely omits the "research" . Now imagine for a moment that the "Research" step is taken out of this process, there are no search engines, no books, no newspapers or videos to research information. Do you think you can write a 600 words article on a topic like: "Prehistoric Reptiles Living In The African Continent Three Million Years Ago"? There are a bunch of software out there which will only help you rewrite the same content over and over again but none of them comes close to what Content Infinity does. Content Infinity takes care of all the 3 steps in the content creation process. The Most Powerful Article Writing Software Ever Created. Grab A Free Demo Of This Multi-Million Dollar Software. No Catch. [Click Here to Download This Amazing Tool](#)

New To Internet Marketing and need some tips?

Would you like to discover how to flood your website with FREE traffic with #1, #2, or even #5 rankings in Google, Yahoo and MSN?

If your answer is "Yes," then I have great news for you.

I just found out that for the first time ever, Internet marketing powerhouse Derek Gehl is giving away 30-Day Trials of his exclusive "Search Marketing Lab."

For the next 30 days, you'll get an "all access" backstage pass to Derek's private search marketing testing labs where, using his tutorial videos, breaking news reports, and discussion forum, you'll discover how to flood your website with unlimited FREE traffic from Google, Yahoo, and MSN...

... Using the same *secret formula* Derek has used to beat out 294 MILLION competitors for #1 and #2 rankings for three years running.

To get your 30-Day Trial Pass to Derek's "Search Marketing Lab," [click here](#)

